



The Burning Bush - Online article archive

The underlying spirit of Refo500

[The text of Rev. Ivan Foster's commentary at the conclusion of the *Heart of the Matter* broadcast, "Popish octopus with a very long reach". [Click here](#) to listen]

Paul the apostle, when speaking of the spirit of antichrist and rebellion at work amongst the nations said this to the church at Thessalonica: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way," 2 Thessalonians 2:7.

Paul refers here to what I might call 'the workings of the spirit of lawlessness' which has been active amongst the nations since the fall of Adam.

The activities of this spirit of lawlessness is termed a 'mystery' because of its secretive, clandestine and covert enterprises. This is a spirit which stands in complete contrast to the spirit in which the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ functions.

Openness marks the gospel.

It is written of the Saviour that He "went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people," Matthew 4:23.

When on trial before the High Priest, He answered a question about His doctrine with these words: "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which heard me, what I have said unto them: behold, they know what I said," John 18:20-21.

There was no concealment, no cunning craftiness, no hidden agenda with the Saviour and His disciples. Paul says of the ministry of the apostles and early church: "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God," 2 Corinthians 4:1-2.

Craftiness is the way of the devil.

Hear Peter's definition of the servants of the devil against whom he warns his readers. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not," 2 Peter 2:1-3.

There will ever be this contrast between the workings of God's Kingdom and the workings of the devil and his agents. One is marked by forthrightness and plainness while the other is marked by secretiveness and underhandedness and deceit.

By bearing this in mind we may rightly evaluate the activities of the organisation called Refo500. It states its purpose in this fashion - and we quote. "Refo500 is the international platform for knowledge, expertise, ideas, products and events, specializing in the 500 year legacy of the Reformation. On the platform all kinds of partners from all over the world work together, to offer a program for a wide audience and to show the relevance of the reformation. Refo500 participants include Protestant and Catholic organizations, universities, seminaries, museums and so on. The platform is open to every organisation that agrees with the goal of Refo500." However, Dr Joel Beeke would place Refo500 at the heart of the celebration of God's wonderful



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work of grace in setting free the nations of Europe from the yoke of papal bondage. (See <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LTnWXnmYgB8>).

But despite Dr Beeke's claims, its evangelical leaders are working with papal institutions and organisations and these agents of Rome, in keeping with their ancient purpose, are clearly seeking to re-establish themselves as bona fide representatives of the Kingdom of Christ.

This is that spirit of which Jude warned.

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ," Jude 1:3-4.

Refo500 facilitates the "creepers" of popery and liberalism as they seek to turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Against such there must be the voice of a Jude raised to warn the flock.

Furthermore, against such there must be the work of digging and an uncovering that the prophet Ezekiel was directed by God to undertake in order that the hidden things of darkness be brought into the light.

Hear these words from Ezekiel chapter 8:6-12. "He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? but turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations. And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked, behold a hole in the wall. Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door. And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about. And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up. Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth."

This work of digging in order to uncover the hidden things of darkness and dishonesty is a necessary labour in such days as these. The task of naming the guilty, as did Ezekiel, is commanded of God today.

Those who are of God will rejoice in the exposure of sin while those whose sympathies lie with the enemy will rage at the uncovering of the secret machinations of lawlessness.

There are some confused souls who dither and totter about in the 'no man's land' of bewilderment and indecision.

Light as ever divides men as the dawn brings forth the creatures of the day while banishing the creatures of the night to their shadows.

Just what impact does the light of truth have upon you? Where do you stand regarding Refo500 and those professing 'Fundamentalists' promoting the sham that it is?