

Dear Partner,

God and His Word are one. Genesis chapter one is full of statements that begin with “And God said” By the power of His Word God created all things. We read in awe the account of God’s wonderful creation and how He made man in His own image and gave him dominion over the works of His hands. But there was an enemy in the garden who was determined to overthrow man’s dominion. His name in scripture is called both Lucifer and Satan. At one time Lucifer was the anointed cherub in heaven. But eons ago he led a rebellion of the angels to try and overthrow God Himself. He was soundly defeated and was cast out of heaven, and a third of the angels who had joined the rebellion were cast out with him. Satan learned that he cannot overcome God directly. Now he wants to overthrow the man whom God has given dominion, but he knows if he tries, God will step in with His power to enforce man’s dominion.

So what strategy does Satan choose? He cannot overthrow the man directly. He cannot overthrow God directly. So the only possible chance he has to succeed is to separate the man from the power of God. The only way to do that is to separate the man from the Word of God. He has to get the man to not only doubt the truth of God’s Word, but get him to actually become disobedient to God’s Word. That’s why the very first words of Satan recorded in the bible as he approaches Eve are ... “Hath God said?” He continues to tempt Eve to doubt God’s word until she is finally deceived into eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Eve was deceived, so the blame for sin is not laid to her account. Adam, however was not deceived. He knew full well the Word of God. God had plainly told him,

Gen 2:16-17 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: (17) But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

When Adam made a conscious decision to violate God’s Word by eating the fruit of the forbidden tree, Satan’s plan had succeeded. He had separated the man from the Word of God. I like to say it this way, “Lack of faith in God’s Word was the way out of the garden (the full blessing of God). That’s why faith in God’s Word is the only way back into the garden” (the abundant life given us by Jesus). Adam chose to live by sight instead of by faith. He chose to believe Satan’s lie instead of the truth of God’s Word. As believers we are exhorted to the exact opposite: *“For we walk by faith, not by sight.”* [2 Cor 5:7]

It seems those who hold governmental authority in this nation have chosen to purposely turn away from the Word of God as revealed in the bible. Almost every week new laws are passed that are in direct opposition to the truth of God’s Word. It seems on a national level there is a spirit loose that is saying, “Hath God said?” Man’s wisdom is being substituted for the wisdom of God.

1Co 1:19-20 For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. (20) Where *is* the wise? where *is* the scribe? where *is* the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?

As believers we are called to be salt and light to this progressively darker world. We are in the world but we most certainly are not of the world. We love our nation, but more and more we are becoming like foreigners in our own country. As Christians living in a land where we can still vote we must do our best to see the righteous elected to government. But it seems the tide is against us. We will see full blown

persecution against Christians coming very soon. I would like to recommend a verse that you should take to heart and commit to memory. For myself I have printed this verse in a large font on a full sheet of paper and have it mounted where I see it every day.

1Pe 4:14 If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy *are ye*; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified.

More and more I am looking at how the prophet Daniel and his friends lived their lives in a heathen land (through no fault of their own) yet held fast to the God of Israel while doing so. They would not bow to the gods of that foreign land no matter if they were threatened with death in the lion's den or the fiery furnace. Yet they lived their lives with such integrity they were promoted to high places of authority, even in that pagan land. Jesus told us what attitude of heart to have when persecuted:

Luk 6:22-23 Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you *from their company*, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. (23) Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy: for, behold, your reward *is* great in heaven: for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets.

Prepare yourself for that which is to come. Happy are you when you are reproached for being a Christian. Prepare to leap for joy when the world hates you for His Name's sake. Great is your reward in heaven. Sue and I love you and appreciate you. We thank God for your generous and giving heart. God bless you!

Your friend and co-laborer,

Gary Carpenter