



# **The Devil Within**

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**The Battle for the Church,  
Your Soul, and the Nation**

**Bobby D. Brown**

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and the Nation*

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## **APPRECIATION**

A word of appreciation to Melinda. Your suggestions were invaluable. God Bless!

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## **PREFACE**

I am not perfect, and I am far from it. I have been saved by grace. Like others, I have struggles, questions, pain, hurt, and joy. But with God's help, I am working towards becoming more like Jesus.

All the glory and credit for the inspiration, writing, and publishing of *The Devil Within* belong to God.

Thank You, Jesus!

# The Battle for the Church, Your Soul, and the Nation

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**MISSION**

*Connecting People to Jesus Christ.*

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Do not be afraid of them, since there is nothing covered that won't be uncovered and nothing hidden that won't be made known. What I tell you in the dark, speak in the light. What you hear in a whisper, proclaim on the housetops. Don't fear those who kill the body but are not able to kill the soul; rather, fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell (Matthew 10:26-28, HSCB).

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## Chapter 1

# INTRODUCTION

I was moved by the movie, *Bonhoeffer: Pastor, Spy, Assassin* (2024). I have read books about and by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, including his *Letters from Prison*. But as I watched the movie version of his life and legacy, I was moved to write this introduction.

I was deeply moved as I watched the movie, and I cried tears of pain and sorrow. My pain is not for Bonhoeffer. His race is complete. My pain is for the destruction I see happening and on the horizon. My pain is for the great falling away that has already occurred and will continue to do so.

I feel compelled to warn a nation and Believers everywhere that Satan, evil, and the world are coming for Christians, the Cross, and Jesus Christ. While God's church will never be defeated, many will be led astray (Matthew 16:18, 24:11-12).

Jesus has already won. Nonetheless, Satan continues in his efforts to destroy everything and everyone associated with Jesus Christ (John 10:10), and Jesus lets him. That's right—Jesus allows Satan to rule this world. People are given a choice: follow Jesus or follow Satan. Acknowledge and trust Jesus Christ as the Living Son of God or deny Jesus and perish in hell forever.

Because God created the world, including humans, Satan seeks to destroy both. Satan's mission is to destroy everything God created. First, he wanted to rule, to usurp God. However, when he realized that usurping God was impossible, he turned his attention to what God allows him to control - the world.

Satan seeks to be worshiped by the very creation created in God's image. Satan wants you to bow down to him. Satan knows that his time and power are limited. In the time he has left, Satan seeks to destroy everything and everyone.

We who are in Christ are protected, shielded, and marked by Jesus (Ephesians 1:13; Revelation 7:3).

However, God's protection, shield, and branding do not stop Satan from attacking, tempting, and sometimes destroying Believers in this life. Yet, Satan can only do what God allows. God limits Satan's actions. In these battles, Believers do not walk alone; we walk with Jesus Christ. Jesus's protection carries Believers now and into the next life—an extraordinary life that our human minds cannot fully comprehend. Our hope, the hope of those who are born again, is in the next life, not this one.

I do not know when Jesus will return or how much pain and suffering you will endure in this life. I do not know when your highs and lows will come. I do not know when the church will have rest and when it will have persecution. I am certain that people, governments, and Satan cannot derail God's will. Satan schemes and man plots, and plans, but God determines the outcome.

God raises nations and leaders for his purposes, planning their days. This includes so-called 'good' nations and 'evil' nations. When a nation has fulfilled God's purpose, God turns the country over to its own nature and desires. Nations may stay the course.

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However, history has shown that nations become evil like the world when turned over to their own nature.

America is an evil nation. America celebrates Satan and mocks God. America calls evil good and good oppression. America has murdered nearly 65 million babies since 1973. In 2020, almost 1 million babies were murdered in their mother's womb in the United States. America exports its murderous ways, including paying for abortions in other countries. Any nation that mocks God is evil. Any nation that murders children is a special kind of evil.

Why, then, does the church in America sit back and allow this to happen? Why is the church quiet? Why does the church accept the evil perpetrated in the nation's name?

Whether it is killing children, calling men women and women men, or placing kitty litter in public school bathrooms for adolescents and teens who identify as cats, a large part of the mainstream church in America has acquiesced to evil. The reason is as old as Cain killing Abel and Judas selling out Jesus. Far too many with leadership positions acquiesce to the

culture because they fear losing members, power, prestige, influence, and other trappings of acceptance and success.

Nearly 100 years ago, the Nazi party took over the Lutheran Church in Germany and the Catholic Church agreed not to oppose Hitler. These actions are just a glimpse of what ***is to come*** in America.

The American government (or the ruling powers over North America) will fully infiltrate the Church. Crosses will be removed; some denominations and churches have already removed the cross from places of prominence in their churches. To speak out against these changes, the political party and its leaders will be tantamount to treason. Preachers, pastors, and seminary professors who do not go along will find themselves in prison or hanged.

In the 1930s, Germany rewrote the Bible. The Nazi Party added two commandments to the Ten Commandments. These changes included adding a false command to honor the Führer above all else. Today, we have Bibles in America that worship God as a woman. Other Bibles praise homosexuality as a

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gift from God. In 2020, pastors in America were arrested and thrown in jail for holding church services. We might expect this in California, New York, or Massachusetts, but this happened in Florida.

In Illinois, during the media-frenzied COVID-19 outbreak, the then-mayor of Chicago, a reported lesbian, sent police to break up a church service. The attendee's crime? Sitting in their cars, listening to the sermon over the radio. She threatened churchgoers with \$500 fines. Ice cream parlors, strip clubs, and liquor stores could remain open in California. But hold a service in a church and face jail or steep fines. Conducting a Bible study in your home in California could risk jail.

Satan is coming for the Church. He already owns many mainline denominations. He will not prevail against the true church—God's Church. However, what you and I have been taught about success and victory is wrong. God's ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9). You cannot impress God (Titus 3:5). God is not impressed with your scoreboard, weights, or measuring stick (1 Samuel 16:7).

In the Old Testament, God told Israel how to worship, build the temple, and what the priests would wear (Exodus 24-31, 35-40). But for the New Testament church, Jesus dwells within each Believer. God never told the New Testament church to build grand buildings or multi-site entertainment venues. God's church is not about music, buildings, rockstar preachers, or programs. God's church is about people focused on a relationship with Jesus Christ. The mission of God's church is to connect people to Christ (Matthew 28:18-20).

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## Chapter 2

### CREATION

**I**n the beginning, the earth was formless and empty. Darkness covered the earth. Then, God spoke life into being. He created light. Having created light, God created day and night. He separated the sea from the sky and made dry land. And God was pleased. God created a diverse array of plants and animals. He created the stars and the moon for the night and the sun for the day. Having looked at His creation, God was pleased (Genesis 1:1-25). Looking over His creation, God declared:

‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, all the earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth.’ So God created man in His own image; He created him in the image of God. . . (Genesis 1:26-27).

Looking over all He had created, God saw that Adam was alone. Seeing that it was not good for Adam to be alone, God caused Adam to go into a deep sleep. God removed a rib from Adam, and from this rib, God created a helpmate for Adam. Looking at her, Adam called her 'woman' because she was taken from his own body (Genesis 2:21-25).

Having created man and woman, God blessed Adam and Eve and gave them authority over the earth. God gave Adam and Eve authority to rule and administer creation on His behalf. Having done all this, God was well pleased (Genesis 1:27-31).

Yet, of all the vastness God created, God told Adam that Adam could not eat from one tree —the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Genesis 2:8-15).

But Satan entered the garden. He began a deceptive dialogue with Eve. This deception resulted in Adam and Eve both eating from the tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (Genesis 3:1-7). From this one rejection of God's command, Adam relinquished his authority to Satan, they were banished from the

Garden of Eden, and death and sin entered the world and the hearts of all humanity (Genesis 3; Romans 5:12-19).

The Lord God said, “Since man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil, he must not reach out, take from the tree of life, eat, and live forever.” So the Lord God sent him away from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. He drove man out and stationed the cherubim and the flaming, whirling sword east of the Garden of Eden to guard the way to the tree of life. (Genesis 3:22-24).

If this were the end of the story, there would be no reason to go on. Life would be meaningless. However, this is not the end. Instead, this is just the beginning. In Genesis 3:15, God promises humans a way back to Him. God promises to provide a way for people to have a relationship with Him again. God’s promise is repeated throughout Scripture (Matthew 12:27-30; John 3:16; John 14:6; Acts 9:20).

Ultimately, God will restore the earth and all creation to a place free from hurt, heartache, war, and evil (Revelation 21:1-27). Until this restoration, the battle continues. Until Jesus returns, the world will continue to experience pain, anguish, and despair. But in Jesus Christ, there is hope (Matthew 24:14, 29-31; John 3:16; John 14:6).

## Chapter 3

### FATHER OF LIES

**S**atan, is the father of lies and the master deceiver (John 8:44). He seeks to kill, steal, and destroy (John 10:10). Satan seeks that which belongs to God (Isaiah 14:13-15).

Satan was called the "shining morning star" (Isaiah 14:12). He walked with God and was adorned with precious stones and gold (Ezekiel 28:13). He was called "anointed guardian cherub" (Ezekiel 28:14). He was blameless in his actions from the day God created him until wickedness was found in him.

You said to yourself: 'I will ascend to the heavens; I will set up my throne above the stars of God. I will sit on the mount of the gods' assembly, in the remotest parts of the North. I will ascend above the highest clouds; I will make myself like the Most High' (Isaiah 14:13-15).

Satan's heart became proud because of the beauty and splendor that God created him with. Because of his pride, Satan corrupted his wisdom (Ezekiel 28:15). Satan decided that He would rise above God. He would place his throne above the One who created him (Isaiah 14:13-15).

The multitude of Satan's rebellion was immeasurable (Ezekiel 28:18). Satan's pride caused his downfall. He was thrown out of heaven (Ezekiel 28:17). He went from being the "shining morning star" to a "destroyer of nations" (Isaiah 14:12).

God has already decreed Satan's ultimate punishment (Genesis 3:15). At God's appointed time, Satan will be cast into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:7-10). This place burns with unrelenting fire and agony (Revelation 20:10). Until then, Satan deceives the nations (Revelation 12:9). He seeks to kill, steal, and destroy (John 10:10).

## Chapter 4

### EVIL IS REAL

**E**vil is real. Satan is real. The Antichrist is real. In 1 Peter 5:8, the Bible warns the Children of God to “Be serious! Be alert! Your adversary, the Devil, prowls like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour.” The Bible warns the Children of God in 1 John 2:18 of the antichrist’s presence in the world:

It is the last hour, and just as you heard that antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have appeared; from this we know that it is the last hour (NASB 1995).

The Bible teaches in 1 John 2:19 that there are those hiding within the Church who do not belong to Jesus:

They went out from us, but they were not *really* of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us;

but *they went out*, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us (NASB 1995).

In Matthew 7:15, the Bible teaches that Satan's soldiers hold some but not all leadership positions in the modern church. These false leaders come to devour and destroy. They seek to lead even the faithful away: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (KJV). The false leaders have the outward appearance of holiness without an inward regeneration of their hearts.

Scripture teaches that a child of God acknowledges Jesus Christ as the Son of God, being fully God, fully man, sinless, crucified, and risen (John 1:1-3, 1:14, 20:28; Hebrews 4:15; 1 John 4:2; 2 John 1:7). Those who are born-again (people who trust Jesus Christ for their eternal salvation), *trust* Jesus as the risen Christ (Acts 2:24). Those who are children of God hold fast to Jesus Christ. A child of God holds on to the Word of God. A child of God continues in God's Word. Those not of God's household reject God's Word.

But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you all know. I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you do know it, and because no lie is of the truth.

Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also (1 John 2:20-23).

Through the Holy Spirit, the people of God are given eyes to see and ears to hear. By the power of the Holy Spirit, a born-again believer is given spiritual discernment. With discernment, we are urged to spiritual maturity (1 Corinthians 14:20; Colossians 1:9-10). A born-again Believer's maturity grows through prayer, living in community with other believers, and studying God's word.

For centuries, evil attempted to disguise itself and hide in the shadows (Philippians 3:2). Yet, what was once hidden is now in broad daylight. As the curtain is pulled back, those with eyes to see and ears to hear recognize that evil has permeated every facet of life.

As 1 John 2:18-23 demonstrates, there are Children of God and Children of Satan in this world. These two different natures interact on an ongoing basis. Evil and Holiness can be seen in “Christian” denominational leadership, local Protestant and Roman Catholic churches, schools, universities, and local, state, national, and international governments.

This chapter ends with but a few examples of the unmasked evil which prevails in society:

- 65 million+ unborn children have been murdered in America since 1973.
- 15 million unborn children have been murdered worldwide during the first four months of 2025.
- In 2020, pastors were threatened with or jailed for holding church.

- Children are allowed to have sex change operations without parental consent or notification.
- Multiple retail chains allow (or have allowed) men who identify as women to use the women's restroom.
- The United States Supreme Court requires states to recognize same-sex marriages.
- Preachers were arrested in Chicago, IL, in 2024 for preaching the gospel on a street corner.
- The United States Department of Defense spent over 15 million dollars on treatment for an estimated 1,800 transgender service members. This includes sex-change operations.
- The call to eradicate Jews is heard on American college campuses.

Recognizing the enemy is your first step toward victory (Corrie Ten Boom, 1892-1983). He prowls the earth looking to devour everything and everyone (1 Peter 5:8). Do not be caught unaware or sleeping.

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## Chapter 5

### THE DEVIL WITHIN

**M**ankind's separation from God creates an emptiness inside each of us. Some people are aware of this emptiness, while others are not. This separation occurred when Adam rebelled against God's leadership in the Garden (Genesis 3). In this emptiness, Satan fills the void.

Because of Adam's rebellion against God in the Garden, Adam relinquished his right to administer or rule on God's behalf. By falling for Satan's trap, Adam handed the right to rule the world to Satan, subject to God's ultimate authority (Job 1:6-12, 2:1-6, 42:2, 42:10-17).

Through Adam, sin entered the world (Genesis 3; Romans 5:12-17). When Adam sinned, he created a separation between people and God, which is imputed to everyone (Genesis 3:17-24; Romans 5). Because of Adam, every person is born with an

emptiness that only Jesus Christ can fill (John 4:13-14; Romans 5:19, 6:23).

God was not surprised by Satan, Adam, or humanity's inherent sinful nature. Before the foundation of the world, God prepared a response to sin (Revelation 13:8). God's response is Jesus Christ (John 3:16; 14:6; Revelation 13:8).

People attempt to fill the emptiness with various substitutes—sex, drugs, alcohol, fame, pain, violence, and even financial and military success. Yet, there is no substitute for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (Matthew 11:28; Ephesians 2:4-5; John 14:6).

There are only two teams or sides in the cosmic struggle—Team God and Team Satan (Matthew 12:30). Because of our sinful nature, we are on Team Satan unless we trust Jesus Christ (John 3:18). There is no Switzerland in the fight for your eternal soul.

God has already won. Satan has been defeated. Jesus Christ defeated sin on the cross and He defeated death when He rose from the grave (John 11:25; Romans 6:4-23; 1 Peter 2:24; Revelation 1:18).

However, until God's appointed time, Satan still prowls the earth seeking to kill, steal, and destroy (John 10:10; 1 Peter 5:8). He is seeking to devour you, your family, and everyone you care about.

When God decides that the time is right, He will destroy Satan for all time (Revelation 20). Until then, Satan pollutes and destroys the world. Yet, the choice is straightforward: God or Satan (Revelation 20:15).

Choices have consequences. Team Satan ensures an eternity in a never-ending pit of fire and agony (Revelation 20:10-15). For Team God, an eternal life of never-ending beauty and joy through faith in Jesus Christ (John 3:16, 14:6; Revelation 21-22).

For born-again Believers (people who trust Jesus Christ for their eternal salvation), the battle on this side of heaven is not over. Jesus warns that if we are His, we will face trials and tribulations (John 15:18-25). Jesus warns that to be His means putting one's faith into action, "Why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and don't do the things I say?" (Luke 6:46). Living a Believer's life invites persecution because a Believer is called to put God first (Luke 9:23-26).

The Apostle Paul warns in Romans 7:14-25 that Believers struggle with sin:

For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am made out of flesh, sold into sin's power. For I do not understand what I am doing, because I do not practice what I want to do, but I do what I hate. And if I do what I do not want to do, I agree with the law that it is good. So now I am no longer the one doing it, but it is sin living in me.

For I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my flesh. For the desire to do what is good is with me, but there is no ability to do it. For I do not do the good that I want to do, but I practice the evil that I do not want to do. Now if I do what I do not want, I am no longer the one doing it, but it is the sin that lives in me. So I discover this principle: When I want to do what is good, evil is with me. For in my inner self I joyfully agree with God's

law. But I see a different law in the parts of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and taking me prisoner to the law of sin in the parts of my body. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this dying body? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with my mind I myself am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh, to the law of sin.

The struggle with sin, even for those born-again (Believers), is real. However, as Believers walk with Jesus, we walk closer to God. As Believers draw closer to God, our behaviors, attitudes, and thoughts mature in Christlikeness (John 13:1-20, 15:4).

The struggle on this side of heaven is real. We fight the pull of sin by trusting Jesus rather than ourselves. Non-believers might live their lives by a moral code of “doing good” or “being Kind,” but this is no substitute for a personal relationship with Jesus (John 14:6; Ephesians 2:8-9).

We can trust that every word of God is pure: He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him (Proverbs 30:5; Ephesians 6:10-18). Let us not forget, our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places (Ephesians 6:12). Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, stand firm (Ephesians 6:13). For the fear of man brings a snare. Yet, everyone who trusts in the Lord will be exalted (Proverbs 29:25).

## Chapter 6

### NO BOUNDARIES

**E**vil knows no boundaries. Evil knows no honor. Trying to compromise with evil is akin to being trapped in a room with a boa constrictor; you feed the family pet to the reptile, hoping the cold-blooded creature will not target your family. Yet, when the boa is hungry again, it will seek to devour your family. The same applies to churches, communities, cities, states, and nations. Evil seeks to expand itself. It will kill, steal, and destroy to evolve, grow, develop, and consume everything.

Anyone who has lived in the South has had to deal with mold. What do you do? Do you say it's just a little mold, so I'll leave it alone? No, you attack, you scrub, you clean. Mold grows until you cut off its source. Evil is the same; the more you feed it and allow it to go unchallenged, the more aggressive and powerful it becomes.

Do not give evil a foothold. If you believe you can compromise with, bargain with, or strike a deal with evil, you are only fooling yourself. Likewise, for local churches, denominations, communities, cities, states, and nations to compromise with evil is to surrender authority to Satan.

But there is hope. Jesus came to destroy Satan's works and deliver all who will believe from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light (John 8:12; 1 John 3:8). Whosoever believes on Jesus Christ as their Savior will be saved (John 3:16).

There are only two choices: Jesus Christ or Satan. Like Elijah told Israel on Mount Carmel, God or Baal, Heaven or Hell, choose wisely (1 Kings 18).

## Chapter 7

### EVIL'S PURPOSE

**W**hy is evil all-consuming? What is evil's purpose? The answers to these two complex yet straightforward questions can begin to be understood by examining Isaiah 14:13-14 and John 10:10.

Satan was the most beautiful of all God's creations (Ezekiel 28:12-13). He was on the mountain of the Most High, a place of Honor (Ezekiel 28:14). He was an anointed guardian cherub (Ezekiel 28:14). Yet, he was not satisfied with his station in creation. His pride consumed him (Ezekiel 28:17). In his pride, arrogance, and self-deceit, Satan rebelled against God. Satan attempted to usurp God's place and authority (Isaiah 14:13-14). Satan seeks to steal, kill, and destroy (John 10:10). In rebellion, Satan rallied one-third of the angels to his side (Revelation 12:4). His punishment and the punishment for all who follow him is preordained: Eternity in the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:1-15, 21:8).

While Satan is still loose, God limits Satan's authority (Job 1:12, 2:6; James 4:7; Revelation 13:8, 20:10). Not only does God limit Satan's authority, God also limits Satan's time (Revelation 12:12). Satan has but a finite time to rule (Revelation 12:12, 20:1-10). While the time is known only to God, Satan knows his time is limited. God warned Satan and the world in Genesis 3:15 that at God's appointed time, Jesus Christ will strike down Satan.

Being given a finite time to rule, destroy, and take people away to hell for all eternity, Satan is on a mad scramble to destroy everything God created while he still has time (John 10:10, 1 Peter 5:8).

Satan wants to be worshiped (Matthew 4:9). Satan wants to be the lord of the lives of those created in God's image (Isaiah 14:12-15). Satan wants all creation to worship him (Revelation 13:8). Satan's goal is to be worshiped instead of God. Knowing that he has lost, Satan seeks to destroy the world and take as many people to the Lake of Fire as possible (John 10:10, 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 20:1-15, 21:8).

## Chapter 8

### SATAN'S DECEPTION

**P**erhaps the greatest deception the world has ever witnessed is being convinced by Satan that he does not exist. This deception fuels another deception: that heaven and hell are not real. Satan deceives the world into believing that God is not real, that Jesus Christ was just a man, a historical figure, and that to believe in the power of the Holy Spirit is for those who are weak-minded.

If heaven and hell are not real, here and now are all that matter. An eternal perspective is not required if heaven and hell are not real. If heaven and hell are not real, what happens after we die does not matter because we cease to exist the moment we die. Satan wants you to live for today without a care for your eternity.

To hedge his bets, Satan has also deceived a segment of the world into believing that *if* there is a heaven,

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how we live today does not matter because everyone gets into heaven.

Because not everyone is fooled by these lies, Satan has set another snare. This snare traps all those who trust in anyone or anything other than Jesus Christ for their eternal security. The lie: There are many ways to heaven.

Satan is the Father of Lies (John 8:44). He is the great deceiver. His goal is to replace God.

## Chapter 9

### ULTIMATE AUTHORITY

**N**either Satan nor man controls the world's destiny; God is the ultimate authority. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has the final say over Satan and men's destinies. God has the final word in all destinies. (Genesis Chapters 1-11; Revelation 4:11; and Revelation 20-21).

Satan plans, schemes, and devices (Luke 22:31-32). Yet God remains in control (Job 1:12, 2:6, 42:2; Revelation 20:1-10). Satan attempted an overthrow of God (Isaiah 14:12-15; Revelation 12:7-12). He continues to pursue God's creation, particularly those created in God's image (people) (John 10:10; 1 Peter 5:8). God's response is to announce Satan's ultimate destruction (Genesis 3:15; Revelation 20:10).

God, in His appointed time, will end Satan (Revelation 20:10). Satan and all those who follow him, including the Antichrist, the False Prophet, demons, and every human who fails to *trust* Jesus

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Christ, will be cast into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:10-15, 21:8).

People go here and there, scurrying about with their plans, ideas, and goals. But it is God who determines the outcomes of our endeavors. In Luke 12:16-21, a wealthy planter (an old-time term for a prosperous farmer) had such an abundant crop that he built a larger barn. But that very night, God required the planter's soul, and the planter died. In death, all the planter's riches were meaningless.

For people to take credit for anything is to replace God with man. God is the Creator of all that was, is, or ever will be created (Genesis 1; Psalm 90:2). To replace God with man is the ultimate sin. Replacing God with man is rejecting Jesus Christ as the living Son of God. Replacing God with man is declaring that I can do it better; I don't need God.

Nothing happens here or anywhere in creation that does not first pass through God's hands. God regulates the earth, the universe, and everything. All blessings come from God (James 1:17); God limits all works of Satan.

In God's sovereignty, He allows Satan a level of freedom to rule the world. However, this freedom is limited and temporary (Job 1:12, 2:6; Luke 22:31-34; Revelation 20:7-10). Nonetheless, never mistake God allowing Satan and people the freedom to follow their own natures, with God causing that which is not good. God's sovereignty does not mean that He causes everything that happens. Instead, His sovereignty means that nothing happens that is not part of God's plan (Job 42:2; Proverbs 19:21; Revelation 13:8). Nothing happens that catches God by surprise, He was before the foundation of the world and is everlasting (Ephesians 2:10; 1 Peter 1:18-21; Revelation 1:8, 13:8). Nothing happens that God does not allow (Job 1:12, 2:6; Luke 22:31-34).

The ability to respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in faith is a gift from God (Ephesians 2:8). The gift comes with a choice. Your freedom to make a choice comes with responsibility. Whether you are a Believer or not, your actions have consequences. In his commentary, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible*, Dr. Constable observes that God exercises His sovereignty by allowing people a

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measure of freedom to make choices for which God holds them responsible.

As Scripture teaches in Deuteronomy 32:8 and Acts 17:26, God sets the boundaries and times of nations, raises their kings, and rules. God has determined the world's fate (Revelation 16:13-16, 17:14-17, 19:20-21, 20:1-15, 21:6-8).

## **Chapter 10**

### **WARNING**

**I**n Ezekiel Chapters 13 and 14, God sent a rebuke and warning to Israel, her elders, and prophets. This rebuke? God will not be mocked. What Satan and, by extension, people mean for their own gain, God will destroy. The warning? “Repent and turn away from your idols and turn your faces away from all your abominations” (Ezekiel 14:6).

While the warning of Ezekiel 14:6 is to Israel, we are hard-pressed to find a reason to ignore God’s message. God sends warnings before destruction. God sent a warning before the flood (Hebrews 11:7). God warned Abraham about the coming destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18:16-33). God warned Egypt before killing the firstborn of the land (Exodus 11:1-10). God has warned the church, the world, and each of us through His Son and the Apostles (Luke 3:17; Acts 17:30-31; Revelation 2 - 3).

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In the Book of Revelation, Chapters 2 and 3, Jesus, working through the Apostle John, sends a message to seven churches. Each of the seven churches fell away from following Jesus, except for Smyrna and Philadelphia. Along with praise and rebuke, the Lord encourages.

The letters to the seven churches were written to churches that existed in the time of the Apostle John. The seven churches are also representative of churches throughout history. Today, we can see attributes of these seven churches in churches throughout America and the world.

The church at Ephesus received praise for its hatred of false teachers and false doctrine. However, the Church was rebuked for holding onto ritual and heritage instead of the Love of Jesus (they loved the rituals of religion more than their relationship with Jesus). The people were encouraged to repent and return to Jesus.

The church at Smyrna was one of only two churches that did not receive a rebuke. Smyrna was praised for

enduring hardship and persecution. The people were encouraged to remain faithful and not fearful.

The church at Pergamum received praise for holding fast to Christ's name and not denying its faith. However, the Church was rebuked for allowing people with false teachings to infiltrate. The people were encouraged to repent or face judgment.

The church at Thyatira received praise for their service, love, and perseverance. However, the Church was rebuked for tolerating seductive practices and attitudes among believers. The faithful were encouraged to hold fast to their faith.

The church at Sardis received praise because some did not soil their garments. However, the Church was rebuked because they were dead. The people were encouraged to wake up, remember what was taught, obey the Word, and repent.

The church in Philadelphia was one of only two churches that did not receive a rebuke. Despite possessing little power, Philadelphia received praise

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for staying true to God's word. The people were encouraged to hold fast to what they had.

The church at Laodicea received no praise. They were rebuked for being Lukewarm. The people were self-reliant because of their power and wealth. They were encouraged to open the door and let Christ in.

Many believers see some aspect of one or more of these churches in their hearts. The seven letters to the seven churches warn every church and every believer of every generation to reject the world's pull, open the door, and let Jesus Christ in.

In Acts 17:30-31, Scripture warns everyone that God's time of overlooking the world's ignorance is over. God calls all who will respond to His call to repent of their sin and trust His Son Jesus Christ, because God has appointed a time for Jesus to judge the world. In judging the world, Jesus will judge every person who lives or has ever lived. He will judge the living and the dead (2 Timothy 4:1). Are you ready?

Therefore, having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to

men that all people everywhere should repent because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead (Acts 17:30-31, NASB 95).

In Matthew 24:36, Jesus teaches that the day and hour of judgment are known only to God. In a message to the Jewish people, Jesus warned them to be alert, as they did not know when the Lord would come. Had they known when He was coming, they would have been ready. However, they were unprepared because they did not know when He would return (Matthew 24:36-44).

A lesson about death is front and center in Matthew 24:36-44. You and I do not know when death will come for us. We do not know if we will wake up tomorrow. We do not know if we will take our next breath. We are not promised this life. God will require an accounting of our life on a day and hour we are not expecting (Luke 12:16-21). The question is, are you ready?

In Luke 9:23-26, Jesus warns those who want to follow Him that the way is hard. If we want to follow Jesus, we must set aside our interests. When we humble ourselves, we make room for Jesus. Following Jesus is a daily decision to set aside our worldly aims and follow Him. Following Jesus is about surrendering oneself to God.

Becoming self-reliant on money, power, positions, and traditions is easy. It is easy to rest on rituals and heritage instead of the power of the Holy Spirit. It is easy to latch onto the next new program, style of worship, or marketing strategy. It is easy to loosen our theology to let more people in. There is a temptation to reject the true nature of sin (wickedness), not calling sin what it is, rejecting God's Lordship—instead, calling sin a misstep, a mistake, or wandering off the path. It is easy to be beaten down by life and go through the motions on Sunday, dead inside. Trusting Jesus Christ is hard. Being obedient is a daily choice that requires effort and perseverance, and it depends on the power of the Holy Spirit.

## Chapter 11

### TRUTH

**W**e have gone past the time when placating the populace can be tolerated within the Church, the nation or our own lives. Truth must be spoken to those we love and those we detest.

I detest the struggle inside me (Romans 7:15-20). If you claim to have no struggle with sin, then run because you are already in Satan's trap. You are either so blinded by the depth of your sin that you cannot recognize the pit you are already in, or you are so naive that you cannot see the Reaper coming for you.

I know this is not a nice thing to say, but if someone is trying to destroy your home, your family, your loved ones, your church, and your nation, then disgust and hate are reasonable responses. We can show love by speaking the truth in our disgust or hate for everything evil. Here are some truths:

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- Homosexuality is an abomination to God (Leviticus 18:22).
- There are only two genders: Male and Female (Genesis 5:2).
- Abortion is murder (Exodus 21:22-25; Psalm 127:3-5, 139:13-16; Jeremiah 32:5).
- God hates murder (Leviticus 20:13).
- There are only two teams: Team God and Team Satan (Matthew 12:30).
- Eternity with the one true God is only by trusting Jesus Christ (John 14:6).
- Many within the Church doing good deeds and teaching in Jesus Christ's name do not know Him (Matthew 7:21-22). More importantly, He does not know them (Matthew 7:23).
- A special place in hell awaits those who lead a child of God astray (Mark 9:42).
- Jesus Christ did not give His life on the cross to eliminate social injustice (Philemon).
- Jesus loves the poor (James 1:27).
- Jesus Christ did not give His life on the cross for you and me to have a bigger house, nicer car, or 401K (Mark 10:17-31).
- Following Jesus Christ is meant to be a life of willing obedience (Luke 9:23-26; 1 John 2:4).

- Many sitting in churches and filling pews still worship idols, including the idol of self (Matthew 7:21-23).
- Those who are Christian in name only will receive eternal punishment unless they surrender to Jesus (Matthew 7:21-23).
- Being a follower of Jesus Christ will put a believer at odds with the world (John 16:33).
- The Christian's everlasting reward is not in the here and now or an earthly tomorrow. The Christian's ultimate reward is the eternal Christ (Luke 6:23; Philippians 3:14).
- Sometimes, the answer is no. No healing, no restoration of a family, no to what you and I want (2 Corinthians 12:8-10).
- Many unanswered prayers result from praying for our will to be done. We pray for what makes us happy or what we think is right (James 4:3).
- Your national citizenship, race, gender, job, reputation, social media presence, and wealth are nothing to God (Acts 10:34).
- Those who deny Jesus Christ as the Son of God commit the ultimate sin (John 3:18).
- Those who deny Jesus Christ as having come in the flesh are not His (1 John 4:2-3).

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- Those who deny Jesus Christ as Creator are not His (John 1:1-5).
- Those who deny Jesus Christ as one with the Father are not His (John 10:30-33).
- Those who deny the Holy Spirit's power, working, and presence do not know God (John 14:17).
- Hell is real:
  - Hell is a place of unimaginable pain, suffering, and agony (Matthew 13:50; Revelation 20:10).
  - Hell is where the fire is so hot that it is described as the Lake of Fire, but so dark that it will drive the demons mad (Matthew 8:12, 22:13).
  - Hell is eternal, never-ending (Mark 9:48; Revelation 20:10).
  - Hell is the eternal just reward for all those who deny Jesus Christ (Matthew 25:31-46; 1 John 4:2-3; Revelation 20:10-15, 21:8).
  - We are all worthy of hell (Romans 6:23).
- Jesus Christ willingly paid the ransom for all those who trust in Him (John 3:16; Romans 5).

- Because of an unwillingness to surrender self, many people will be cast into hell for all eternity (Matthew 7:13-14).
- Satan is real. He is the God of this world (John 12:31, 16:11). The world worships him. Yet, Satan's power is limited by God (Job 1:12, 2:6).
- God remains in control (Job 42:2).
- There is one God, existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He is the creator of all things. He is infinitely perfect. He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.
- God will restore paradise (Revelation 21-22). He will cast Satan into the Lake of Fire for all eternity at God's appointed time (Revelation 20:10. All those who deny Jesus Christ will spend eternity in the Lake of Fire (hell) with their Father, Satan (Revelation 20:10-15, 21:8).
- The Bible, comprising sixty-six books, written by people guided by the Holy Spirit, is the inspired, God-breathed word of God, and is without error in its original manuscripts (1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3; 2 Peter 1).
- The Bible is "useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" (2 Timothy 3:16).

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- The Bible is sufficient for coming to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 3:15).
- Both the Old and New Testaments point to Jesus Christ as the finished work of God (Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 7:14; Revelation 19-22).

The above contains a lot of theology. This theology reveals truth, a truth that many people do not want to recognize or acknowledge. To accept God's truth is to recognize our own sin. To take the Word of God as true is to realize that anything and everything we say, do, and think that does not align with God's will is a sin against God, the Creator of everything (Genesis 1; Luke 6:46-49; John 1:1-4; 1 John 2:1-6).

Accepting the Word of God as truth requires us to acknowledge that we cannot save ourselves (John 14:6). Accepting the righteousness of Jesus Christ as Creator, Savior, and Judge necessitates that we recognize that the world and our very existence are not about us. *All Existence is About Bringing Glory to God.* God's glory will see His Son, Jesus Christ, sitting on the throne of all creation for all time (Revelation 22:3-5).

## Chapter 12

### HATE

**J**esus Christ teaches that to be angry with your brother is to be in danger of Judgement (Mathew 5:21-22). As a way of illustration, 1 John 3:15 teaches that “Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life residing in him.” Leviticus 19:17 teaches that rather than nursing hatred in our hearts or being entangled in sin, we are to confront a brother who is sinning.

Sin comes from the heart (Matthew 15:21). The heart reveals our thoughts (Matthew 5:27-28). Jesus Christ is love, and because of this love, Jesus gave Himself as a willing sacrifice on a wooden cross for all those who will believe in Him (John 3:16). To hate another person is to hate God’s creation and those for whom Jesus sacrificed Himself (Genesis 1; John 1-5).

Jesus told the Apostle Peter to forgive his brother not seven times seven but seventy times seven (Matthew

18:21-22). To a Hebrew in Jesus's time, a brother would have been another Hebrew. Does this mean that a Christian is only required to forgive another Christian? Can a Christian hate everyone who is not a Christian?

In Luke 10:25-37, a lawyer asks Jesus, "Who is my neighbor?" In response, Jesus teaches a powerful parable. We know this parable as the parable of the Good Samaritan.

The Good Samaritan went on a journey. On this journey, he came across a man who had been beaten, robbed, and stripped naked. Two upstanding Jewish leaders had already passed by this broken traveler. A priest and a Levite, what we might refer to as a pastor and a church staff member in a protestant church, had no time or compassion for the beaten and robbed man (Luke 10:30-32). The Good Samaritan gathered up the broken traveler, took him to an inn, paid for his care, and guaranteed payment for additional care (Luke 10:33-35). The thing is, Samaritans were despicable to the Jewish people. No respectful Jew would travel through Samaria (John 4:9). Yet, Jesus

used a Samaritan to demonstrate a good heart from an evil heart.

God told Peter that a person cannot be judged by outside appearances (Acts 10:1-35). Jesus demonstrated this same Biblical principle when He offered living water to the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:1-26).

God flipped the switch or turned the tables on the idea of who could be a servant of God when He rescued the murdering, conniving, despicable Saul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-43). God has repeatedly demonstrated that His ways are higher than ours. His thoughts are mightier than our thoughts (Isaiah 55:8-9).

If God is willing to rescue me, why not someone else? Why not the person I see doing that which I hate? Why not the person I see burning a Bible? Am I better than them? No, I am a sinner saved by the grace of God (Romans 3:21-25).

I have not figured out how to hate sin and not the person. I have not figured out how to hate the evil I

see around me and not be disgusted by the person. When I hear about atrocities committed against women, children, the elderly, and the helpless, I see evil. I hate the evil I see growing in boldness. Evil is no longer hidden; it is in broad daylight. Perhaps I hate evil because I fear evil. I know evil is real. I know evil is Satan personified. I know that Satan seeks to capture every living soul he can for his kingdom.

I do not know how to love and hate at the same time. I cannot do it alone. Only through the power and work of the Holy Spirit can anyone share Jesus Christ with those we perceive as being evil or engaging in evil. Of course, I do not claim to be perfect. Only one man has ever been perfect. Jesus Christ, who is fully God and fully man. He is the only perfect person.

Rather than hate, we are to love others because God first loved us. In Romans 5:6-11, the Apostle Paul teaches that God loved you and me so much that, while we were still enemies to Him, He sent His Son to pay the price for our sins. The Apostle John “relates the requirement of Christian love to the very nature of God himself” (Smalley, Stephen S. *1, 2, 3*

*John*. Word Biblical Commentary series. Waco: Word Books, 1984, p. 235):

Dear friends, let us love one another, because love is from God, and everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. The one who does not love does not know God, because God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent His One and Only Son into the world so that we might live through Him. Love consists in this: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Dear friends, if God loved us in this way, we also must love one another (1 John 4:7-11, HCSB).

The call to love others is not a suggestion; it's a requirement (Matthew 22:36-40).

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## Chapter 13

### PERFECTION

**Y**ou and I will never be perfect on this side of heaven. Yet, struggling with sin is not an excuse to live like the world. Those who are truly Christ's disciples are called to walk more like Christ (1 John 2:1-6).

We are called to be in the world but not of the world (John 15:9; Romans 12:2; James 4:4). Never perfect but always in the fight (Ephesians 6:10-20; 1 John 2:1). Never perfect but running the good race to the end of this earthly life (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). This is a call for the church and the children of God to be different than the world (1 John 2:15). Never perfect but reaching for Jesus Christ with the help of the Holy Spirit (John 14:26; Acts 1:8; Romans 8:26).

The Apostle Peter, after an armed mob had taken away Jesus, publicly denied Jesus three times (Luke 22:47-62). Peter stated that "I don't know Him!" (Luke 22:57). Yet, Peter wept at his denial of Jesus

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(Luke 22:62). After Jesus rose from the grave, Jesus comforted and restored Peter (John 21:15-17). Jesus instructed Peter to care for His followers and feed them spiritual nourishment (teach them Jesus's ways) (John 21:15-17).

In 2 Samuel 11:1-27, we read how King David committed adultery with the wife of a trusted soldier. When she became pregnant, David had the soldier killed and married the widow. All because David took his eyes off God. David committed evil in the sight of God (2 Samuel 11:27). But David was remorseful for his actions and confessed his guilt before God (2 Samuel 12:13). In Acts 13:22, God calls David a man after His own heart. David was not perfect, but he sought after God.

The Apostle Paul, credited with writing at least thirteen Books of the New Testament, held the coats of the men who stoned Stephen to death (Acts 7:54-60). Stephen's crime? Preaching Jesus Christ (Acts 7:1-53). But then Saul, later known as Paul, met the risen Savior Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-19). Jesus called Paul to a life of service and suffering (Acts 9:15-16, 13:9).

In Romans 7:15-20, the Apostle Paul, writing to Believers in Rome, teaches that what we want to do we do not do, but what we hate we do. This struggle is because our two natures fight—our sinful and spiritual natures (Romans 7:15-25).

God does not call the perfect. Instead, He has “a long history of using flawed people” (*Jesus Revolution*, 1:44:10). The requirement is repenting from sin and turning to God, having faith in Jesus (Acts 20:21). Through faith in Jesus Christ, God promises to wash away your sins and remember them no more (1 John 1:6-10). This is the promise to everyone who will trust Jesus! The requirement is faith. Nothing else matters.

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## Chapter 14

### HOPE

**D**eath comes for everyone. In death, an accounting awaits. In Luke 16:19-31, God warns everyone, rich, poor, young, old, famous, and obscure alike, that we will be held accountable for our lives. Our actions, inactions, and interactions in life matter.

More pointedly, each of us will be held accountable for what we did or did not do with Jesus Christ. Those claiming to speak for God, even more so (James 3:1). At death, there are no do-overs, no second chances to get right with God (Hebrews 9:27). All pencils are put down, the test booklet is closed, and the answer sheet is turned in. Forever gone are all opportunities to change your answer.

You cannot work yourself into heaven. Being saved or born-again is about walking with Jesus Christ today. In Romans 10, verses 9-13, scripture teaches us that:

[I]f you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, “WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED.” For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; for “WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED” (NASB).

In Luke 9:23, Jesus teaches that if anyone wishes to follow Him, “he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow [Jesus].” Luke 9:23 teaches that being obedient to God is a daily choice. Obedience is not one-and-done. There is a difference in a life lived where Jesus is Lord and a life in which Jesus is merely called Lord (Matthew 7:21).

Being born-again is not about working your way to heaven or how many times you attend church. Being born-again is about a relationship with Jesus Christ. A relationship with Jesus requires surrendering your life to Him. A relationship with Jesus involves repentance. Repentance is rejecting your own path and turning to Jesus' path. Repenting is a profound sorrow for your rebellion against God and a genuine turning away from it. Never perfect, but reaching for God, longing to be conformed to the image of Christ.

‘Keep asking, and it will be given to you. Keep searching, and you will find. Keep knocking, and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who searches finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened. What man among you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your

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Father in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!' (Matthew 7:7-11).

Call on Jesus Christ. Trust in Him. Surrender your will to His, your life to Him (1 John 2:3). The reward is to walk with the Creator of the world as a son or daughter of the Most High (John 1:12). The reward includes walking with Jesus while we are in this world and then walking with Him for eternity in peace, love, and joy, where there is no war, no pain, and no sorrow (Revelation 21:4).

Here is the thing: "The moment you accept Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, you are as ready and fit for heaven as you will ever be" (Dwight Pentecost). Once we are saved, we walk with Jesus to be in a relationship with Him, not to be saved. The alternative is living in this world without Jesus and spending an eternity in hell with Satan.

## Chapter 15

### TRUST

**I**f you are a blood-bought, born-again child of God (a Christian or Believer), then your responsibility is to trust God, to trust Jesus Christ. To truly trust that Jesus is your Savior, your Redeemer, your Protector, and your King. You must trust that He cares about you and that He knows what is happening in your life (Matthew 10:26-33).

Whether you are experiencing joy or tragedy, our job as believers is to trust Jesus. As the world spins out of control and draws closer to destruction, our job is to trust Jesus. As persecution and hate come to Believers, our job is to trust Jesus.

In Matthew 10:29, Jesus reminds us that not even a sparrow falls to the earth without God's awareness. How much more precious are you who are made in God's image? How much more precious are you as a child of God?

We have been conditioned in America to think that a good Christian has 2.5 children, a 2-story house, and a 3-car garage, etc. But nothing could be further from the truth. Nothing like that is in the Bible (1 John 2:15-17). The Bible promises persecution, trials, and death to those who have faith in Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 3:12).

In America, Christians have become complacent, soft, and comfortable (a little less so now after church lockdowns), always looking for the blessing. When bad stuff happens, westernized Christians tend to ask why this had to happen and why God let this happen. We lose sight of God's end-time plans. We often lose sight of the fact that our lives are but a vapor in time.

We try to control events, time, and people to prevent bad things from happening in our lives and the lives of our family. Yet, we can never truly know what is around the corner. As a dear friend reminds me from time to time, we are all just one phone call from dropping to our knees.

There is an old Chinese proverb that goes something like this:

A farmer and his son had a beloved stallion who helped the family earn a living. One day, the horse ran away, and their neighbors exclaimed, “Your horse ran away! What terrible luck!” The farmer replied, “Maybe so, maybe not. We’ll see.”

A few days later, the horse returned home, leading a few wild mares back to the farm. The neighbors shouted, “Your horse has returned, and brought several horses home. What great luck!” The farmer replied, “Maybe so, maybe not. We’ll see.”

Later that week, the farmer’s son was trying to break one of the mares, and she threw him to the ground, breaking his leg. The villagers cried, “Your son broke his leg, what terrible luck!” The farmer

replied, “Maybe so, maybe not. We’ll see.”

A few weeks later, soldiers from the national army marched through town, recruiting all the able-bodied boys for the military. They did not take the farmer’s son, who was still recovering from his injury. Friends shouted, “Your boy is spared; what tremendous luck!” To which the farmer replied, “Maybe so, maybe not. We’ll see.”

The story's moral is that we do not honestly know the consequences of events when they occur (whether they seem good or bad). Sometimes, we may never know. But God always knows; He is never surprised. God’s will is never thwarted by you, me, or Satan (Job 42:2; Revelation 13:8).

Giving up control is often the hardest part of living every day. It is easy to take back control and very hard to surrender it. But when I do surrender control to God, great and extraordinary events have occurred in my life. When I hold on to the illusion of control

(when I think I am in control), I have experienced struggles, hurt, and heartache. The harder I try to retain control, the more my life feels like walking uphill in muddy terrain with a 50-pound pack on my back. When I let go and acknowledge that God is in control, there is peace, even in the midst of turmoil and tragedy.

***To walk in faith is to say God has it; God is in control. To walk in faith is to wake up each day and see what God will do that day.***

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## Chapter 16

### THE CHURCH

**W**esternized churches both in America and abroad, are filled with men and women who do not know Jesus Christ. The same can be said for many of America's pulpits. The Western Church lacks power because many churches lack a connection to Jesus Christ.

Many American pulpits and churches are filled with people who worship idols rather than Jesus Christ. Their God is the world. Idols come in many forms, and some may even appear righteous. We can create an idol of the size of our church, the number of people we reach on social media, our academic and seminary degrees, our church title, the car we drive, or the house we live in. The biggest idol is the idol of self. An idol is whatever you place above God. The greater any person tries to make themselves, the further they are walking (separated) from God.

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We do not need to go far to see deception and evil in pulpits across America. In recent years, too many prominent ministers have fallen. Some may have seemed shady from the outset, while others projected a fantastic facade. Some began as sincere ministers of the Word of God but went astray.

Billy Graham once said, "Four reasons for a minister's downfall are silver, sloth, self, and sex." Whether it's a minister mistreating a child or an evangelist repeatedly being caught with prostitutes, sexual sin runs rampant through America's pulpits. Poor stewardship of finances and pride also plague the church. Satan's methods have not changed in 2,000 years (Matthew 26:14-16).

A less spoken-about sin resonating from the pulpit is that of the rockstar or celebrity preacher. When people come to church to hear the preacher rather than to hear about Jesus Christ, the church has a problem. Jesus Christ is supposed to be the star, not the preacher or the band. Churches with superstar preachers and band leaders tend to fold up and disappear when the superstars are exposed. Scripture

warns the church to guard against these false teachers (Matthew 7:15-20):

Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravaging wolves. You'll recognize them by their fruit. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes or figs from thistles?

In the same way, every good tree produces good fruit, but a bad tree produces bad fruit. A good tree can't produce bad fruit; neither can a bad tree produce good fruit.

Every tree that doesn't produce good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So you'll recognize them by their fruit.

When churches focus on building believers and leaders, they are more likely to weather the storms of adversity. A storm is the test of a local church. Any church can sail smoothly through calm seas, but a storm tests a church's true nature.

There is a song by Cast and Crowns titled “*Start Right Here.*” This song is a striking warning for preachers and congregations. The opening lyrics go like this:

We want our coffee in the lobby  
We watch our worship on a screen  
We got a rock-star preacher  
Who won't wake us from our dreams

Unfortunately, *Start Right Here* describes many popular churches and attendees today.

A trend in American churches today is to strive for popularity. These churches want to be attractive. The goal is to get as many people through the front door as possible. Their operating premise is that if people come in, they will hear about Jesus Christ. Because of this, these churches go to great lengths to avoid offending anyone. Their method? Make people comfortable; offer a superficial Jesus from the pulpit and avoid offensive sermons. This trend is leaving many churches in America filled with attendees who do not know Jesus. This trend is leaving many people unprepared for the future.

Jared C. Wilson, in his book *The Gospel-Driven Church*, identifies the driving ideologies behind the attractional church model as *consumerism* and *pragmatism*. One YouTuber, in a video titled “*The Dark Truth, McDonald’s Dark Playbook: How Mega Churches Manipulate You*” (posted August 19, 2024), observed that seeker-sensitive attractional churches emphasize “comfort, acceptance, and positivity.” This YouTuber likened attractional churches to McDonald’s. (Interestingly, as I write this book, the video is no longer available on YouTube).

Worship and ministries that focus on potential customers' desires and values mistake inclusion for Godly love. The problem with this approach is that the bait the church uses to lure people in is the same bait it will need to continue using once they are in the church (Wilson, *Gospel-Driven*).

Many modern seeker churches teach a god without judgment, a savior without a cross, and a heaven without a hell. Such a religion seeks to bring people to Christ without a sacrifice or a resurrection. Such a religion requires no repentance by people and no

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sacrifice by Jesus Christ. It is a no-fuss, no-muss believism—a non-redeeming religion.

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is supposed to offend. Jesus Christ is described as the Rock of Offense (Romans 9:33). The Rock breaks some people, turning them from Satan to Jesus Christ. At the same time, many are crushed by the Rock and spend eternity in hell with their father, Satan. The difference? Repentance and trusting in Jesus Christ (Acts 17:30-31).

Rather than being a church that invites sinners in to hear a watered-down Gospel, the church is supposed to be a people who go (Matthew 28:18-20). Rather than making the church a place of platitudes and niceties that might see a sinner saved, the church is to equip the Saints for spiritual warfare on the battlefield. This is where the people are. Jesus Christ teaches that the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few (Luke 10:2). The church is called to build workers who go, not baristas, ushers, and parking lot attendants who stay.

A quick way to determine where a local church's heart is focused is to examine its finances. An old adage says, "Show me your checkbook, and I will show you your heart." When a church's checkbook prioritizes filling seats, hiring more staff, and building new buildings over focusing on the mission field, it has the wrong priorities.

Jesus Christ did not command the Disciples to go and build buildings. He did not command the Disciples to build monuments to Him or themselves. Jesus Christ did not command the Disciples to compete with one another for church members. Instead, in Matthew 25:19-20, Jesus Christ's instructions are clear:

'Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you.'

Jesus Christ has called the church to be a light to the world. He has called those who claim to be His disciples to be a light to the world (Matthew 5:14-16).

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However, this light brings both hope and judgment. Hope to those who trust Jesus Christ and judgment to those who do not trust Him.

The church is not supposed to conform to the world, but to call people to come out of it. Any church that the world likes is likely not one that is led by the Holy Spirit. Dietrich Bonhoeffer calls the church to “be an independent moral agent holding forth the Word of God against every creed and institution of humankind- obeying the word of God above all else” (Michael Van Dyke, *Radical Integrity, The Story of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*). Bonhoeffer’s warning is ignored at our peril.

The idea that the church must be a cozy place for the lost to build church numbers fails to understand to whom the church belongs. Neither the preacher nor the congregation owns the church. The church belongs to God, and He will not allow Satan to overcome it (Matthew 16:18). Many who claim to be part of the church are actually lost, but the church itself is never lost because it is God’s own. He calls us to love people, not institutions.

Jesus did not water down His message to get more people in the door. Instead, He told people that following Him would be hard. His message is that to be His disciple, you must die to self every day and follow Him (Luke 9:23). Today is no different. There is only one gospel; There are many ways to present the gospel, but only one gospel:

1. Creator God, worthy of all worship, praise, and glory.
2. Mankind's rebellion against God resulted in separation from God and a death sentence for all.
3. God provided His Son, Jesus Christ, in response to our rebellion.
4. The call is to trust Jesus. In trusting, we must repent for our sins, turning from ourselves to Jesus.

Modern Christian philosophy advises the church to be seeker-friendly to attract people. We must spoon-feed them the gospel. We must not tell them about the hard stuff, like giving up sinful behavior, yielding to Christ, or that Jesus is not some cosmic vending machine waiting for their next pull of the lever. This

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modern philosophy says we must not teach about hell because it may scare people away.

The contemporary church forgets that the church (body of believers) is not all-inclusive. It is a select club; you can only enter by being washed in the Lamb's blood of life. In this seeker-friendly, cheap grace, country club Christianity environment, hell awaits many who claim to know Jesus. Many sitting in American churches and pulpits will spend eternity in everlasting torment.

We all face a reckoning: nations and people. Being a Preacher, Sunday School Teacher, or Church Elder will not keep you from facing God to account for your life. On a day you do not expect, you will face judgment. The faithful to eternal reward; the unrepentant sinner to everlasting torment (Matthew 25:46; Revelation 20:7-15, 21:8).

## **Chapter 17**

### **CHANGE IS COMING**

**C**hange is coming and it is not what people expect. I have voted in every presidential election since I was eighteen. But I am not blind either. No elected official is going to turn the world or America Christian. No matter how popular, elected officials and political parties cannot save the soul of America or that of an individual. Couple this with recognizing that the commercial church is a tool of political parties and movements, and we see a church and movement in denial.

Movements come and go. Both God and Satan use movements for their purposes. The only difference is that Satan's power and influence are limited (Job 1:12; 2:6). He can never disrupt or thwart God's plan.

Europe is heading for another dramatic shift as we move closer to a one-world government. In Canada, which is more aligned with Europe than America, a person can be arrested for a hate crime for speaking

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the gospel. Satan is working through movements to erase God. Yet, God remains in control. Satan will never defeat the true church (Matthew 16:18).

I believe that a political force other than Russia will rise in the next 20 years (give or take a little). Satan will be in control of this political force. This political power will seek to control Europe by force, like Hitler and Germany in the 1930s and 1940s. At first, the political figure will seem like a savior. Then, he will show himself to be an antichrist (1 John 2:18).

In the United States, conservatives appear to have the upper hand in 2025. But do not be fooled. The United States is not turning back the clock on its evil ways. I envision an America that outlaws God during the same period Europe is undergoing its transformation (or much sooner). Dry runs were conducted in 2020 and 2021. With government approval and support, Satan already floods the airwaves and the internet with anti-Jewish and anti-Christian messages.

If you doubt what I am saying, look around. Local and state governments, the courts, Washington, DC insiders, and elected officials are working around the

clock, seven days a week, to support demonic government policies and destroy anyone who stands up to them. When not in power, these forces work from the outside to oppose and destroy. When in control of the government, whether obtained legitimately or through trickery, fraud, or force, evil perpetrators work even harder and faster to remove God. Their goal: force every living soul in the United States and around the world to worship at the altar of a one-world demonic government.

The America of apple pie and 4th of July picnics is gone. Satan has infiltrated every level of the government. Satan's tentacles reach from the local level to the power elites in Washington, DC. Satan's reach goes into every local, state, and Federal agency. Satan no longer hides in the shadows; he is coming for our children, our churches, and our freedom.

Between January 2021 and January 2025, the government allowed America to be invaded at a record pace. This was done to undermine America's security and create new voters to support a socialist one-world agenda. America is dying, and politicians,

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their judges, and other supporters are administering the cyanide.

The systematic destruction of America began decades ago. The dismantling continues in various forms under both political parties. This includes Satan working to make his political and social changes irreversible.

God will be embraced, then marginalized, then outlawed. That is what the communists did at the start of the Russian Revolution- they used the church, once they controlled the country, they outlawed the church. But, in persecution, the true church thrives in what matters—glorifying God by connecting people to Jesus Christ. Everything else the church does is window dressing.

## Chapter 18

### COUNTERFEIT FAITH

**T**he words “depart from me, I never knew you” were spoken to those within the false church (Matthew 7:21-23); those who think they are Christians but deny the power of the cross and Christ’s resurrection (2 Timothy 3:5). These are the ones who have bought into the message of easy believism—a godliness that denies the power of God (2 Timothy 3:5). They will hear Jesus’s words in Matthew 7:21, where Jesus asks, “Why do you call me Lord, Lord, but do not do what I say?” These will be those who wanted Jesus without the cross, without the necessity of repentance (Acts 17:30-31).

A multitude of people professing to be Christians live as if living a life conformed to Jesus is optional. We seem to pick and choose from a menu of options. I’ll do this, but not that; I will accept this command, but not that one. It is like we are going through a buffet line. I will have mashed potatoes, shrimp, and bread; I will skip the...

There is a difference between calling Jesus Lord and Him being Lord of your life (John 14:15). Anything less than obedience is rejection (John 14:15). Jesus demands that those who claim to follow Him do God's will (Matthew 7:21-23):

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord!’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of My Father in heaven. On that day many will say to Me, ‘Lord, Lord, didn’t we prophesy in Your name, drive out demons in Your name, and do many miracles in Your name?’ Then I will announce to them, ‘I never knew you! Depart from Me, you lawbreakers!’”

And the will of the Father is that we follow His son (John 6:40; Acts 17:30-31).

Peter warns against false professions of faith (2 Peter 2:1). He warns about those claiming Christ without a changed heart. Today is no different. Therefore, we are to test ourselves:

Test yourselves *to see* if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test? (2 Corinthians 13:5, NASB 95).

A faith that has not been tested is a faith that cannot be trusted.

The New Testament is devoid of easy believism. On the contrary, those seeking to purchase the power accompanying faith were rebuked (Acts 6:18-20). Many accounts of the hardships of following Jesus are seen in Scripture. A few examples include Peter and John being beaten (Acts 5:40), Stephen being stoned to death (Acts 7:58-60), James being killed in prison (Acts 12:1-2), and Paul being imprisoned and shipwrecked (Acts 27:1-44). Christian Tradition says that Peter was crucified upside down, John was boiled in oil but lived, and Paul died in prison. A trustworthy faith is a tested faith.

Easy believism was invented by Satan to trick people into believing they are saved. A faith without a cost does not worry Satan. A Faith without Christ at its core does not worry Satan.

True salvation is found in a transformed heart—never perfect but striving after Christ. Salvation results in fruits of righteousness, not mere window dressing—a life lived for Christ. A Believer hungers for God.

Works of the flesh do not save a true Believer. Instead, a true Believer produces good fruit out of a changed heart of love because of God’s love (Matthew 7:15-20; Romans 5). Following Jesus is not one and done. Following Jesus is a daily choice to deny self and follow Jesus (Luke 9:23). Following Jesus is a daily choice to choose Jesus.

True salvation rejects reliance on saving oneself. True salvation relies solely on Jesus Christ (John 14:6). True salvation results in the Believer laying down their life and following Jesus (Luke 9:23-26). “One who believes obeys, one who obeys believes!” (Dietrich Bonhoeffer). Rigid obedience does not

produce salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9). Instead, Faith produces obedience. As faith grows, a Believer grows in Christlikeness. As a Believer grows in Christlikeness, they grow in obedience. As a Believer grows in obedience, they grow in Christlikeness.

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## Chapter 19

### NARROW WAY

**F**alse teachers persuade the masses that the way to happiness (both temporal and eternal) is through singing the correct songs, saying the correct words, attending the correct church, or following the correct prophet. Anything but a life surrendered to Jesus.

Some false teachers lead others astray by convincing them that people are responsible for their own destiny. Live for today, grab everything you want, because it will be over one day, and then nothing. False teachers lie to the world, claiming that a person is whatever they make themselves to be; reality is whatever you want it to be; nothing is everything, and everything is nothing. The world heads this way and that--anywhere but to the truth.

All this leads the masses to a life of emptiness and an eternity of pain. In Matthew 7:13-14, Jesus teaches

that many follow the broad road to destruction. Few follow the narrow path to life.

‘Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it’ (Matthew 7:13-14, NASB 1995).

The path is Calvary and the Cross (1 Peter 2:24). The gate is Jesus Christ (John 10:7-9, 14:6). Jesus died on a Roman cross for the sins of everyone who will trust Him (John 3:16). For everyone who trusts, Jesus’s literal resurrection from the dead brings eternal life (Romans 5:18; 1 Corinthians 15:22).

Recorded in Matthew, Chapters 24-25 (referred to as the Olivet Discourse) is Jesus's revelation to Israel of the coming last days and His return. In Matthew 24:37-41, Jesus, speaking to the Jews, warned that His return would catch the world unaware and unprepared. His return ushers in a judgment on the living and the dead (Acts 17:31; 2 Timothy 4:1;

Revelation 20:11-15). Jesus tells the parable of the homeowner whose house was robbed:

Therefore, be alert, since you don't know what day your Lord is coming. <sup>43</sup> But know this: If the homeowner had known what time the thief was coming, he would have stayed alert and not let his house be broken into. This is why you also must be ready because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect (Matthew 24:42-44).

This parable warns us to be vigilant for Jesus's return because we do not know the day or the hour when God will demand an accounting of our lives. We are not guaranteed our next heartbeat or next breath.

While I was in high school, two classmates who were sisters didn't come home one day. They were killed in a car accident. I worked with a Naval Flight Officer who wasn't feeling well. He went to the nearby Naval clinic and died a couple of days later. Another Naval Flight Officer I worked with retired in his 50s and within two years had brain stem surgery and died

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months later. I never knew my older brother; he only lived a few hours. We never know when we will account for our lives.

During the Vietnam War, a dear friend of mine, a Marine, crashed in a helicopter. He had to walk out of the jungle to safety. I have had my brushes with death. As I write this book, my Marine friend is still alive, and I am still here to write this book. We never know when we will account for our lives.

The way is narrow. The path to eternal life leads directly through a relationship with Jesus Christ (John 10:1-42). No other way is acceptable to God (John 14:6; 1 John 2:23). Everyone who denies Jesus Christ condemns himself (John 3:18).

Scripture warns that many false teachers have and will come:

But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them,

bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. And in their greed they will exploit you with false words. Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep (2 Peter 2:1-3, ESV).

These teachers claim to hold the key to life or that they are the key to life. They offer false hope, a false way to a false promise of life. These false teachers provide a trap door that leads to death (John 10; Romans 2:21).

The way is narrow, and it's not supposed to be easy (John 15:18-21, 2 Timothy 3:12). The way to life is different from the way of the world (John 17:45; 1 John 2:15-17). In Luke 9:23, Jesus teaches us to give up our own way to follow Him. His way is in direct opposition to the world. Because Jesus will not bend to the world, the world hates Him. If you follow Christ and refuse to bend to the world, the world will also hate you (John 15:19).

Jesus's call is for people to follow Him. While all are called, few respond (Matthew 7:14; John 3:16). The call is to live a life like Jesus (Matthew 7:21). To claim Christ, our lives should reflect Christ (1 John 2:3-6). Jesus's call is to love the Lord God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. All the law and the prophets rest on these two commandments (Matthew 24 and Mark 12). Living this call separates Believers from pretenders; it separates believers from the world.

You may think that your life is too bad for God; that you have committed too many sins, or that your sins are far worse than those of others. A lesson I learned a long time ago is that the greater the sinner, the more magnificent the Savior. Jesus saved Saul, a conspirator to murder, and Peter, who denied Him three times (Matthew 26; John 21:15-19; Acts 9:1-43; 1 Corinthians 15:1-11). He can save you!

## Chapter 20

### TWENTY MINUTES

**A**merica views life, the world, and God through a distorted lens. Some refer to this as looking through rose-colored glasses. The American view of the world is skewed. For the most part, Americans lack a worldview. Instead, Americans tend to view the United States as the center of everything. This worldview is partially driven by America's wealth, prosperity, and military strength. The United States is the wealthiest nation in the world.

The world still wants to come to the United States. People want to chase the American dream. Yet, it was less than 65 years ago that Americans hid under school desks and built bomb shelters because the nation was afraid of nuclear war with Russia. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, Russian atomic missiles were less than 20 minutes from reaching major cities in the United States.

In 1929, on October 28, a day now remembered as Black Monday, the stock market experienced a dramatic decline. Black Monday ushered in an economic crash that led to a worldwide financial depression. It was not until the Second World War and its aftermath that America experienced financial recovery.

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese Navy, in a surprise attack, nearly destroyed the United States Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor. This led the United States to enter World War II. The war lasted four years, resulting in an estimated 70 to 85 million people killed, and ended with the dropping of two atomic bombs on Japan.

On September 11, 2001, two planes were flown into the Twin Towers in New York, another plane hit the Pentagon, and one plane crashed in a field. The United States was shocked to its core. What followed was a 22-year war. The result: no peace, no safety, the largest national debt in history, over a billion dollars of American military hardware left in the hands of

terrorists, and over six thousand American service members dead and over fifty thousand wounded.

In 2008, the United States experienced a financial crisis that caused 1 in 5 people to lose their jobs. During the Great Recession (2008-2010), 200,000 small businesses closed. In 2008 alone, over three million home foreclosure notices were filed.

In March 2020, the nation went into a 15-day lockdown to slow the spread of COVID-19. However, this turned into two years of lockdowns, forced vaccinations, church closures, preachers jailed, and mass hysteria.

Today, Russian submarines are on hair-trigger alert. These submarines sit off the East Coast of the United States and carry nuclear missiles. Their missiles can reach nearly all major American cities and military installations within 20 minutes of launch with little or no warning. American leaders state that the United States can launch a response in 27 minutes of a Russian launch and reach Russia in 15 minutes. In 42 minutes, our world can be dramatically changed for

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eternity. In 20 minutes, the United States can become a third-world country and worse.

The country you know can be gone in 20 minutes. Placing your faith in a country, a political party, a job, money, or a way of life is false security. Satan placates the masses to blind their eyes to what truly matters: eternity.

## Chapter 21

### WORLDWIDE REBELLION

**E**very nation shall rise against Israel. The United States is not excluded from this rebellion. As a result, every nation will be judged for its evil heart.

Some Bible teachers believe the church's role is to improve the world, which will, in turn, hasten Jesus' return. However, such teaching ignores the warnings of Daniel, Jesus, and the Apostle John (Daniel 9; Mark 13; Revelation 6:4, 9:1-21).

Another segment of Bible teachers believes that we are currently living during a period of Jesus's spiritual reign. They interpret Jesus's thousand-year reign (Revelation 20:1-6) as spiritual rather than physical. These teachers generally reject the literalness of Scripture. Instead, they tend to see prophecy as allegorical.

We only need to look around at the rape, murder, and other atrocities to know this is not the reign of Jesus Christ told of in Isaiah. We must only look at the wars and rumors of wars to realize we are in the last days (Matthew 24:6). When Jesus reigns, there will be peace. There will be no more war. The lamb will lie down with the lion (Isaiah 11:6-9).

First, every nation will rise against Israel, intent on destroying Israel and the Jewish people (Revelation 16:1-16). This worldwide massing of forces against Israel will be met by the Army of God (Revelation 19:11-14). With the words of His mouth, Jesus Christ will destroy the military forces of every nation (Revelation 19:15-21).

With the destruction of the world's military forces, the Antichrist and False Prophet will be thrown into the Lake of Fire (a place of eternal torment) (Revelation 19:20). Satan will be bound for one thousand years (Revelation 20:1-3). Upon this destruction and binding of Satan, Jesus will physically and spiritually rule the world. Israel will be

a real, literal nation from which the world will be blessed.

This region will last a literal thousand years. Jesus knows how to count, and He understands time. Two examples are Genesis Chapter 15, verse 13-16, in which God warns Abram that Israel will be oppressed for 400 years in Egypt. We find God's warning fulfilled in Exodus 12:40. Another example is Jesus's warning to His Disciples that He would be crucified and rise from the dead on the third day (Matthew 12:40; Mark 8:31). The fulfillment is recorded in many places, including 1 Corinthians 15:4. That Jesus arose from death and the grave on the third day was witnessed by the Apostles and more than 500 people (Luke 24:34-43; Acts 1:3; Corinthians 15:6). These examples are but a few which demonstrate that God's word is true.

Satan has infiltrated the governments of every nation. He seeks to bring about Israel's destruction. Satan has woven his followers into the fabric of modern society. Satan's effectiveness is evident in the United States and around the world.

It is not a question of whether the United States and world governments will turn against Born-Again Believers and the Jewish people. The question is when. Satan's plan is progressing.

We can already see this unfolding in history. Russia is reported to have murdered hundreds of thousands of Christians under Stalin. China is reported to have murdered millions of Christians under Communist rulers. Hitler is reported to have exterminated over six million Jews and stolen their wealth with the help of foreign bankers. In 1948, Great Britain deliberately took steps to prevent Israel from defending itself. This all but guaranteed Israel's destruction, but for the intervention of God.

Looking at recent history, on October 7, 2023, Israel was attacked. Women were brutally raped and murdered. Death squads targeted children. Yet, on American college campuses, supporters of the lawless governments supplying, funding, and training these murderers have been protected.

Those within America who have become comfortable with our relative safety, abundance, and modicum of freedom expect America to last forever. Yet, when people rely on a government to support their faith, the government controls the faith. When the church depends on the government for protection or support, it surrenders its rightful place.

Today, in America, the church largely relies on the government to protect its physical safety and its right to exist and worship. However, in recent years, state and local governments have turned on the church. Our local, state, and Federal governments have decided that not only do they have the right but also the authority to control when and whether you can attend church or meet in your home to discuss Jesus Christ. Attending church in places like Florida, California, and Chicago can be a crime. Preaching Jesus Christ on a street corner can result in arrest in some cities.

America will follow Russia, China, North Korea, and other like-minded nations in outlawing the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Exodus 3:6). America

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will outlaw the Cross and Jesus Christ, the Risen Savior. The question is not if but when.

The world will continue to become more violent and evil (Matthew 24:6). Lawlessness will increase. There may be times of revival in people's love for God, but these times do not halt the onward march to the world's ultimate consummation. America and the world will be judged and destroyed. The only country to escape this destruction is Israel.

In the final days, when Satan is released from his one-thousand-year imprisonment, He will go out across the earth to deceive the nations. Satan will gather the armies of the world for a final battle. His army will be so numerous that counting the sand in the sea would be easier. One last time, Satan and his army will encircle Jerusalem. God will send fire down from heaven. The fire will devour Satan and his armies. This destruction is Satan's final judgment, at which time he will be thrown into the Lake of Fire and brimstone. Satan's torment is everlasting (Revelation 20:7-10).

Whether you read the book of Revelation literally as presented in this Chapter or figuratively, the point cannot be any clearer: A time of unimaginable pain and suffering is coming to the world. Those who do not surrender their life to Jesus Christ are aligned with Satan in a war against God. Ultimately, God destroys all evil, including those allied with it.

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## **Chapter 22**

### **KNOWING HIM**

**T**his book has not been written to shame, embarrass, guilt, or frighten anyone into action or belief. Shame, guilt, and embarrassment are poor motivators. Fear only lasts a short while. Instead, the desire is that you would know Jesus Christ. However, asking anyone to describe Jesus in His fullness is impossible. The finite cannot fully describe the infinite. The best we can hope for is to provide a glimpse into the character of Jesus Christ.

Understanding that humans can never fully comprehend Jesus does not grant permission for people to stop trying to know Jesus. A relationship with Jesus is the only way to an eternity of peace, joy, and happiness (John 3:16, 14:6; Romans 5; Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 John 5). A relationship with Jesus is a lifelong journey (Luke 9:23).

The Bible is the best source of information for understanding Jesus. When reading the Bible, there are a few key points to consider. First, the sixty-six books of the Bible are not sixty-six separate books cobbled together in a single binding. No, these sixty-six books are more like sixty-six chapters of a comprehensive work. The overarching plot of this single book is placing Jesus Christ on the throne of all creation for all time. From cover to cover, the Bible is about Jesus Christ.

The Bible describes Jesus as the Creator of the world. Nothing was, is, or will ever be created that Jesus did not make (John 1:3). He was before the beginning of time and will always be (John 1:1-2). Jesus is love, grace, and kindness (John 3:16, 14:6; Romans 5; Ephesians 2:8-9, 1 John 5). He will rule over all creation without end (Hebrews 1:8). He is righteous (1 John 3:7). Because He is righteous, He will judge the world (Acts 17:30-31). Perhaps the most warming and hope-generating quality of Jesus is that He willingly sacrificed His life for you before you were born (Romans 5). Trusting Him is your responsibility (Proverbs 3:5-6; Acts 16:31; 2 Corinthians 5:7).

## **Chapter 23**

### **THE BATTLE**

**T**he battle is real. Christianpost.com reported in January 2015 that 900,000 Christians had been killed for their faith in the past ten years. In 2015, at Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, Ore., a gunman lined up students and asked if they were Christian. Those who said yes were shot in the head. On the other side of the nation, in Charleston, SC, in 2015, a gunman opened fire at a Bible study meeting at Emanuel AME Church.

The battle did not end in 2015. OpenDoors.Org, citing their 2025 World Watch report, states that 12 Christians are killed every day for their faith. Roughly 5,000 a year. Open Doors also reports that in 2025, 70 people were found decapitated inside a Protestant Church in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Field sources have named an Islamist group linked to the Islamic State as the attackers. The hatred of Christians is absolute.

In the fourth century, Christianity gained widespread acceptance within the unified Roman Empire. By the end of the century, Emperor Theodosius I made Christianity the state religion. From the fourth century onward, Christianity has enjoyed varying levels of state protection and acceptance in various parts of the world.

However, after the fall of the western portion of the Roman Empire in the fifth century, Christians once again began to die for their faith. Historical records indicate that between 622 and 732, Islam, founded by Muhammad (570-632), spread across the Middle East, into North Africa, and Spain, and threatened to reach Europe. Between 632 and 636, Jerusalem and Damascus fell to Islam.

The killing of Christians has never stopped. BacktoJerusalem.com reports that between 1920 and 1953, Stalin killed an estimated sixty million people. Of these, hundreds of thousands were Christians sent to “re-education” camps. But the biggest murderer of Christians may have been Chairman Mao of China. BacktoJerusalem.com reports that between 1958 and

1962, Mao killed 45 million people. But his killing did not stop. History records that he continued to target Christians specifically. This included sending death squads to find and kill Christians. Communist Russia and Communist China were built on the murder of millions of people, including the murder and attempted destruction of Christianity in their nations. These nations remain hostile to Jesus Christ.

In many places in the world today, being a Christian is a death sentence. Having a Bible is a death sentence. Wearing a cross is a death sentence. This same hatred and persecution of those who trust in Jesus Christ will come to America. Not to watered-down churches or people who are Christian in name only. But persecution, prison, and death will come to America to those who profess Jesus Christ, the Risen Son of God, as their Lord and Savior. Maybe not today, maybe not tomorrow, but someday. Perhaps sooner than you think (Revelation 22:20).

The church in America has been sheltered and coddled for too long. Many churches have been lulled into a false sense of security and, in many cases, a false gospel. Jesus teaches that if you love Him, then

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the world will hate you. Jesus calls those who want to follow Him to pick up their crosses daily and walk as He walked.

A child of God cannot be better than God (Luke 6:40). The world hated Jesus to death (John 15:18-19). The world still hates Jesus. Does your faith inspire praise and adoration from the world or ridicule and hatred?

To stand for what Scripture teaches rather than what man has devised to appease our desires is to be hated, especially in the United States. Condemning sin is unpopular. Telling people they cannot have it their way invites hate. To say to people that to deny Jesus is to follow Satan brings the wrath of the world.

In James 2:15-19, the Apostle James teaches that:

If a brother or sister is without clothes and lacks daily food and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,” but you don’t give them what the body needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith, if it doesn’t have works, is dead by itself.

But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without works, and I will show you faith from my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. The demons also believe—and they shudder.

In Romans 3:28, 4:1-8, and Galatians 3:6-9, Paul teaches that a person’s faith brings them to Jesus. Both James and Paul teach that if you have true faith in Jesus Christ, your life will bear fruit that evidences your faith.

Being a Christian has a cost, even in America. The bill is coming due. Those who claim to be Christians must ask themselves, Am I ready to pay the bill, or am I a Christian in name only? If we claim to be Christian, we should walk more like Christ than the world (1 John 2:6). Jesus asks a very pointed question when He asks, “Why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and don’t do the things I say? (Luke 6:46). Who are you walking like, Jesus or the world? There are only two teams: Team Satan and Team Jesus. You must choose. Failing to choose is a choice.

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## Chapter 24

### SWORD AND SHIELD

**I**n the battle against evil, a Believer cannot fight alone. Believers are meant to band together for comfort, strength, and worship (Matthew 18:20; Hebrews 10:25). Believers are meant to bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:1-10). Jesus teaches in Matthew 18:19-20 that there is power in the prayers of Believers bound together for the same purpose. Fundamental to this strength is faith.

A.W. Tozer is correct when he teaches in his book, *A Cloud By Day, A Fire By Night*, that a Believer cannot stand against Satan or his weapons/instruments (demons, people, and circumstances) alone. David, when he faced Goliath, faced this same problem. David faced an enemy of God. David faced a warrior who openly mocked God. David was just a boy, a sheep herder. On the other hand, Goliath was a giant of a man, a seasoned warrior, the best of the Philistines. But David faced Goliath in the open field of battle. David did not have a shield, a sword, or a

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spear. David's weapon? A slingshot and three smooth stones. However, David was not facing Goliath alone. David stood before Goliath, standing on his faith. David came against Goliath "... in the name of the Lord" (1 Samuel 17:45).

As Believers, our fight must be anchored in faith in Jesus Christ. Anchored on our faith, we are called to battle evil together. When Paul was in jail, the people prayed (Philippians 1:19). When Peter was in prison, the people prayed (Acts 12:5). When Paul traveled on his missionary journeys, he did not travel alone (Acts 16:25). When Jesus sent His disciples out, He did not send them alone (Luke 10:1-20). When the disciples waited for the Lord to send the Holy Spirit, they waited together (Acts 1:13-15, 2:1-4).

Persecution like America has never seen is on the horizon. The church will face greater persecution than it has ever faced in the past. You cannot stand against Satan alone. You must fight in the name of the Lord. You must fight with our greatest weapon, the Word of God (Hebrews 4:12).

There is a song titled *Satan and Grandma* written by Craig Monday and Chris Wallin, sung by Rory Feek. In this song, Satan knows Grandma well, not because she lives a life dedicated to the world, but because she lives a life devoted to prayer.

The song starts with its signature line: “Satan knew my grandma well, He could hear her prayers clear down in hell.” The music moves to Grandma being tested and the storyteller’s own encounter with evil. Followed by perhaps the best prayer warrior lyrics ever written: “With a Bible for her sword and shield. She fought him on the battlefield, Kneeled down beside her bed, for hours on that tear-stained floor.” The song ends with these powerful words: “Jesus knows my grandma best.”

In 1 Corinthians 9:25, Paul teaches that Believers do not seek a crown that withers and dies but one that is more valuable than gold and precious stones, one that never fades. I pray that one day, when I am gone, my grandchildren can say that I stood in the gap between them and evil, that I never backed down from Satan. I would much rather have holes worn in

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my knees than a fat 401(k). I would rather be known as the crazy guy always praying than the cool guy with all the toys. I am nowhere near where I dream of being, but I am better than I used to be.

## Chapter 25

### SALVATION

**S**alvation is available to all who will call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 3:16; Romans 10:13; Acts 2:21). Through Jesus Christ, the risen Son of God, we are offered a new life if we trust Him. Through the blood of Jesus, sins are washed clean, the shame of sin is removed and replaced with the honor of being children of God (John 1:12). The weakness that sin causes is replaced with God's authority (Romans 6:6; Romans 10:11; James 4:7; 1 John 1:17). In Christ, we are a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Jesus Christ's sacrifice on a Roman cross paid my debt for all time (1 Peter 2:24). In and through the blood of Jesus, I was declared innocent (Colossians 2:13-14). Believers refer to this transformation as being saved or born-again.

Being saved is repenting of our sins and trusting (also referred to as "believing" or "believing on") Jesus

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Christ's death and resurrection for our salvation (Acts 17:30-31). In so doing, we are placing our lives in Jesus's hands (John 10:28-30; Romans 8:31; Hebrews 13:6). Upon taking this step of trusting Jesus, He drops the charges against us; we are saved from our rebellion against God (sin) (Psalm 103:10-14; Romans 4:8). Being saved is replacing disgrace with honor because we become children of the one true God (John 1:12). Being saved replaces fear with authority over sin in our lives (Job 1:8-12; Luke 22:31-32). Fear is replaced with faith (2 Timothy 1:7).

Note: Each Believer must determine to what extent they will use the power of faith. Faith is what moves mountains (Matthew 17:20). But unused faith is misused faith.

Satan's authority over your life is destroyed when you surrender to Jesus Christ because it is Christ who lives in us (Galatians 2:20). Being saved is being born again to a new life, a new life in Jesus Christ (John 3:3). The old you is washed away; the new you alive in and through Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

A snappy prayer, raising a hand at a crusade or church, a song, or wishful thinking will not bring you into the right relationship with Jesus Christ. Being “saved” or “born-again,” in its simplest terms, is trusting in Jesus Christ, trusting Jesus enough to repent (confess your uncleanness to Jesus and turn from your ways to His ways) (Mark 1:15; Acts 17:30-31; 1 John 1:9). Being saved is trusting Jesus’s death and resurrection for your eternal protection (Romans 10:9), trusting that Jesus died for you! Trusting Jesus enough to walk with Him today instead of the world (1 Timothy 1:12; 2 Timothy 4:17; Psalm 23).

Being saved is about a relationship, not a religion (1 John 15:18; Revelation 3:20). Being saved is not about being perfect (Romans 7:15-20; Philippians 3:12); it is about growing in your relationship with Jesus (Hebrews 6:1-4). You cannot buy or work your way into heaven; instead, being saved is admitting that you cannot save yourself (Ephesians 2:8). Being saved is about surrendering your will to God’s will (Luke 9:23-26). A relationship with Jesus is about walking with Him in times of joy, times of sorrow,

and during struggles and triumphs (Psalm 18:2; John 14:15-18).

Then he said to the crowd, ‘If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your way, take up your cross daily, and follow me’ (Luke 9:23, New Living Translation).

Turn to God, call out, and repent of your sins. “Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame” (Romans 10:11). Accept Jesus Christ as the Lord and Savior of your life so that you may have a relationship with Him now and forever (Acts 2:20-46 and Romans 10:9-13). The following is a prayer that can help you begin your conversation with Jesus. But remember, words do not save anyone, only trusting Jesus Christ (John 14:6). What matters is what is in the depth of your soul (heart):

Dear God, I am a sinner. Please forgive me for my sins. I reject my sinful path and surrender to Jesus Christ, the resurrected living Son of God, as the Lord and Savior of my life. Amen.

How do we know we are saved? We take God at His word and act upon it (Luke 6:46-49; John 14:15; and 1 John 2:15-17). If you have trusted Jesus Christ, welcome to the family of God. I encourage you to:

- Tell Someone
- Get Baptized
- Study the Bible
- Pray without ceasing
- Get in and stay in a community of Believers
- Join a Christ-Centered Bible Church

Jesus will not force anyone to follow Him (John 12:46-48). It is a choice. Jesus came the first time to destroy the works of Satan and save the lost (Luke 19:10; 1 John 3:8). However, when He returns, He will come to judge (2 Timothy 4:1). Believers to an eternal glorious reward and the lost (also referred to as unsaved) to everlasting damnation (Mathew 25:31-46).

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the

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things done while in the body, whether good or bad (2 Corinthians 5:10).

Being a Believer and rejecting God are both choices. Likewise, failing to choose is also a choice. Choose wisely (John 3:36).

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

I have been an attorney for almost thirty years. In addition to earning a Juris Doctorate, I also earned graduate degrees in Business, Human Relations, and Ministry. I have argued cases before judges, juries, and one of the nation's second-highest courts. I have advised billion-dollar-a-year organizations and mom-and-pop businesses. I have won and lost cases. However, these accomplishments are just labels; they do not define who I am.

At about six years old, I accepted Jesus as my Lord and Savior and was baptized in our Baptist church in California. I would love to tell you that my walk with the Lord was smooth sailing. It has not. At age 17, the Lord called me to the ministry while sitting in a pew at Windsor Park Baptist Church in Corpus Christi, Texas. However, I spent several years trying to prove to God that He was wrong (not a wise course of action).

However, in 1999, the Lord got my attention when an 18-wheeler hit me on the highway between Victoria, TX, and Corpus Christi. This marked the beginning of a journey with the Lord, which I am still on.

In 2014, I was privileged to participate in ten days of revival meetings in Haiti. The fruit of these meetings spread across the nation for several months. In 2014, I was also ordained as a minister by the Elders of Cornerstone Church in Jacksonville, FL, and Believers' Gathering Place in Fleming Island, FL.

Since 2014, I have been privileged to share the Word of God through teaching, preaching, and writing. A guiding Bible verse for me in sharing the word of God is Matthew 10:8, which teaches that what we have received freely, we are to give freely. This is why we work hard to make the books I write available for free download in PDF format.

God Bless!



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**Mankind's separation from God creates an emptiness inside each of us. Some people are aware of this emptiness, while others are not. In this emptiness, Satan fills the void.**

