The physical world often gives us insight into the unseen, spiritual side of creation, just as creation itself proclaims the glory and power of its Creator.
The Living Bible very clearly describes this knowledge:

For the truth about God is known to them instinctively. God has put this knowledge in their hearts. From the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky and all that God made. They can clearly see his invisible qualities — his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God. Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn’t worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. The result was that their minds became dark and confused.

(ROMANS 1:19-21)
THE APOSTLE PAUL WAS TRYING TO help us see that the things in the world around us reveal important aspects of what is unseen, but still very real. There are a host of diseases to which we, animals, and plants are susceptible that come from mildews, spores, and viruses. Some can hardly be described as living organisms, as they are so persistent, so enduring, and so very dark in their nature. These diseases should cause us to stop and think. Are they telling us something we should know? They wait for times of weakness and stress in order to invade, take over and, if possible, turn the host into a great factory for producing more of their own useless, destructive kind. Finally, worn out, the unfortunate host dies under the burden, deprived of nourishment, light, and life.
MUT IS A GOOD EXAMPLE OF this, in regards to both the fungus which infects weakened plants, and the moral degradation which pervades modern society. No one in his right mind would eat smut-infected corn, yet in some circles it has become a delicacy. In the moral analogy, an upright person would not give his soul over to spiritual smut, yet many falter under the temptation to do what they know is wrong, and even delight in it. Unless one promptly and deliberately turns away from it, the nature of evil begins its work in his soul, just as smut degrades a plant.
Eventually, a person’s taste buds can be trained until what was once revolting becomes a delicacy. He puts away the revulsion he naturally feels at eating the twisted, discolored masses of spores (i.e., corn smut) just to have a new and perverse pleasure in life. In the moral analogy, that is like silencing the voice of one’s conscience which is telling him not to do something that hurts another person. The toll of “smut” weighs on the body and taxes the soul, no matter how much one enjoys it. In the end, as with any sin, it takes away the life of its possessor.
SOMETHING LIKE THE INVASION OF SMUT happened in the spiritual realm many years ago, as the light faded in the early church. In the beginning, the Holy Spirit enabled them to do what has seemed impossible ever since—put away the obvious deeds of the flesh, such as division, greed, and war, and instead, by His grace, live together in harmony and peace. This was the faith they received, the persuasion and the grace that they could do what was otherwise impossible for men to do. But Christian theology now proclaims it is impossible, yielding to the overwhelming weight of historical evidence that the flesh really is mightier than the Spirit.
T WAS IMPOSSIBLE for the infected, disease ridden, and smut-laden body the early church became. It could no longer produce the same results, as it lost the glory it had at first. Then, grace was upon them all. It then mutated beyond all recognition in just a few centuries from its beginnings. Since then, that dead body has filled the world with her spores of mistrust, suspicion, and unbelief, teaching that obedience to God’s word is not only impossible, but is to be considered an active evil called “works salvation.”
However, it was not always so. The first-century church had been the bride-to-be, whose corporate life together, gathered in communities following the pattern of the one in Jerusalem, was the light of the world. With that light, she was bringing salvation to the ends of the earth (as they knew it then).
As the willingness of the many faded, as silence began to fill the gatherings (except for the emerging clergy), and as more and more disciples took thought for themselves, no longer freely sharing whatever worldly goods they had with one another, the light began to dim. As men began to speak in the flesh, seeking their own glory, the light of revelation ceased to shine upon them in their gatherings. The gates of the unseen realm began to prevail over the church.
THAT SPIRITUAL LIGHT ONLY SHONE ON those with the glory of their Master, the glory to be one as He and the Father are one. In the end, there were only a few who still had the glory of their Master. It departed as their unity crumpled in the face of things like showing favoritism to the rich, not heeding the cry of the poor and hungry in their midst, and not keeping themselves unstained from the world. This was in stark contrast to their beginnings when the apostles were ready to stop teaching rather than let the cry of the neglected widows and orphans ascend to heaven, for that cry would have condemned them before their God.
ARLY IN THE SECOND CENTURY, WHEN James wrote his epistle, he could see where their friendship with the world was leading them — to wars and murder in order to obtain the things they lusted after. And in this, James was certainly a prophet, as Christian history abundantly shows. The common life of the early believers was history by then, a part of their now-legendary beginnings, meaning that as far as the lives of the people were concerned, Acts 2 and 4 may as well have been a myth. It was no longer the living experience of believers everywhere or even anywhere. Another gospel, another Yahshua was being received, as Paul had already warned. They eventually even changed His name, as most modern translations call Him by a name that would have been foreign to His ears.
For if one comes and preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted, you bear this beautifully.

2 CORINTHIANS 11:4

After Paul’s warnings, the cries of the other apostles and prophets, such as John and James, were also ignored.
THE BEGINNINGS OF THE TRANSITION TO another Jesus and another gospel and another Holy Spirit are easily found in the Scriptures, but not readily recognized for what they are. To do so would be to question the validity, not only of Christianity past (the horrors which many recoil from), but also of Christianity today as the vehicle of God’s salvation. Otherwise, one must repudiate the life and practices of the early churches as recorded in the New Testament, for the two — the Christian Church of the past nineteen centuries, and the vibrant, communal life of the churches in the first century — are irreconcilable.