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How to Best Understand America's Deep Divide



This week, the week of the presidential inauguration, I would like to take a close look at Ephesians 6:10–11: *“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.”*

This is a timely and appropriate study given all the turmoil in America. The wholehearted examination of this passage provides us with much insight—a biblical perspective—relative to the ultimate reasons for the deep divide in our nation.

Read on, my friend!



Ralph Drollinger

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Former Cabinet Members / White House Senior Staff: Wednesdays 7am, Zoom.

Senate Members: Tuesdays 8am, rotating offices, hot breakfast served.

House Members: Thursdays 8am, The Capitol Hill Club, hot breakfast served.

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John Adams



“We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion ... Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the governance of any other.”

— John Adams, second President of the United States, signer of the Declaration of Independence, judge, diplomat, one of two signers of the Bill of Rights.

Charles Francis Adams, *The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States: With A Life of the Author*, Volume IX, Boston: Little Brown and Company, 1854.

How to Best Understand America's Deep Divide

I. INTRODUCTION

The proposition of this week's study is this: it is *normative* for obedient believers to be spiritually **strong** and discerning! In addition to providing us with the biblical reason our country is so divided, this passage provides a definitive explanation as to whether God equates a believer with spiritual maturity. So the question arises: are you as spiritually mature as you might think you are? What follows should help you answer that question with the accuracy, precision, and help of biblical insight.

By way of an immediate, cursory overview of this profound and hugely insightful passage, let us examine at least three main truths the apostle Paul is conveying to believers in the church at Ephesus. First is the *command*, **Finally, be strong in the Lord**. This *command* more than suggests that being **strong** spiritually is not optional from the perspective of the One who inspired Paul to write it—and I might add gave His life to save you. Now note from the passage the *cause* for one being **strong** (or as we will see the more specified meaning of the Greek word being discerning) **in the Lord**. This is accomplished not in our own abilities, determination, or willpower but rather **in the Lord, in the strength of His might**. We walk not in our human abilities but by faith in His sufficiency. Lastly, notice the *consequence* of our invoking His might in our lives. So that you will be **able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil!** This outline—The Command, The Cause, and The Consequence related to **being strong in the Lord**—will be elaborated in our study that follows.

II. THE COMMAND TO BE DISCERNING

“Finally be strong”

The command of this passage is more than simply one person telling another what to do. The Greek construction reveals the idea that the believer should be able to do what is commanded! It is the idea of being who you already are in Christ! Let me explain. Paul is communicating this idea through his selection and use of specific Greek words and verb tenses which makes his meaning clear. The Greek word before the verb is “**Finally**” (*loipos*) which means “henceforth and in the future.” This is used in combination with the genitive neuter singular definite article “**be**.” What this combination of words communicates is that understanding your high calling in Christ (Ephesians 1–3) along with mature character and behavior (4–6:9) will naturally result in an ability to **stand firm against the schemes of the devil** “henceforth and in the future”—today and for the rest of your life. If we follow Christ's teachings, as believers, we have already been equipped.

The **schemes of the devil**, we will see, are spiritual in nature but are manifest on earth through his pawns—non-believers—who are sometimes referred to as “tares” in Scripture. Notice in this regard Ephesians 6:12 which further elaborates on this perspectival truth:

“**For 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.**”



Understanding this foundational biblical truth is fundamental to spiritual maturity, my friend! This passage is a mainstay in the study of the doctrine of demons, aka demonology, but suffice it here to say, per this passage, that:

The actual battles believers face in office over certain biblically based policy issues are not necessarily with adverse human beings but with Satan's influence over them.

Believers who are mature in Christ will have this perspective regarding both personal and professional battles wherein and when God's specific revealed will is in jeopardy. They will also possess the discernment and the ability to *stand firm against* them, knowing through the lens of Scripture that they are the *devil's schemes*.

Unbelievers do not have this discernment; they don't get it; they are blind to God's ways as revealed in the Bible and in that they reject the author of Scripture and His Lordship in their lives, they reject the precepts of His book. Herein is the underlying biblical insight and basis that explains America's deep, growing divide. It is the divide of good versus evil.

So what side are you on? What side should you be on? This is why unbelievers need to come to Christ, and why it is so important for believers in the capital not only to evangelize their colleagues but to be maturing in Christ themselves! Therein are what determine the outcome of the battles

more so than all the constant political maneuverings. But few are those who actually believe what I just said. Spiritual maturation only comes through rebirth in Christ and then knowing and applying His Word.

III. THE CAUSE OF BEING DISCERNING

"in the Lord and in the strength of His might"

Coming to Christ, growing in the knowledge of Him, and being guided by the Holy Spirit is the only way to *become strong in the Lord* and fully appropriate *the strength of His might*. There are no shortcuts. It is the only way we can *stand firm* and hold our ground while under attack as we defend God's immutable truths. It is the only way we can see Satan's *schemes* for what they really are. Unfortunately, many remain unsaved or spiritually immature and fall to the *devil's* methods of deception and play into his hand to further and irreparably divide the country—the home of the largest missionary-sending force in the history of the Church. Again the divide is over good versus evil.

Before moving on to our third point in the outline, it is important to underscore that Paul is stating that the believer cannot win spiritual battles apart from spiritual armament (which he delves into from 6:11 to the end of the epistle). Our battle for God's glory and His attributes being manifest in the world today are not won or lost on the basis of political campaigns, rather they are fought *in the strength of His might* via spiritual weaponry. This is why evangelizing your elected and

♥ VERSE OF THE WEEK

Ephesians 6:10

"Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might."



Be strong in the Lord!





Noah Webster



“The moral principles and precepts found in the Scriptures ought to form the basis of all our civil constitutions and laws.”

— Noah Webster, Revolutionary War soldier, judge, legislator, educator, “Schoolmaster to America.”

Noah Webster, *History of the United States* (New Haven: Durrie & Peck, 1832), p. 339, “Advice to the Young,” p. 53.

appointed colleagues is of the utmost importance to victory in and over the matters that currently divide the nation.

IV. THE CONSEQUENCE OF BEING DISCERNING

“so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.”

The one Greek word for *stand firm* (*histemi*) is translated into two English words in order to convey the best sense of its meaning. *Histemi* was used in ancient literature in a military context to mean “hold your ground while under attack.” The apostle John uses it in Revelation 2:25 in reference to the church at Thyatira—itsself under Satan’s attack—when he quotes Jesus saying “*hold fast [histemi] until I come.*” It follows that one is not *strong*, discerning, or mature in Christ if he lacks the ability to *hold fast*, to *stand firm*, like a soldier would during an intense battle, or an ambassador would during a difficult negotiation.

Further, 1 John 2:12–14 provides additional insight into this biblical maxim. Herein the apostle John draws an analogy to human development. He equates believers who are deceived or seduced by the *devil’s* various *schemes* as being *babes* in Christ at best (if in fact they are even saved). Per this passage, John is describing a *babe* in Christ as one who knows only that his or her sins are forgiven. Whereas a *young man* in the faith, John states, has definitely *overcome the wicked one* (v. 14). That’s to say, a mature Christian has spiritual discernment and can see through the profusion of antics served up by Satan. He can and does *stand firm against* them; he

holds his ground in the battle between good and evil. Again, in the larger context of what follows in Ephesians 6 (a stand-alone study in itself!), he or she, the mature-in-Christ believer, is the one who is armed for spiritual battle whereas the *babe* is not.

A parallel thought is that the one who *stands firm* is a true *disciple* of Jesus Christ. *Mathetes* is the Greek word for *disciple* and it is not difficult to transliterate the Greek word into the English language: we get the English word *mathematics* from it. In essence, a *disciple* of Jesus Christ is one who can *calculate* the world via the lens of Scripture. Are you a *disciple* of Jesus Christ? (Cf. Matthew 28:19–20.)

Now take note of Ephesians 2:1–2 which facilitates further understanding and insight. In fact, this passage is abundantly informative, foundational, and elaborative regarding the clear and redundant biblical teaching on the existence of satanic surrogates:

“And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.”

In the second part of this passage Paul uses a moniker of distinction to further describe those who have never repented of their sin, labeling them as *the sons of disobedience*. But, in addition, this passage indicates that it is



Satan who is the one ***now working in the sons of disobedience***. What Paul teaches us here in this earlier passage from the Ephesian epistle is that *all unbelievers are under the control of Satan*.

Further, 2 Timothy 2:26 states that unbelievers are ***held captive by him to do his will***. They are his minions, often without realizing it. Lest one conclude that this is all quite condemnatory in its tone, notice the whole of 2 Timothy 2:26 wherein the apostle Paul manifests compassion and offers hope for the unregenerate, that they:

“... may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.”

These various passages which illuminate biblical demonology inform the mature Christian’s world view—or at least they should. It follows that God commands believers to know all of the above. There is no reason for discerning believers to be duped by Satan’s ***schemes*** but unfortunately many are! And as a result Satan is having a heyday with America at present.

The Greek word for ***schemes*** (*metho-dia*) has a negative connotation which is not found in its English translation, “method.” In ancient Greek usage, the word means “craftiness, cunning, and deception.” Ephesians 4:14 echoes this idea and adds much clarity and amplification in this regard:

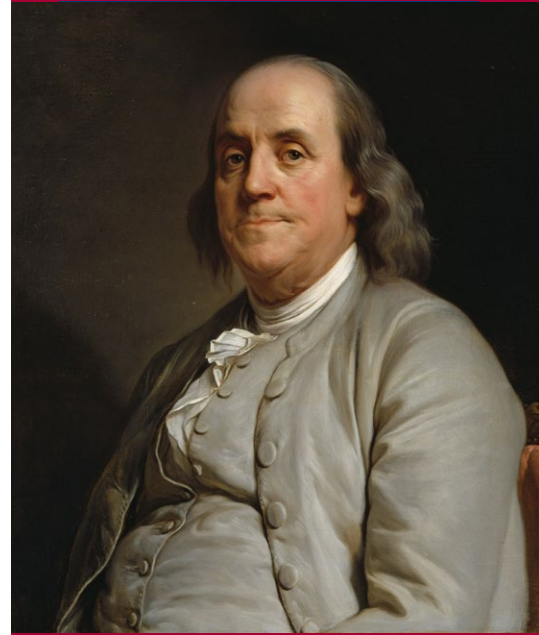
“We are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming.”

The last word in that verse in Greek is *metho-dia*. It saddens my heart when people who name the name of Christ in the capital have little, if any, desire to be trained in the Word through regular participation and intentional interaction in Bible study (be in a solid church at home that actually teaches the Bible, or here in the capital) in order to gain an increasing understanding and ability to ***stand firm***. Instead, likened to the above passage, many are seduced, flattered, deceived, and misled and consequently remain ineffective in the ultimate battles. Too often ***babes*** in Christ end up on the wrong side of biblically clear matters, again, battles that are underlyingly spiritual in nature. Satan has them where he wants them because they don’t realize his ***deceitful scheming***, the *metho-dia* of the ***devil***. If saved, they remain ***babes***, walking in their own “strength” versus ***the strength of His might***. Adding more to this previous point in our outline, the idea behind ***the strength of His might*** then is not “let go and let God,” it is rather “get in and get trained!” Are you a ***babe*** or a mature believer?

What then specifically are ***the schemes of the devil***? One should know what they are and be conscious of them in order to be armed and properly equipped to fight his deviant methods. It follows and is appropriate that identifying them should dominate the remainder of this study.

A Bible teacher can’t teach on a passage that deals with the *devil’s scheming* and not identify his *schemes*!

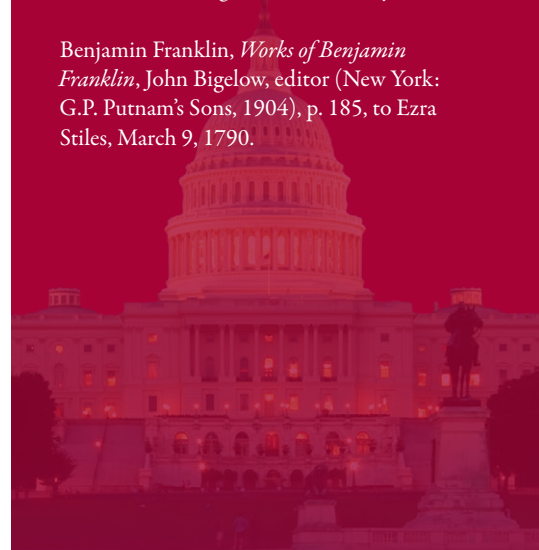
Benjamin Franklin



“As to Jesus of Nazareth, my opinion of whom you particularly desire, I think the system of morals and His religion as He left them to us, the best the world ever saw or is likely to see.”

— Benjamin Franklin, signer of the Declaration of Independence, diplomat, printer, scientist, signer of the Constitution, governor of Pennsylvania.

Benjamin Franklin, *Works of Benjamin Franklin*, John Bigelow, editor (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1904), p. 185, to Ezra Stiles, March 9, 1790.





Patrick Henry



“The great pillars of all government and of social life [are] virtue, morality, and religion. This is the armor, my friend, and this alone, that renders us invincible.”

— Patrick Henry, Revolutionary War general, legislator, ‘The Voice of Liberty,’ ratifier of the U.S. Constitution, governor of Virginia.

Patrick Henry, *Patrick Henry: Life, Correspondence and Speeches*, William Wirt Henry, editor (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1891), Vol. II, p. 592, to Archibald Blair on January 8, 1799.



It is all too easy to be deceived and seduced if you know nothing of your enemy’s multiple fronts in the spiritual war in which you find yourself engaged. Whether you like it or not, as a believer in the capital per Ephesians chapter 1, you have a high calling and dutiful responsibility to fulfill for God’s glory and your inevitable bema seat judgment where one day every believer will give an account to Jesus Christ, the One who saved them by dying in their place on a cross.

Before exploring these *schemes* in greater detail, note first that the Greek definition of *scheming* (again, “craftiness, cunning, and deception”) carries the idea that one does not necessarily realize that Satan is behind the scenes creating the effect! The concept of *scheming* then is synonymous with deception which means “inculcating of one so that he takes the false as true, the unreal as existent, and the spurious as genuine” (*Merriam-Webster*). Satan is the ultimate stealth bomber in the spiritual sense. If only more could see and understand this biblical truth! My heart is often broken over the successful *scheming of the devil* in the hearts of so many whom I love—and what is so painful is that those he holds captive in the capital don’t even realize it! First Timothy 4:1 serves to underscore this point even further:

“But the Spirit explicitly says that in the later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons.”

Apostates are those who seemingly at one time were followers of Christ but, like the tares in the parable of the soils,

they are disingenuous and were never the real thing. When the pressure comes for naming the name of Christ they are found for who they really are, unbelievers. It is these who let down the name of Christ, who say they are believers but are patently unbiblical when it comes to the way they think and vote on the great moral issues of our day. You can’t have it both ways. In fact, Jesus said, ***“you will know them by their fruits”*** (Matthew 7:20). Discerning, mature believers get this, *babes* in Christ do not.

It is not the intent of this study to provide an exhaustive listing of all of Satan’s *schemes* but what follows are four categories of satanic craftiness, cunning, and deception that you must be alert to and ***stand firm against!*** Put another way:

The greatest problem in D.C. is a lack of spiritual discernment.

Given these aforementioned additional, insightful passages that present a broader understanding of the biblical doctrine of demonology, it stands to reason that without regeneration in Christ unbelievers are used by Satan as his agents especially to lash out at believers in the most vindictive ways. As a matter of fact, *devil* (*diabolos*) is used 35 times in the New Testament (NT) to describe Satan. The Greek word means “slanderer” or “accusing falsely.” The English word “diabolical” and



its meaning are a near transliteration. Further, the Greek word for Satan (*satanas*) means “adversary.” To understand what the Bible teaches in this regard is to understand that *the ultimate struggles in the capital are not political but spiritual*. Again, herein is the basis of the divide in our country. It therefore follows that there are really only two combatants behind all the scenes that play out on the Hill: Christ vs. Satan. *Regardless of political affiliation, everyone, including the media, works to some degree for one side or the other: Christ or Satan.* We should be mindful that anyone can be used by Satan. After Jesus told his disciples that he would be killed and raised up on the third day, Peter rebuked him and said *“This shall never happen to you. But He turned and said to Peter, ‘Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God’s interests, but man’s’”* (Matthew 16:23). The way you can ascertain who’s on what side is by this: Satan’s surrogates always battle against those who represent God’s precepts.

Why is spiritual discernment so lacking in political leaders’ lives today? It is because so many holding office in D.C. and in our state capitols and local governments are unfortunately biblically illiterate; people who do not know the genuine article by which they can compare the false! Here then are some of the common *schemes of*

the devil to be found in the world today. So many are deceived by the following falsities that Satan is behind and is propagating today.

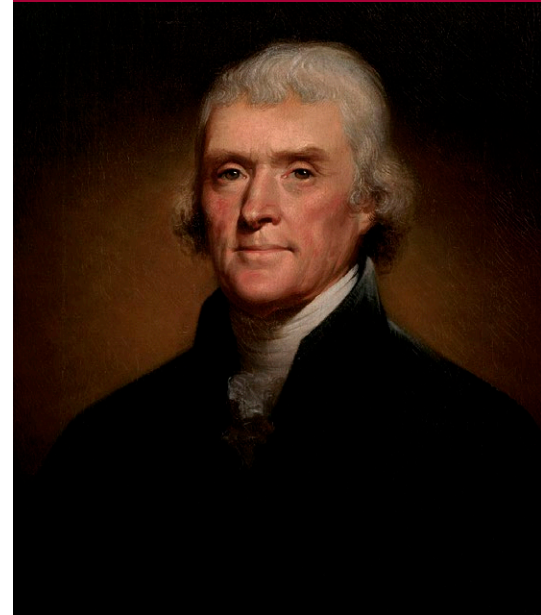
A. SECULAR HUMANISM

Lest you think Secular Humanism and its adherents including radical leftists and modern Progressives are not satanic, one of their “leading lights” is Saul Alinsky. In his book, *Rules for Radicals* (their bible), Alinsky acknowledges “the first radical ... Lucifer.” There are three aspects of Secular Humanism in particular that have an increasing hold and devastating effect on American culture. They are as follows:

1. Same Sex Marriage, Homosexuality, Gender Neutrality, and Abortion

In past Bible studies I have explicated much Scripture regarding these particular *schemes*. All are Satan’s perversion of God’s beautiful creation of human beings whom He created in His image, both and only as *man* and *woman*. In addition, God created holy matrimony and procreation for and between husbands and wives. The above satanic perversions all attempt to destroy God’s fundamental building blocks of society—the nuclear family. God designed marriage to be between one man and one woman; a family headed by a father and a mother is the ordained way to procreate and it is the best incubator for civility in the next generation. Running a close parallel to this deception is the satanically driven sudden neutering in January 2021 of biblical gender identification from all House bills! The LGBTQ movement

Thomas Jefferson



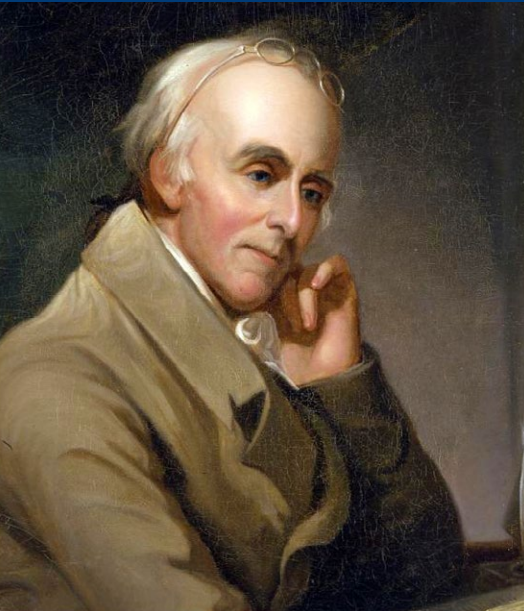
“The practice of morality being necessary for the wellbeing of society, He [God] has taken care to impress its precepts so indelibly on our hearts that they shall not be effaced by the subtleties of our brain. We all agree in the obligation of the moral principles of Jesus and nowhere will they be found delivered in greater purity than in His discourses.”

— Thomas Jefferson, third president of the United States, signer of the Declaration of Independence, diplomat, governor of Virginia, secretary of state.

Thomas Jefferson, *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, Albert Ellery Bergh, editor (Washington D.C.: The Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1904), Vol. XII, p. 315, to James Fishback, September 27, 1809.



Benjamin Rush



“By renouncing the Bible, philosophers swing from their moorings upon all moral subjects ... It is the only correct map of the human heart that ever has been published.”

— Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence, surgeon general of the Continental Army, ratifier of the U.S. Constitution, “Father of American Medicine,” treasurer of the U.S. Mint, “Father of Public Schools Under the Constitution.”

Benjamin Rush, *Letters of Benjamin Rush*, L. H. Butterfield, editor (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1951), Vol. II, p. 936, to John Adams, January 23, 1807.

is a satanic attack on core biblical truth. In Genesis 5:2 the Bible records that God fashioned two genders only: **“He created them male and female.”** Those surrogates of Satan associated with this movement reject the order of creation. But mark my words, and the shout out from history is: no society will continue to exist that rejects God’s order of creation. None ever has and none ever will.

2. Women’s Liberation

Satan knows that if he can get women out of their intended complementary role to their husbands that he will own the next generation, and that is exactly what is happening in America today. Children desperately need their mom’s nurturing so that they are not hooked by Satan’s *schemes* of drugs, sex, and slothfulness in their formative years which then often destroy their later productive years. The Women’s Liberation movement largely disconnects from God’s plan for necessary child incubation, bonding, and catechism. Again, if he can destroy the family, he can destroy the nation. Woman’s liberation, akin to male chauvinism, is a *scheme of the devil*.

3. The New Morality

This is code for “no morality.” It is a *scheme* to override and anesthetize the conscience of man. For those who buy into this ideology there is no absolute right or wrong. A close cousin to Postmodernism, New Morality people are led to believe that they are their own judge of what is right and wrong. Truth is relative, so they think. This explains why there is so much hypocrisy amongst political leaders today:

what aids me today—today’s “truth”—might not aid me tomorrow, so tomorrow’s “truth” could be opposite of what I said I believed in the media yesterday. Such 24-hour duplicity is so appalling it would be laughable if it weren’t so seriously disingenuous, lacking in integrity, and destructive to the nation. Believing that “Truth is what you make it to be today” only serves to discount one’s own credibility to any and all “truth is objective” observers. Objective truth is an inviolate, immutable principle of God’s creative order.

In his book *The Audacity of Hope*, a past occupant of the White House spends an entire chapter arguing precisely for this anti-biblical position—that there is no absolute truth.

The acceptance of such thinking, this *scheme* of the *devil*, has a disastrous effect on the credibility and productivity of public servants and the unity and survival of the nation.

B. FALSE RELIGIONS

Satan also deceives people by entrapping them in false religions, those that appeal to their pride, or systems that in essence declare that each of us is good enough to save him or herself. Similar to Satan’s temptation of Adam and Eve, he has fashioned all false religions to have personal merit at their core—versus God’s meritorious work on the cross on their behalf—as their central agent of salvation attainment. When you think about it, all such religions



deem Christ's death utterly useless and play to man's pride, versus God's grace and glory.

1. Islam

This religion is based in part on plagiarisms from the Old Testament (OT)—plagiarisms that amount for much of the orderly content of the Koran. To quickly illustrate this point, Muslims do not believe in the Trinity, yet the Koran contains this passage which is word-for-word Genesis 1:26, ***“Let Us make man in Our image.”*** This is a direct early OT reference to the Trinity. Muslim scholars have no response to or explanation for why this passage, which is directly opposite of what they believe, is in the Koran. Again, this is just one of many plagiarism-related issues. Muslims deny the Trinitarian nature of God, so they should not have plagiarized this particular passage! This religion has historically spread through the sword and seeks nothing less than world conquest for Allah through violence. Allah was the moon god worshipped in the Middle Eastern part of the world long before Mohammed came on the scene to found his religion hundreds of years after the life of Christ and the writing of the OT from which he borrows. Salvation, per Islamic theology, is not attained via a loving, self-sacrificing act of God as per Christianity; it is attained by jihad, a sacrifice of self in combating the infidels. Whereas in biblical Christianity God gives His life for man, in Islam man must give his life for his false god.

2. Works-Based “Christianity”

In Ephesians 5:11 Scripture commands believers to expose the *schemes*

of the devil. The passage specifically states, ***“Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them.”*** This is especially incumbent on someone in my profession to do.

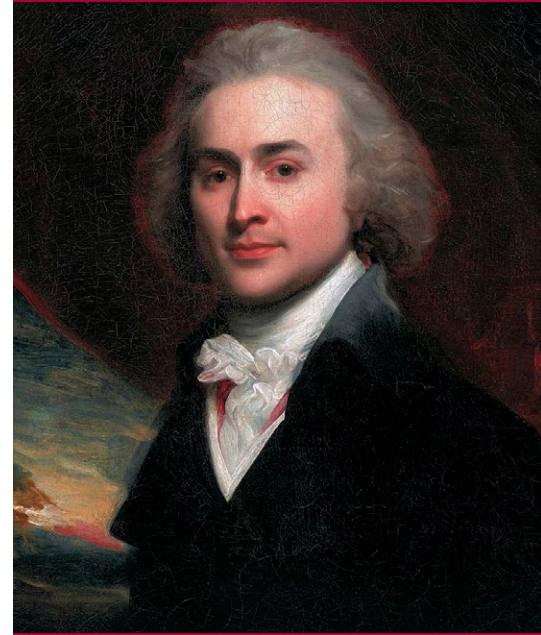
There are forms of “Christianity” that have a devolved, wayward doctrine of salvation in comparison to what the Scriptures teach.

These other “Christian” religions teach that salvation is gained in some other way than by faith in Christ alone. There are those who believe they are to work their own way to heaven. Such thinking is diametrically opposed to what the Scriptures teach. (I realize that one can have a cultural connection to a religion and believe differently—believe what the Bible says about salvation rather than the contrary teaching of their religion—but why they remain associated with a religion that teaches differently than they believe is difficult to understand.) To be clear, the scriptural teaching on salvation is summarized in Ephesians 2:8–9:

“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”

Works-based “Christianity” deludes people into thinking they can save themselves via their own effort when in reality they cannot. ***“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”*** states Romans 3:23; it is a deception of Satan to think otherwise. Proudful is

John Quincy Adams



“In the chain of human events, the birthday of the nation is indissolubly linked with the birthday of the Savior. The Declaration of Independence laid the cornerstone of human government upon the first precepts of Christianity.”

— John Quincy Adams, sixth President of the United States, diplomat, Secretary of State, U.S. senator, U.S. representative, “Old Man Eloquent,” “Hell-Hound of Abolition.”

John Quincy Adams, *An Oration Delivered Before the Inhabitants of the Town of Newburyport at Their Request on the Sixty-First Anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1837* (Newburyport: Charles Whipple, 1837), pp. 5-6.





James Otis



“Has government any solid foundation? Any chief cornerstone? ... I think it has an everlasting foundation in the unchangeable will of God ... The sum of my argument is that civil government is of God.”

— James Otis, leader of the Sons of Liberty, attorney and jurist, mentor of John Hancock and Samuel Adams.

James Otis, *The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved* (London: J. Williams and J. Almon, 1766), pp. 11, 98.

Satan and he always plays to the pride in others.

3. Liberal “Christianity”

Both Modernism and the Social Gospel are synonymous names for Theological Liberalism. Many of America's former Christian denominations (and their educational institutions) have been infected and changed forever by this and as a result are only false religion shells wearing the name “Christian” today. Their doctrines are vastly different from what the Bible teaches. How deceptive! The Social Gospel is not what the Bible teaches.

**About 100 years ago,
religious liberals
began stirring together
human rationalism with
Biblical revelation.
This, in turn, suffocated
historic, reformed
Biblical Christianity.**

Specifically, Higher Criticism was imported from Europe which subjected Scripture to a cynical, skeptical brand of scholarship, falsely concluding that the source documents that make up our Bible were in error. Higher Criticism was an outright denial of the authenticity and historicity of the Bible—as though the inspiration and transmission of God's Words to man were flawed and erroneous. Scripture became subjugated to man versus the other way around. What followed was a wholesale disaster: humanistic rationalism substituted for divine revelation. And today the results are clear to see: congregations that call themselves Christian churches but

who have no sense for the authority of God's Holy Word. The movement remains today but is dying because their doctrine creates no incentive to evangelize folks outside their church. In relatively recent years, Theological Liberalism was repackaged in the form of the multi-year “Jesus Seminar” where liberal scholars met semi-annually to vote on the teachings of Jesus and decided among themselves what was the inspired Word of God and what was not—as if they were more inspired than the Spirit-filled prophets and apostles whom God used to pen the Old and New Testaments! Liberal Theology is a *scheme of the devil* that plays in and through the arrogant, self-righteous intellectual faculties of man. It serves to elevate his ego and proves hostile and poisonous to biblical revelation and genuine, soul-saving Christianity. Theological Liberalism, aka the Social Gospel, is a huge *scheme of the devil*—a satanic manifestation of vast proportions rooted in D.C. today.

Make no mistake, even though Theological Liberalism wears the name “Christianity” it is far from what the Bible says is Christianity! It is a false religion masquerading—deceptively so—as Christianity. It is not in any way Christian as defined by the Bible!

C. POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES

Not only does Satan deceive through secular movements and false religions, but he also uses political ideologies as well. Throughout history there have been many forms of human government, influenced by Satan, that have attempted to destroy God's purpos-



es. For instance, the Roman Empire would not tolerate Christianity until the time of Constantine. Today, Socialism/Communism, in its *atheistic* political ideology, is another such illustration. It persecutes the Church wherever and whenever it roots itself as do Islamic ideologues as they expand their religiously exclusive political/theocratic or else atheistic ideologies throughout the world. These are political *schemes* empowered by Satan that require godly political leadership to ascertain and defeat. America needs mature-in-Christ political leaders who can *stand firm against such schemes of the devil!* Ronald Reagan is a great illustration: he possessed spiritual discernment when he stood against Russian Communism during his presidency. Donald Trump and Mike Pompeo are two others who exposed the reality of the *atheistic* Christianity-hating, Church-persecuting Chinese Communist Party.

**Don't be misled:
Socialism/Communism
persecutes God's
called-out ones.
Socialism/Communism
is darkly satanic.**

D. PERSONAL TEMPTATIONS

The last of four broad *schemes of the devil* in the world today are those of personal temptations that are orchestrated by him. How many are caught in immorality, pride, worldliness, self-reliance, the quest for significance, the pursuit of power, and self-indulgence today? Luke 8:12 adds to our study on demonology:

“The devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved.”

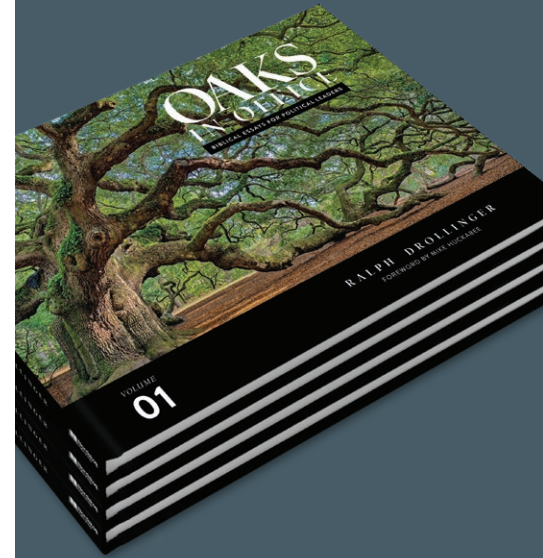
So tricky and deceiving is he that many who continually practice the aforementioned would tell you that they are going to heaven. Why? Because Satan has sold them on the fact that they “believe in Jesus.” But the *devil* “believes in Jesus” as well and is certainly not saved. James 2:19 drives the point home: *“You believe that God is one. You do well; the demons also believe, and shudder.”* He deludes people into thinking that intellectual assent is all that it takes—as if you need not volitionally repent of your habitual sins and come to Christ humbly, attitudinally submitting to His Lordship—as the Bible teaches. John 10:10 states further:

“The thief [Satan] comes only to steal and kill and destroy.”

Remember, Satan does all his work very stealthily. He will do his best to try and trip up your effectiveness for Christ by and through enticing you with various personal temptations. See his deceptions for what they are and objectify them: do not allow him to sideline you! Walk in *the strength of His might!*

V. SUMMARY

These four areas, Secular Movements, False Religions, Political Ideologies, and Personal Temptations are what, in a broad sense, begin to illustrate the deceptive *schemes*—the methods—of the *devil* in today's world. They are what serve to divide the country. God will enable you to be conscientious and



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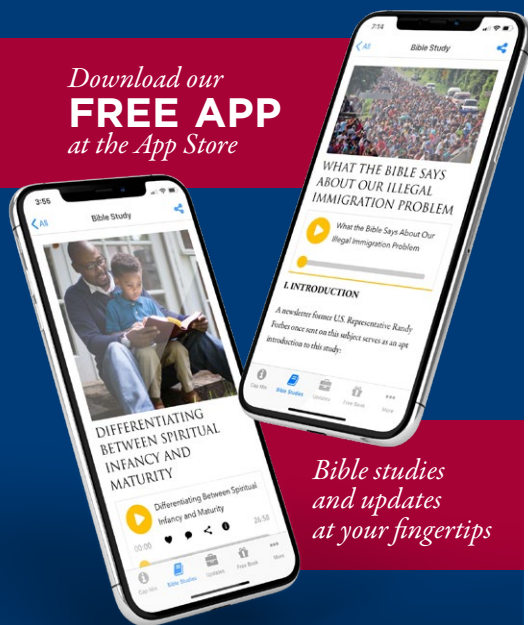
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victorious over all of them to the degree you are *strong in the Lord and the strength of His might*.

God has graciously blessed us with the book of Ephesians that we would come to know our high calling in Him (chapters 1–3), that we would align our behavior to that calling (4–6:9), and that as a result we would strive to be the most effective for Him (6:10–24) as a result. In light of this last point of the book, this week's passage of study is intended by God to shout at us that we must know our adversary, the *devil*, and be able to *stand firm* against his numerous *schemes*, i.e., his various forms of craftiness, cunning, and deception. Failure to do so keeps you in spiritual diapers, far from becoming the soldier of the cross, the ambassador for Christ that God intended to make a difference for Him in this fallen world when He foreordained and adopted you for His purposes before the foundation of the world!

Don't underestimate, undervalue, or underperform in your high calling, my friend!

May many people be blessed because of your spiritual discernment in Christ! Amen!

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