

BEWARE: Ideas Will Bear Consequences

(Go To Meeting)

Norbert Bohnert—December 3, 2022

The world, the way it's in today and the conditions that we are living under, we know that the world is in trouble. It's in total chaos! Many of us are struggling constantly to make sense of actually what is going on. That's what's driven me to give this message.

I want to talk about a specific topic, and that is about 'ideas.' We all have ideas, that is true, and we all express them throughout our lives. But let us ask: The ideas that we express

- Are they based on sound thinking?

or

- Are we just floundering out there expressing ourselves without truly knowing what we are thinking?

And sometimes even sharing with others what we think regarding some particular topic, situation, etc.!

Ideas are basically concepts in the mind that form opinions, view and belief. No doubt about it, we all have ideas; each one of us has ideas. That goes on continually in our lifetime; it's just part of our life.

As the title suggests, *ideas do have consequences*, and that is what I want to focus on: sometimes good, but many times not so good.

As we look at the broader picture, which I'm going to try to paint today, I think it may give us a little better framework to see, watch and analyze some of the things that are actually happening in our society today.

More specifically, how it affects our personal lives physically, mentally and emotionally; we as Church members are not exempt of what's going on around us.

We have been called to be part of the Family of God, the Body of Christ, at a time that you would probably say is very unique in human history. What do I mean by that?

Well, I'm not just focusing on events; we know that there are many events, many major events that have taken place in the world at the present time. But there are major events that have occurred in the past in history. Examples:

- major earthquakes
- famines
- pestilences

- rumors of war
- actual wars

These have occurred and are well described in the Scriptures. There have been many, many major events that have occurred recently and also over history.

However, if we look at ideas and their subsequent consequences, I believe that this is a unique time in history. This is not by chance! ***This is by design!***

It is not an accident or a random unexpected event. It is the design of a very clever and very powerful spirit being identified in the Bible as '***he god of this world***' That, of course is *Satan!*

It is so evident that we are looking at a stage in the world setting today, seeing the maximum effects of ideas of what men can do and what they have created ***by that source of the god of this world!***

We are also a part of that, because we live in this world today. We are in a unique time, and as we—part of the Church of God—are not immune to any of the environment created around us. The environment of chaos and a hotbed of a propagation of ideas.

This is a time that we have to stay close to the 'trunk of the tree.' We need to remind ourselves of some fundamental things that we have learned over the past ***based on the sound Word of God!***

Remember the Scripture that talks about ***fruit coming from the Vine. Jesus Christ is the Vine!*** The absolute necessity of connectiveness. We know that the entire world is deceived. That is a fact, and we also know that intellectually.

1-John 5:19: "We know that we are of God, and that ***the whole world lies in the power of the wicked one.***"

The entire world lies under the influence of the wicked one: *Satan!* As we develop what I'm going to go through, v 20 will come into play:

Verse 20: "***And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us an understanding, so that we may know Him Who is true; and we are in Him Who is true, and in His Son, Jesus Christ. He is the true God, and the eternal life.***"

That is the most important thing that we must keep in mind; *we have to stay to the 'trunk of*

the tree’!

Let’s keep this verse in mind as we go through this message. We know Him Who is true—God the Father and Jesus Christ—to follow.

2-Timothy 3:13: “But wicked men and imposters shall become worse and worse, **deceiving others and being deceived themselves.**”

We can talk about Satan and the demons and their influence, but we need to expand it just slightly. This is the extension of Satan’ deceptive qualities. Satan is the author of deception, and his removal signifies that he will deceive the nations no more! We know that time will be coming, but in the meantime—in the present—and it has been for a long time—we have been under the influence of Satan.

We know that the deceptions continue, there is *a man of sin* to be revealed, a man who works unrighteous deception by the working of Satan. But the point is, we live now in a world that is totally deceived. So, let us ask the question:

- Where do my personal ideas originate?
- Where do they actually come from?

We know from Eph. 2 that there is an influence that brings about the worldwide deception of mankind.

Ephesians 2:2: “In which you walked in times past according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, **the spirit that is now working within the children of disobedience.**”

We have read this many times, and we know these things, but we are to always bring them into the contemporary situation. We must deal with it on a day-to-day basis. The course of this world is the age and it really applies from the beginning, from the decision that was made in the Garden of Eden all the way forward through history. We have ***a prince of the power of the air*** working all around us and ***he puts thoughts and ideas into our human mind!***

The demons under their chief operate as man breathes the air in and out. ***The demonic world has taken over!*** It can exert tremendous influence upon the mind of man, destroying their ability to discern good from evil, ***the evil to develop the mental disposition, idea after idea!***

To this we need to add another detail, and we can reference Rev. 12: *the devil has come down to you having great wrath because he knows that he has a very brief time!* Satan has sensitive ability to influence the mind of man being greatly reduced and eliminated. His time to influence the ideas of man

has limitations, and as time contracts his wrath inversely increases.

Satan cannot be a happy being. We live in a time when Satan’s wrath is increasing. We see it all around us, and it is coming to a focal point.

So, from this perspective, our time and place that we live in today is very unique. We must battle the ideas of Satan at a deeply personal level, and as a fact in our daily lives.

What can we identify as the central core of Satan’s program. We need to establish this, because if we take snapshots of ideas at times in human history we may possibly draw inaccurate conclusions. We must take a small snapshot of a particular time.

The central core of Satan’s program to have men think in a particular way is simply *rationalism*. Rationalism comes in many flavors and colors, but I think you understand that rationalism is a belief that opinions and actions should be based on reason and knowledge, rather than any religious belief or emotional response.

In a theological sense, rationalism is simply the reason, is the ultimate authority in religion. Right there is the emphasis on ideas. We all possess this trait. Rationalism is the result of a decision made by our first parents, Adam and Eve influenced by Satan directly. They chose to rely upon reason:

- to establish life
- to establish truth
- to establish what is right and wrong

Satan said that ‘the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God knowing good and evil.’

We have read this numerous times, but many times we do not remember it when it comes to dealing with contemporary manifestations of it, and how it applies to our personal life.

Rationalism produces ideas. It’s the working of the human mind ***and those ideas all have consequences!*** Ideas driven by ***‘the spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience’!***

We live now in the world centered around this phenomena, the culture of authenticity. This is the mindset that we have been trained to over the last 60 years or so, and it just seems to get worse and worse. The mindset is based on the romantic idea that each one of us has a golden figure of a core of ourselves.

What do I mean by that? *It is an innately good true self that can be trusted, consulted and contacted!* The reasoning behind this is that *our*

personal feelings are the best guide for what is right and wrong. This is guiding this society that we live in today. The focal point of this thinking is the moral authority as no longer found in some external objective good, but is found in each person's unique original self.

This is clearly addressed in the Scriptures where we read that 'men become lovers of themselves!' There are many out there in the Churches of God struggling in this society to make sense of what is happening around us, what's happening in the world. The world has become a world of so-called rational thought and that basically is what it's focused on.

We have come through periods such as *the age of reason* and *the age of enlightenment*. These ages all produce variations of *rationalistic thought!* We have 'isms' created all over and it has carried over into our society today. For instance—and these have little bit different stagings, if you will:

- *humanism* brought mankind forward from the Middle Ages to about the 1600s
- *secularism*

further developments of this rationalism:

- ✓ the reject of religion
- ✓ religious teaching
- ✓ rejection of God
- *feminism movement* that was brought to us in the last 19th and 20th century
- *modernism* and *post modernism*
- of course, very prevalent today is that of *eroticism*

That is a major influence upon our society today, and we see it all around us. Of course, we can see the works by German rationalism and the effects of what that had on the world overall at that time and as carried forward.

So, my purpose today is to remind us of the influence out there in the world ***and beware of what is occurring under that direction of Satan!*** For Satan to be effective, he must have each generation have open minds to receive what he wants them to receive: *new ideas that have developed over time!* And looking at history it becomes very, very evident!

We see the time of Luther coming onto the scene, and Protestantism formed. Philosophical concepts were created and came from the hardness of the Catholic Church.

Then came the humanistic psychology led by people like Carl Rogers, the most influential psychologist of the 20th century. The humanistic psychologist shifted away from Freud's darker

conception of the unconscious and promoted a sky high estimation of human nature.

Let me make that clear: *it is vastly different!* The primary psychological problem he argues, is that people do not love themselves enough. So, therapists unleashed a great wave of self-loving. I think we've witnessed that. So, from Carl Rogers' point of view, the word that best describes human nature is *positive, forward moving, constructive, realistic and trustworthy!*

The world has come to the point of believing that human nature generally is good. There is that golden center, as I referred to before within us and you have to just tap into it.

That is their philosophy! Well, I will leave it at that, because ***we know better, brethren!*** That is the way the world is tending to think. They do no need to combat themselves, but only need to 'open up' to liberate their inner selves so to speak, by:

- self-loving
- self-praising
- self-accepting

for who they actually are! That is what is happening, and Paul told Timothy that it would be.

To the extent that a person can be freely in touch with his valuing and processing themselves. You will behave in ways that are self-enhancing. Is that the society that we can see around us? This reasoning and philosophy has shaped nearly:

- every school
- every curriculum
- every human resource department
- every self-help book

It's out there! It's a typical principle; each moral climate is a collective response to the problems at the present time.

Many of us have experienced different things, and this way of thinking over the years we have experienced, and even has crept into the Churches of God.

Where am I going with this? *Our problems don't stem from a Donald Trump, Hilary Clinton, or anybody else!* Our problems—the state of our nation, the state of the world today—has been a long time coming by the individual who plants ideas in people's minds that will eventually will and do bring consequences.

That's what we are experiencing today, and seeing every increasingly in our world currently and is going to get worse in the years to come.

I don't mean to be sounding too negative, but reality is reality. We must realize that! It must bring us closer to what we have been called to do, to come out of this world and to resist and fight!

This unique time in human history is bringing some of these things together like they have never been brought together before. Each younger generation believes that it is right. It's just a fact, because the older *isms* is a miscarry of ideas that are increasingly deadly.

Each *ism* as I referred to it is created by man and carries many further away from God the Creator. We are moving in a deadly direction and certainly not a positive direction.

Psalm 10:3: "For the wicked boasts of his heart's desire, and blesses the covetous but despises the LORD. Through the pride of his countenance the wicked will not seek God; in all his thoughts there is no place for God" (vs 3-4).

That is what we have come to. That is why the idea that is created by all the *isms* that are out there, and the philosophies will not work. They will not produce the happiness and all the things that mankind is hoping to look for. Perhaps Satan's greatest deceit is to:

- have mankind accept ideas that will literally destroy themselves
- having mankind accept ideas and with those ideas actions that will bring destruction on themselves
- have mankind bring the penalty of sins upon themselves

We know that the penalty for sin is death!

I want to take you, in a sense of analogy, to Num. 25, illustrating this principle, sort of emphasizing this concept. It's *the principle* that I'm more concerned about than the facts of the case. It's a remarkably interesting account where King Balak asked Balaam to come. Balak was very worried about the vast horde of Israelites out there. The Moabites and the Ammonites and so on, were very worried about the Israelites.

So, they called for this 'religious' man to come and pronounce a curse on Israel, to remove the influences away. It is a story where you would not have wanted to have been Balaam's donkey. If you will remember, it starts where the donkey could see the angel preventing the way. So, Balaam takes his staff and whacks the donkey three times.

What I found fascinating is that the donkey then talks to Balaam and he responds in a rational manner. The donkey and Balaam have this

conversation back and forth: 'Why did you hit me three times?' *Because you are a stupid donkey!*

They were going back and forth with this discussion. Really what was happening was that God was preventing Balaam from going and pronouncing the curse. God did not allow him to pronounce the curse on Israel. In fact, Balaam pronounced some blessings on Israel, and King Balak got more than a little upset!

Numbers 24:10: "And Balak's anger was kindled against Balaam. And he struck his hands together. And Balak said to Balaam, 'I called you to curse my enemies, and behold, you have kept on blessing *them* these three times.'"

Balak was angry and drives his fist into the palm of his hand, because Balaam was not doing what Balak wanted. Then we come to:

Verse 25: "And Balaam rose up, and went and returned to his place. And Balak also went his way."

Pretty miserable and upset that he had not gotten what he wanted done. The account rolls right into Num. 25:1. After this little situation with Balaam and Balak we see:

Numbers 25:1: "And Israel dwelt in Acacia Grove, and the **people began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab.**"

So, without going into too much depth here, I would suggest that you do some research on what happened, because it will be more meaningful for you.

Josephus the Jewish historian adds some detail between Num. 24:25 and Num. 25:1 that is particularly important. Balaam was not allowed to pronounce a curse on Israel. But before he left—and this is explained in *Antiquities of the Jews, chapter six*. I will let you do the research in reading this, it's quite interesting! Before Balaam left he said to Balak:

I cannot pronounce a curse, but let me tell you how you can get the Israelites to destroy themselves. Get your beautiful young women, parade them up and down in full view of the young men of Israel, and the young men of Israel will come running and panting. When they do, you have the woman put a ring through their nose and lead them into worshipping your gods.

This is exactly what is recorded, but what is not recorded is the advice that Balaam gave Balak for them to bring destruction on themselves.

Verse 2: "And they called the people to the

sacrifices of their gods. And the people ate and bowed down to their gods. And Israel joined himself to Baal Peor. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel” (vs 2-3).

Balaam did not have to do this. Israel did it to themselves by responding to the exact advice that Balak had been given. He paraded the women and the men charged after the women and they led the men toward their gods.

They joined themselves to these false gods and God was angry. If you read the account, 24,000 died without delay because of their decisions. Not something that was imposed on top of that. So, it’s an interesting story. In reading Josephus, I’ll paraphrase one section:

Josephus says: Had the young men of the Hebrews conducted themselves such that they reject God and worship the god of the Midianites and Moabites, for by this means God will be angry with them.

Which He was!

Proverbs 28:4: “Those who forsake the Law praise the wicked, but those who keep the Law contend against them.”

This is a very apt description of our society today in some of the things that are going on.

Verse 18: “Whoever walks uprightly shall be saved, but he who is perverse *in his* ways shall fall at once.”

So, we have this situation where those who forsake the Law praise the wicked:

- you are doing right
- you are doing good
- just think about yourself
- reach into your own inner self

That will give you everything you need!

Does that sound familiar in today’s society? ***But he who is perverse in his ways—and the rejection of God’s Law is perversity—will suddenly fall!***

It is a particularly good synopsis of Josephus’ account. It is a statement made to our moral environment today.

The prince of the power of the air wants to fill our head with ideas so that we will put those ideas into action. Those ideas become action items and thus we reap the consequences!

Romans 1:25: **“Who exchanged the Truth of God for the lie; and they worshiped and served the created thing more than the One Who is**

Creator, Who is blessed into the ages. Amen.”

Verse 28: “And in exact proportion as **they did not consent to have God in their knowledge**, God abandoned them to a reprobate mind, to practice *those* things that are immoral.”

Verse 32: “Who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that **those who commit such things are worthy of death**, not only practice these things themselves, but also approve of those who commit *them*.”

Prov. 28 is described right here. That is the environment that we live in today, where ***people reject God’s Law, praise those who reject moral standards of any kind***, and particularly any external moral standards. ***Rationalism serves the creature rather than the Creator! Let us keep that in mind!***

Many, if not all, *isms* that are out there in this society today has a particular agenda. I think it can say that safely based on the ‘prince of the power of the air’ principle. They have a particular agenda, and part of that agenda is Satan’s destructive power performing its greatest work when it is focused on the family.

None of this should be a surprise to us now. We have learned and have been taught how important the family is. From the beginning of Genesis right through to the end of the Revelation of God, He is creating His Family. That is an important concept that we must keep in our mind. The family is the organic unit and its health is fundamental to society. That is the way that God designed human life. God designed marriage, created marriage, created the family, and He created it for a purpose!

It is the fundamental unit of society, and I carries on; God’s Family carries on! As goes the family, so goes the society. It’s very evident; it’s a perfect target for Satan and his injection of ideas into our minds!

Many of the minds that derive and drive the developing *isms* that are out there understand that the family is what determines overall society. Take for instance *socialism* as an example. Another *ism*, and it destroys the family. Throughout all history we can see what happens to civilizations when the family structure is broken.

Think! The Body of Christ operates as a family. It’s an organic function, organic in the sense of the working of God’s Spirit among a group of people. It brings all parts into unity and harmony.

The family nature of God’s relationship with mankind began when the first man and woman was created. It will continue until all have the

opportunity to be members of God's spiritual Family.

This is a situation that Satan truly, truly hates! Satan's time is getting shorter and his anger is increasingly more intense. His desire to get ideas into the mind of men so that they will conduct themselves such as to bring themselves destruction is powerful and strong.

*We are at war! We are at **literal war!*** Satan is driven to break family relationships on both the physical and also more importantly on the spiritual level!

Here I'm talking about church family. God's *spiritual* Family as well as our *physical* families. Satan is driven to break family relationships on both the physical and the spiritual levels.

Our response needs to focus on the family, family relationships.

- What are the ideas that we are allowing into our families, both on a spiritual and a physical level?
 - What are we exposing our children to?
 - What is society exposing our children to?
this not only applies to the children, but:
 - What are we exposing ourselves to with everything about us:
 - ✓ the Internet
 - ✓ the multimedia sources
 - ✓ so much information
- Whether it be true or false, it's all out there!*
- What are we allowing to enter our mind in developing our ideas?

It's a battle! We truly are fighting a battle! We are truly at war!

Everything out there in this world today is presented as positive, 'forward moving, moving toward good,' but it is directly doing the opposite!

It takes courage for a young person, and even us in our elder years, to buck this trend to develop ideas that are dangerous and detrimental to our lives, both on physical terms and, more importantly, on a spiritual terms.

We cannot be led by someone's ideas unless it goes back to the 'trunk of the tree.' When we understand how Satan's deceptive mind works, we become smarter and wiser. We can learn how to resist this temptation, the influences that are out there in this world today. There are many, and the Internet, as valuable as it is, is probably the most deceptive, most corrupt means of developing new ideas.

The key, of course, goes back to the head of the family. Under God's family structure, the head of the family is directly attached to the Head, that being Christ Who is attached to His Head, the Father; an attachment that is absolutely vital for spiritual health, strength and well being.

The family structure is setup to allow and direct the intimate flow of Godly influence for all family members. Of course, I'm speaking of both the *physical* and the *spiritual* family.

There is, and must be, structure within the family. This places enormous responsibility on those charged with the connection of family members of the Body to Jesus Christ the Head.

That's us! God the Father called us! We are to be those to be in charge and maintain our spiritual lives with the guidance of God being the 'Trunk of the tree'!

Ephesians 4:11: "And He gave some as apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers **for the perfecting of the saints...** [that's our purpose] **...for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ until** we all come into the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.** So that we **no longer be children, tossed and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men in cunning craftiness,** with a view to the systematizing of the error" (vs 11-14).

We need to be careful brethren! We need to be focused! We cannot divert our way of thinking, our ideas, from the 'Trunk of the tree'! That does not mean that we kind of lose our minds, but it means that we constantly ***seek God and ask Him to give us the mind of Christ!*** That is what our goal should be.

All of these things that I've described as happening in today's age is the *day of rationalism, the use of the human mind **with God out of the picture*** developing for ourselves what is right and what is wrong. ***A dangerous scenario!***

Now this is directed to the Church. We can clearly see it in society, ***but can we see it happening within the Church? Of course we can!*** Over the many years that we've been here, many moreso than others, winds of doctrine changing, *blowing from all directions dangerously!* We are speaking of winds in our discussions; *very dangerous!* It is not clear and specific at times, and we cannot place a direct finger from the direction of the sources that are derived. We must be careful because the wind is coming from vastly various places. They are the winds of doctrine!

There again, the winds of doctrine, the basis of the 'Trunk of the tree' basis of the Word of God, the Scriptures that we have been so fortunate to have been led to.

Brethren, **let us be warned!** Let us pray that if we have ideas—or doctrines thrown at us from wherever—that we stay close to that 'Trunk of the tree' or else we will begin to waiver and have consequences, to wander to get our mind off where that 'Trunk of the tree' is. Of course, that is away from God's Word.

- we must remain sound in our belief
- we must be committed
- we must be convicted

to the Truth and nothing else!

Let us not be distracted, taken away, questioning, and beginning to drift away from the solid foundation that we have been exposed to by God's calling. That we continually grow on that calling and do what we have been instructed to do. **Stay focused on the 'Trunk of the tree'!**

Let us not let our minds be deceived by one's thoughts and one's opinions. We all have them, we all of thoughts and opinions. Sometimes people share their opinions more than they should. But strictly, everything that we say and every idea that we come up with should:

- stay to the Vine
- stay to the Word
- stay to the Truth

If there are any doubts, **do not expound it until proven!** As we are instructed by the Word, **prove all things!**

Opinion means nothing! Trying to express someone's beliefs based on their ideas is strictly an instrument that Satan uses widely, *especially on the called out ones!* We are the ones Satan is after, those whom God the Father has called out of this world. We are the prime target of Satan and his doings.

The Church is not immune to the reception of ideas generated by the mind of 'the prince of the power of the air.' Ideas that have consequences and those consequences may not be good.

We've read Eph. 5 many times and recently it's come up many times:

Ephesians 5:1: "Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children; and walk in love, even as Christ also loved us, and gave Himself for us *as* an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savor. But fornication and all uncleanness or

covetousness, do not permit it even to be named among you, as is fitting for saints; nor filthiness, **nor foolish talking or jesting**, which are not becoming; but instead, thanksgiving. For this you know, that no fornicator, or unclean person, or covetous *person*, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. **Do not let anyone deceive you with vain words; for because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience**" (vs 1-6).

Num. 24 & 25 is the same principle. Satan and his ideas leads people into moral conduct that brings the wrath of God "**...upon the sons of disobedience.**"

Verse 7: "Therefore, do not be joint partakers with them."

This is Satan's standard mode of operation. The main key from there takes you right back to Eph. 4:15

John 17:14: "I have given them Your words, and the world has hated them because they are not of the world, just as I am not of the world."

I made the point earlier that the entire world is deceived. There is a small group of people who have been removed from that deception. If you go into the secular world and try to denounce the *isms* that I referred to earlier, you will find yourself, very quickly, being very unpopular!

The world does not want to hear from an external source. It wants only to be told that it is good and right; you are right. what you think is good—*whatever!*

Verse 15: "I do not pray that You would take them out of the world, but that You would keep them from the evil one. They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world. Sanctify them in Your Truth; Your Word is the Truth" (vs 15-17).

Set them apart! Jesus Christ says, **'By the Truth of Your Word!'**

Psalms 119:9: "With what shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your Word."

By getting out into this world and embracing every *idea* and every *ism* that is floating around is very dangerous.

Verse 10: "With all my heart I have sought You; O let me not wander from Your commandments. Your Word I have laid up in my heart, so that I might not sin against You" (vs 10-11).

By getting out into this world and

embracing every idea is dangerous!

The Word of God, the Truth of God, the Truth of God's Word.

Proverbs 7:6: "For at the window of my house I looked through my lattice, and I saw among the simple ones, among the youths, a young man with no understanding" (vs 6-7).

He went into a situation he should not have put himself into, and was influenced! Can we relate to that! Have we got ourselves into a situation that we should not have ever been in? And it influenced us?

Verse 10: "And, behold, there a woman met him, *with* the attire of a harlot and a wily heart."

Satan is a deceiver to draw, to seduce people's minds and thoughts. It talks about it. She seduces him here.

Verse 19—*she* says: "For my husband *is* not at home; he has gone on a long journey."

We know this is relaying a message about younger people, but it also applies to us in many ways in many circumstances.

In the early years, when many of us were called to the Truth, everyone was anticipating the return of Christ. As time progressed and society moved on, it also moved on in the Churches of God. The people turned away and turned to many of the *isms* in this world today. *So sad! So unfortunate! But it's true!*

There was much philosophical rationalism from the world brought into the Church! See what happened, the Church was destroyed, basically destroyed from within. Not externally, but from within! In v 20 he references society, an analogy of Satan's world.

Satan's way of operating is to get people to conduct themselves to entertain ideas first and then they become actions that cause their own destruction and thus consequences.

Their hurt bends their minds. How many of us know all too well that we are constantly struggling to heal our mind from some of the things that we got involved with earlier in our lives. We are older, wiser ***and we have been blessed to have been called out by God the Father!***

But we still need to deal with those struggles, whether they be from the past or more recent.

Proverbs 30:11: "*There is* a generation that curses their father and does not bless their mother.... [Are we at that state now?] ...*There is* a generation

that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their own filthiness" (vs 11-12).

We are seeing a generation that is pure in their own eyes, which is absolutely fertile ground for Satan to plan ideas into a person's mind.

Verse 13: "*There is* a generation, O how lofty are their eyes! And their eyelids are lifted up. *There is* a generation whose teeth *are like* swords, and their jaw teeth like knives, to devour the poor from off the earth and the needy from among men" (vs 13-14).

Isaiah 45:22: "Turn to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I *am* God, and there *is* none else."

There is no *ism*, no *movement* in the world today that will lead us to life. ***Life only comes from God! There is no other!***

Verse 23: "I [Christ] have sworn by Myself, the word has gone out of My mouth *in* righteousness, and shall not turn back, that unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear."

We are trying so hard to understand the concept of being connected to Jesus Christ, and through Christ to the Father. If we center Christ in our family, our look will be to the Father and the Truth that emanates from Him! Truth must be revealed by God! It does not reside in the natural heart of mankind.

1-John 2:24: "Therefore, let what you have heard from *the* beginning dwell in you; if what you have heard from *the* beginning is dwelling in you, then you will be dwelling in the Son and in the Father."

This is the relationship we are striving to build. What is that that was to abide in them from the beginning? John started his letter by telling them:

1-John 1:1-3: "That which was from *the* beginning, that which we have heard, that which we have seen with our own eyes, that which we observed for ourselves and our own hands handled, concerning the Word of Life; (and the life was manifested, and we have seen, and are bearing witness, and are reporting to you the eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested to us); that which we have seen and have heard we are reporting to you in order that you also may have fellowship with us; **for the fellowship—indeed, our fellowship—is with the Father and with His own Son Jesus Christ**" (vs 1-3).

John goes on to spell that our repeatedly in this particular letter. We need think about some

things that John writes here. But when I was looking at some of this, I was think that it must be stacked up against what Jesus Christ told us.

Matthew 24:24—*a warning for us*: “For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, and they shall present great signs and wonders, in order to deceive, if possible, even the elect.”

It is obviously a close call, and the very elect are going to have to be ‘on their toes.’ ***Be on guard! Be alert! Know and prove what they hear!*** If you hear something that doesn’t sound right, check it out! Prove it! You can prove it! God back to the Word of God. It may take effort and response on your part. We cannot accept just hearing someone’s ideas and take that as being the Truth.

We have a lot to learn, it is limited in our learning at times. We must constantly seek God and pray to Him that He would open our mind to hear what there is to hear from the ‘Trunk of the tree.’

Brethren, there is one final thought:

1-John 4:1: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but ***test the spirits whether they are from God***, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

We’ve seen that many times! ***The winds of doctrine are blowing!*** We need to be aware of that. We need to be tested! Assess and evaluate the spirits that are out there. That’s what it says:

Verse 2: “By this *test* you *can* know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in *the* flesh is from God.”

We know that we have a relationship with Jesus Christ. He walked on this earth, lived a sinless, perfect life and He died for us as the sacrifice for our sins. We get to take Him as a part of our being, part of our mind. That is the relationship that we have.

Verse 3: “And every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not from God. And this is the *spirit* of antichrist, which you heard *was* to come, and even now it is already in the world. You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, ***because greater is He Who is in you than the one who is in the world***” (vs 3-4).

If there is some deconstruction that Satan can create to disconnect people from Christ, his way will win. We have to be aware of that. ***We fight that daily!*** We must fight that! Satan do anything, everything, to get ideas into our mind that is totally diverse and not from the ‘Trunk of the tree.’

Christ living His life in us will be the preventative measure of those ideas taking root. We have a mind that will test ideas, reject those that

don’t stack up to the Word of God. Remember, God’s Word is Truth!

Ideas float around as you breathe the air, and breathe out air. Ideas of the ‘prince of the power of the air’ are floating all about us. We have the opportunity and the choice to embrace any particular idea we have. God has given us that choice, but if we are truly of God, ***we will know the Spirit of God and Christ in us!***

We will test the spirits! We will test the ideas presented to us to see if they come from an irrational mind of men, or from the revealed Word of God, the ‘Trunk of the tree,’ and that we grab a hold of it and hold tight.

Verse 5: “They are of the world; because of this, they speak of the world, and the world listens to them.”

With Christ living His life in us, we that attachment to the Head of the Family, we will not hear and accept those ideas presented to us that are not right.

Of course, there’s discernment and work involved, establishing and maintaining the ever so important relationship with Christ and God the Father. That is why we are at war! That is why we have to do the things we do! We are of God—***period!*** Let us remain that way!

- ***Let us stay steadfast!***
- ***Let us stay strong!***
- ***Let us stay faithful!***
- ***Let us stay loyal!***
- ***Let us stay to the ‘Trunk of the tree!’***

He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world! Ideas have consequences, and in particular realize that your own private ideas will also have consequences.

- Where are you drawing your ideas from?
 - From the world out there?
- or***
- From the Word of God?
 - ✓ that is the test!
 - ✓ that is the ‘Trunk of the tree’

Let us not be distracted, misled into someone else’s or even have our own ideas, but rather stay close to the book! Stay to the Word of God!

- don’t be distracted by the Internet
- don’t be distracted by the social media that’s out there

God’s Word is where we should be! We are at war and God the Father wants us to stay close to

Him! He needs us, so, brethren, stay fast, stay loyal to God's Word and let not your own ideas and agendas take over our way of thinking. Certainly don't let it affect others!

We live in dangerous times and we need to light the fire behind us to take heed and not let the world take us in. let the Spirit of God lead us and direct us to our everlasting reward that God has presented and promised to us; *that of eternal life!*

Remember: *ideas will bear consequences!*

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 John 5:19-20
- 2) 2 Timothy 3:13
- 3) Ephesians 2:2
- 4) Psalm 10:3-4
- 5) Numbers 24:10, 25
- 6) Numbers 25:1-3
- 7) Proverbs 28:4, 18
- 8) Romans 1:25, 28, 32
- 9) Ephesians 4:11-14
- 10) Ephesians 5:1-7
- 11) John 17:14-17
- 12) Psalm 119:9-11
- 13) Proverbs 7:6-7, 10, 19
- 14) Proverbs 30:11-14
- 15) Isaiah 45:22-23
- 16) 1 John 2:24
- 17) 1 John 1:1-3
- 18) Matthew 24:24
- 19) 1 John 4:1-5

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Revelation 12
- Numbers 25:1
- Proverbs 7:20

NB:bo
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