

Do Not Be Deceived My Beloved Brethren - Part 3

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Well, good afternoon everyone! In the previous two sermons, I've been covering the topic of being deceived. When I started the series, I mentioned it would be a multi-part sermon. And the first part or the first sermon I gave dealt with the overall concept of being deceived by Satan. In that, we saw from the Bible that it is considered by God, this deception by Satan, to be a spiritual seduction by Satan just as he did with mankind and especially those of us today, those that God has worked with, his desire to spiritually seduce us and thereby make us unfit for the virgin Bride of Jesus Christ that we read about in Revelation 14.

In the second part, we looked at the methods that Satan uses to attempt to seduce us and draw us away from following God and from the calling that we've all been given. 2 Corinthians 2:11 tells us we should not be ignorant of his devices and his attempt to gain an advantage over us. We also looked at the incident of the seduction of physical Israel on the banks of the Jordan River and saw that it was not just a random happenstance. Rather, it was a very carefully planned and executed attempt to have God destroy Israel in Moab's last attempt before they crossed over into the promised land. The analogy of where we stand today, those efforts were stepped up by Balak getting Baalam to try to curse them, but also just as they were going into the promised land for us today it should serve as a very stark warning that we should take very seriously in this attempt.

What I want to do today is to continue to examine the methods that Satan uses to attempt to draw us away. Turn over to 2 Corinthians 11. I read this scripture in my last sermon, but I want to re-emphasize it and use it as a starting point for this sermon. And this sermon will be titled

Do Not Be Deceived My Beloved Brethren - Part 3.

In this epistle to the Corinthians, Paul was warning the Corinthians of what was going to come upon them. At the very beginning, the very infancy of God's Church, remember this was in the first number of years that it had formed. 2 Corinthians 11 and let's pick it up in verse 13. It says:

2 Corinthians 11:13. *For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. (NKJV)*

So, he's talking about these that he was referring to as false apostles that they transform themselves into apostles of Christ.

That Greek word [transforming] is Strong's 3345, "metaschēmatizō." There are two basic parts to it, "metá" and then "schēmatizō", from which we get the word "schematic."

It's a framework. "Metá" means *pertaining to*. In other words, these deceitful workers, they pertained to, try to represent themselves. And what Strong's says is that it is a derivative of 3326 and 4976 and it means "to *transfigure* or *disguise*."

But it means *to transform* and it's interesting that that word that's translated there as "transform" is completely different from the process by which we're being transformed. Just hold your finger and turn over to Romans 12. This word "transformed" is used again, but it's talking here about us. Romans 12 and verse 2 and it says:

Romans 12:2. *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. (NKJV)*

And that's a totally different word even though it's still translated "transformed." That's Strong's 3339 and that's *metamorphóō*. It's the word we get for metamorphosis or metamorphous, which means to literally *transform*. And it's used in the King James *to change, to transfigure or to transform*.

Let me read what Zodhiates says in his Word Study about comparing and contrasting those two words. I find it very interesting and he's referring to 2 Corinthians. He says, "This outward change is best illustrated by contrasting...."

And this is page 973 of the Complete Word Study.

This outward change is best illustrated by contrasting *metaschēmatízō* with *metamorphóō* (3339), to transform. If one were to change a Japanese garden into an Italian one, this would be *metaschēmatízō*. But if one were to transform a garden into something wholly different, as a ball field, it is *metamorphóō*. It is possible for Satan to *metaschēmatízō*, transform himself into an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14), i.e., he can change his whole outward semblance. But it would be impossible to apply *metamorphóō* to any such change for this would imply an internal change, a change not of appearance, but of essence, which lies beyond his power.

So again, these are two very different words that are used and there is a great deal of difference to them. What we're looking on is the outward appearance, the way one acts, what they say, the way they appear versus the inward appearance or the inward heart. One is to appear to change and the other is to change first on the inside and as our heart changes, the way we act and the way we are will change. We, as humans, can only look on the outside and, because of this, it makes it relatively easy to fool someone. During His time on this earth, Jesus was constantly running into issue.

Go back to 2 Corinthians 11 now.

While we can't look on the heart—and we're going to discuss this later in more depth in the final part of this series—while we can't look on the heart to see if the transformation

is genuine, God has given us a way to do that. And that is to look at the fruits and what a person bears. And I'm just telling you to get you to thinking about this. I find it very interesting that God with the very first encounter with humans, what He put before them with the two trees was fruit. And He said, "Here's fruit leading to life. And here is bad fruit. It's poison and it leads to death." So God is very consistent in wanting us to look at fruits and if those fruits will belie what's beneath.

Back to 2 Corinthians 11 and I'll pick it up in verse 14. It says:

2 Corinthians 11:14. *And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms ... (NKJV)*

The New American Bible and the New International Version use the word "masquerades." The New Living Translation and the New Revised Standard say, "disguises."

14b) ... himself into an angel of light.

15) Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works. (NKJV)

A phrase that we've heard many times, and I'll just use it again, is "The best predictor of future behavior is past behavior." And this is not only true with human beings, but it's also true with Satan and it's also true with his ministers. God inspired Solomon to tell us the very same thing. Ecclesiastes 1:9. Solomon wrote:

Ecclesiastes 1:9. *That which has been is what will be, that which is done is what will be done, and there is nothing new under the sun. (NKJV)*

The way that they behaved in the past is the way they will behave. There is nothing new.

Turn over to Acts chapter 20. The Bible is the guide and the primary source of information that we, as Christians, need to give us instruction on how to live and the pitfalls to avoid. The early Church had the same issues regarding false ministers infiltrating the Church and I might add just as we do today. Acts 20 and we'll pick it up in verse 16. It says:

Acts 20:16. *For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost.*

17) From Miletus he sent to Ephesus ... (NKJV)

In other words, he wasn't able to stop there, but when he got to Miletus:

17b) ... he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. (NKJV)

There was something he wanted to deliver that was very important to those at Ephesus to the Church. He didn't have time to stop, but he wanted to convey it. So he had them come to him.

18) And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, (NKJV)

Skip down to verse 28.

28) Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

29) For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.

30) Also [And notice this!] from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, ... (NKJV)

The New Revised Standard says, "distorting the truth." The Bible in Basic English says, "give wrong teaching," and the English Standard Version "twisted things." So, "rise up speaking twisted things to draw away" and this is key.

30b) ... to draw away the disciples after themselves. (NKJV)

The whole purpose of them doing this was to gain a following. They wanted to teach something that was different from the truth so that those people would follow them. And this is a key motivation behind "speaking of the perverse things." It's to gain a following.

If you think about it, in order to have people follow you, you have to have something that is unique or different. Otherwise, how can you get them to buy in or follow you? And I'm going to ask you this and I'm going to use this in a different way, but the question is: "Does all of the 'new truth' that is being espoused—and I don't think it is, but I'm just going to call it that—does that bring God's people closer together? Does that unify us? Does that make us more committed to follow God, to become a family, a body of Christ? Or does it split us and divide us and separate us and tear us apart? Does this 'new truth' strengthen our body, the body of Christ, which is the Church? Or does it weaken it and separate it?"

Verse 31:

31) Therefore watch, ... (NKJV)

Another key word—watch. Be on your guard to what I just said. Take heed.

31b) ... and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

32) *"So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. (NKJV)*

I mentioned in my last sermon that everyone that—and I'm going to use the word "observes" the seventh-day Sabbath doesn't necessarily mean they're a true minister of God; it doesn't mean that they are a member of the body of Christ. And this is just my observation. We in the Church are very naïve about this today. It's as if that is the bond, the glue that holds us all together if we say that we observe the seventh-day Sabbath. And I will tell you this can have very serious and it can have even fatal consequences.

I want to do a case study into this. Turn over to 1 Kings 12 and I'll just start in verse 26. It says:

1 Kings 12:26. *And Jeroboam said in his heart, "Now the kingdom may return to the house of David:*

27) If these people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will turn back to their lord, Rehoboam king of Judah, and they will kill me and go back to Rehoboam king of Judah."

28) Therefore the king asked advice, made two calves of gold [There's nothing new.], and said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel [Wow!], which brought you up from the land of Egypt!" (NKJV)

Somebody just hit the fast-forward button.

29) And he set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.

30) Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan.

31) He made shrines on the high places, and made priests from every class of people, who were not of the sons of Levi. (NKJV)

He just took common people.

32) Jeroboam ordained a feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the feast that was in Judah, ... (NKJV)

It was a counterfeit. He changed the calendar. And what's interesting is: It worked then and it's still working today.

Take careful note of the reason that Jeroboam did this. Was it to unify? Was it to bring God's chosen people together? Or was it to divide and to split?

32b) ... and offered sacrifices on the altar. So he did at Bethel, sacrificing to the calves that he had made. And at Bethel he installed the priests of the high places which he had made.

33) So he made offerings on the altar which he had made at Bethel on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, in the month which he had devised in his own heart [a month after the Feast of Tabernacles]. And he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and offered sacrifices on the altar and burned incense. (NKJV)

And God was very upset at the way they were behaving. He sent a prophet to deliver a very stern warning. Let's continue in chapter 13 and verse 1.

1 Kings 13:1. And behold, a man of God went from Judah to Bethel by the word of the Lord, and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense.

2) Then he cried out against the altar by the word of the Lord, and said, "O altar, altar! Thus says the Lord: 'Behold, a child, Josiah by name, shall be born to the house of David; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and men's bones shall be burned on you.'"

3) And he gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign which the Lord has spoken: Surely the altar shall split apart, and the ashes on it shall be poured out."

4) So it came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, who cried out against the altar in Bethel, that he stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, "Arrest him!" Then his hand, which he stretched out toward him, withered, so that he could not pull it back to himself.

5) The altar also was split apart, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the Lord. (NKJV)

And again, that's very key.

6) Then the king answered and said to the man of God, "Please entreat the favor of the Lord [Notice this word:] your God [not mine, not ours; your God], and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me." So the man of God entreated the Lord, and the king's hand was restored to him, and became as before.

7) Then the king said to the man of God, "Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward." (NKJV)

Notice that Jeroboam wanted to reward the man for what God had done through him. Verse 8:

8) But the man of God said to the king, "If you were to give me half your house, I would not go in with you; nor would I eat bread nor drink water in this place. (NKJV)

You see the prophet knew very well what God had told him. He was to deliver a message to Jeroboam and then he was to leave. Not to tarry. Deliver a message and go. Verse 9:

9) *For so it was commanded me by the word of the Lord, saying, 'You shall not eat bread, nor drink water, nor return by the same way you came.'* (NKJV)

What's that about the mouth of two or three witnesses? Here is the first witness of him telling what God had said. You see he was not enticed by honor or reward. He was focused on carrying out the task that God had given him exactly the way He told him.

10) *So he went another way and did not return by the way he came to Bethel.*

11) *Now an old prophet dwelt in Bethel, and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel; they also told their father the words which he had spoken to the king.*

12) *And their father said to them, "Which way did he go?" For his sons had seen which way the man of God went who came from Judah.*

13) *Then he said to his sons, "Saddle the donkey for me." So they saddled the donkey for him; and he rode on it,*

14) *and went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak. Then he said to him, "Are you the man of God who came from Judah?" And he said, "I am."*

15) *Then he said to him, "Come home with me and eat bread."*

16) *And he said, "I cannot return with you nor go in with you; neither can I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place." (NKJV)*

The second time.

17) *For I have been told by the word of the Lord, 'You shall not eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by going the way you came.'* (NKJV)

Third time he repeats it. He repeats what God had told him.

18) *He said to him, ... (NKJV)*

This is the old prophet.

18b) *... "I too am a prophet as you are [I'm like you!], and an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord, saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.'" [Notice!] But he lied to him. (NKJV)*

This was clearly not from God. It was Satan. And this prophet was one of the ministers sent to deceive and to entice to disobey God, His very clear instruction, which he knew. Riches and honor didn't get him. He let his guard down when he was told "I'm one of you. We're buds! We've done the same thing. I have knowledge too. And let me tell you what God told me to pass on."

Verse 19:

19) *So he went back with him, and ate bread in his house, and drank water. (NKJV)*

And God delivered the sentence to that prophet through the mouth of this false prophet.

20) *Now it happened, as they sat at the table, that the word of the Lord came to the prophet who had brought him back;*

21) *and he cried out to the man of God who came from Judah, saying, "Thus says the Lord: 'Because you have disobeyed the word of the Lord, and have not kept the commandment which the Lord your God commanded you,*

22) *but you came back, ate bread, and drank water in the place of which the Lord said to you, "Eat no bread and drink no water," your corpse shall not come to the tomb of your fathers."*

23) *So it was, after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk, that he saddled the donkey for him, the prophet whom he had brought back.*

24) *When he was gone, a lion met him on the road and killed him. And his corpse was thrown on the road, and the donkey stood by it. The lion also stood by the corpse. (NKJV)*

All because someone said, "I'm one of you. And God spoke through me as well. And here's what He told me." 1 Peter 5:8.

1 Peter 5:8. *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*

9) *Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. (NKJV)*

You see he disobeyed God. He was seduced by someone saying, "I'm one of you. I'm like you are. I'm a prophet as well. And here's what God told me to tell you." And yet, clearly three times, he knew what God said.

Brethren, we need to understand we are in very perilous times. And that means that not everyone that is among us that claims to have the truth is of God. Satan's ministers are masquerading themselves as bringing new truth. And it appeals to us because it is new and it's exciting and it's titillating. And it appeals to our vanity and our self-importance because we've got understanding or knowledge that others don't. And somehow we are special because we have this understanding. Let me tell you the fruit of that is poison and it's going to bring death, just as it did to that prophet and those that Satan are able to devour.

We're going to revisit this again when we examine the tools that God has provided for us to resist and identify them, but never forget: Every teacher that is among us is not of us, is not part of us. And again, I want to say it again. We can be very naïve about this and the result will be the death by our adversary, the roaring lion, the great deceiver.

Back in the mid and late '60s when God started revealing truth to me, one of the people that I came in contact with very early on, in fact, probably I don't even know at that time I was aware that there was a church, but I had read and I knew there were people. But one of the people I came in contact with tried to introduce me to the concept that I would later understand that if God had a name and He was going to listen to us or to regard us, we needed to know how to correctly pronounce His name. The reason I mention that is it's a false doctrine that I'm sure long predated my exposure but it's also one that persists to this day. And this heresy has won by the idea that the God that created us insists one not only using the one name, but we also have to have the accent correct or He just refuses to hear us.

Let me tell you something about accents. Please let me brag for a second. I've traveled the world. I have heard almost every language. And let me tell you there are certain languages that don't even have the ability to pronounce other languages. The way the tongue has been trained. For example, I'll just use one that's very obvious. To the Japanese, they can't pronounce an "L". It comes out as an "R". And that's just the way it is.

Well, if God who made those languages and if He required that, then God's not fair if He gives people languages that they're not even able to pronounce this one name and to get it just exactly right. If you think about it very long, you realize it's just hogwash. It's heresy.

The problem, even taking that further is, if you get four of these people together, you'll have five or six different opinions on how it's supposed to be pronounced.

God's the author of language. Let's never forget that. And by the way, God could change our language in the twinkling of an eye. In fact, we know in the future He's going to. He did at the tower of Babel. And He's going to do it in the future when He gives us a new and a pure language.

I've watched people start on a path of this. And let me tell you, to a person, it has always taken them away from God. It's taken them down a path that's away from God to the point that they simply quit trying to obey or serve God. They somehow thought if they did this that God could become their "genie" because "I've got His name right. I act in a certain way and that's pleasing to God. Ergo, God is going to do what I want." And when that doesn't work, they become very disillusioned and they will just go off on their own and just quit trying at all. It's a one-way path and it never ends well.

But just remember God said He will look at those that are of "a humble and a contrite heart and trembles at His Word, listens to what He says."

If I could use the analogy, going down that path will take us right back to Egypt.

Turn over to Matthew chapter 9. When Christ walked the earth, one of His biggest difficulties was not from His disciples or the people desiring as babes to be fed, it was

from the old guard that wanted to protect their power base and their system of Talmudic dos and don'ts. In their minds, their traditions had become the focus of their worship and, in their minds, that had trumped God's laws. Matthew 9 and verse 11, it says:

Matthew 9:11. *And when the Pharisees saw [this], ... (NKJV)*

And I'm just breaking into a thought.

11b) ... they said to His disciples, "Why does your Teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" (NKJV)

You see they were trying to cast doubt on Christ and were attempting to discredit Him because He didn't follow their set of rules.

12) When Jesus heard [them], He said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.

13) But go and learn ... (NKJV)

He didn't just tell them. He said, "Look, you go search this out."

13b) ... go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance."

14) Then the disciples of John [one of them] saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?" (NKJV)

And keep in mind, the disciples of John were from the practicing Jews of that day and were still in the process of understanding—even John himself—who the Messiah was. They still had their traditions. And at this point, John was still actively preaching repentance and still pointing to the Messiah. It was a valid question that they asked and notice Christ's answer, verse 15:

15) And Jesus said to them, "Can the friends of the bridegroom mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, and then they will fast. (NKJV)

Now notice His analogy of this current status quo and what He was bringing in the next verse. He says:

16) No one puts a piece of unshrunk cloth on an old garment; for the patch pulls away from the garment, and the tear is made worse.

17) Nor do they put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins break, the wine is spilled, and the wineskins are ruined. But they put new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved." (NKJV)

What He was telling them was, "You don't try to stitch the old ways and the old traditions into the new ways. It only makes it worse."

Let's make no mistake. Christ came to establish a New Covenant. The Old Covenant, which required physical obedience for physical blessings, was replaced by a covenant that required not only physical to God's law but spiritual obedience to a spiritual law and it was for spiritual eternal blessings. And those two just didn't mix. One was the outside and one was the inside.

And those that badgered Christ and hounded and even killed His followers to maintain their system didn't go away when Christ died.

Turn over to Philippians 3.

Paul spent his entire post-conversion years preaching against man's attempt to mix the old and the new. And God used him because he came out of that mindset. If you just sort of back off and you look at Paul and who Paul was, it's nothing short of astounding that God would take someone that was so in the middle of that, so steeped into it, bring him out, and convert him, because who better to understand it and be able to talk about it and to talk about the limitations of it than Paul?

Philippians 3:1.

Philippians 3:1. Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe.

2) *Beware of dogs, ... (NKJV)*

And again, he wasn't talking about the dogs outside.

2b) *... beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation!*

3) *For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,*

4) *though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so:*

5) *circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee;*

6) *concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.*

7) *But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. (NKJV)*

Paul was not very fond of the Judaizers which tried to bring the people back into that framework. He called them "evil workers" and "dogs."

Galatians chapter 2 and I'll just start in verse 1. It says:

Galatians 2:1. Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and also took Titus with me. (NKJV)

And this is referring to the conference recorded in Acts 15 where they went to Jerusalem to discuss the issue where the Jews that were in the Church were under pressure from those without requiring the Gentile converts to become physically circumcised before they could be baptized and part of the Church.

2) And I went up by revelation, and communicated to them that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles, but privately to those who were of reputation, lest by any means I might run, or had run, in vain.

3) [Notice!] Yet not even Titus who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised. (NKJV)

He said, "We didn't even make Titus," who was his traveling companion, wasn't compelled. The circumcision issue was from outside influences. It was not an innocent question, but it was a full frontal attack at God's Church from the Pharisees. Verse 4:

4) And this occurred [Why?] because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, ... (NKJV)

You see it wasn't an accident. It was those saying, "You go over there and you metaschēmātizō in front of them and tell them that they need to be doing this. And what was the purpose of this Judaizing? Was it to bring them more in harmony with God and His truth? Notice:

*4b) ... that they might bring us into bondage),
5) to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, ... (NKJV)*

Did Paul mull it over? "Let me sleep on this. Let me.... I'll get back to you next week. I want to think about this." He didn't sidle up to it. He didn't try to see their points. And remember this was all very familiar, very comfortable territory to Paul. It wasn't a new concept. He was a Hebrew of the Hebrews. He was circumcised the eighth day.

5 to whom we did not yield submission even for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you. (NKJV)

Hold your finger there. Let's go over to Acts 15. You see this issue had the potential to split the Church. That Satan, I might add, through his ministers masquerading themselves as ministers of light were trying to do. Acts 15 and we'll start in verse 1.

Acts 15:1. *And certain men came down from Judea and taught the brethren, "Unless you are circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved."*

2) Therefore, when Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and dispute with them, ... (NKJV)

The "them" was not the apostles. It was certain men from Judea.

- 2b) ... they determined that Paul and Barnabas and certain others of them should go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles and elders, about this question.
- 3) So, being sent on their way by the church, they passed through Phoenicia and Samaria, describing the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused great joy to all the brethren.
- 4) And when they had come to Jerusalem, they were received by the church and the apostles and the elders; and they reported all things that God had done with them.
- 5) But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed ... (NKJV)

And this word "who believed" is from the Greek word; it's Strong's 4100 and it's "pisteuo." And it means *to have faith in, to have respect to a person or a thing*. And it's translated "believe," or "commit," or "to put your trust with." And the word has the connotation of putting one's trust in God and that's correct. It's used many times to believe in God, but it also means *to put one's trust in anything*. It can mean *put one's trust in wealth, a lucky charm, some ideology*.

And the commentaries, if you look at the commentaries, they're divided as to the correct meaning of the word. Some feel that "pisteuo" here means that they believed in Christ and were converts or that they believed in their words or traditions, in this case, requiring circumcision. Adam Clarke's Commentary has the view that based on what Paul said about them in Galatians, they were not converts; they were false teachers. So, again, it's one of those areas where it's certainly up for grabs, but if you take that in concert with what we read about in Galatians, these were not believers in Christ.

Verse 5:

5) But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses." (NKJV)

Just as an aside, I covered in a Bible study recently the law of Moses here was not just the Ten Commandments. It was the entire first five books of the Bible, which we call the Pentateuch. It was all five of the books that Moses wrote.

Okay, let's go back to Galatians 2. This event, which was introduced and stirred up by Satan's ministers, had so leavened the Church that even the apostles got caught up into it. Let's pick it up in verse 11 of Galatians 2.

Galatians 2:11. *Now when Peter had come to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was to be blamed;
12) for before certain men came from James, he would eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision.*

13) *And the rest of the Jews also played the hypocrite with him, so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy.*

14) *But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, I said to Peter before them all, "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles and not as the Jews, why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?" (NKJV)*

Titus 1. This was one of the early issues the Church dealt with and today, brethren, the same forces are at work with the same goals in mind. They split to divide and to destroy the Church of God, to return us to the bondage that comes from the darkened teachings of those that have crept in. In his letter to Titus, Paul addresses this very directly. Titus chapter 1 and I'll pick it up in verse 5. It says:

Titus 1:5. *For this reason I left you in Crete, that you should set in order the things that are lacking, and appoint elders in every city as I commanded you — (NKJV)*

So he's raising up churches in Crete. And then he goes on to list the qualifications of those who were to be appointed as elders, but notice verse 9. Skip down

9) holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict. (NKJV)

One of the qualifications for an elder was not back then. "Holding fast" is a present progressive. It continues. Remember the titles "deacon" or "elder," those are not just titles that you get for life. It's a job description. It describes what you are doing. And here it says, "holding fast."

I don't care to count the number of times I've seen a person ordained as an elder in a very short order start to change what they teach. It's almost as if they had these ideas and were trying to get the office so it would give credence to their ideas. And they would start teaching something new and different. And soon they've split off and garnered a following for themselves.

Again, the qualification is a present tense qualification. Not a past tense! It's not at some point in time you did that, it means to continue to teach what they had received.

9) holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict.

10) For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision,

11) whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain. (NKJV)

They're looking for a profit, for a following. They're looking for people to look to them. They want power.

12) One of them, a prophet of their own, said, "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." (NKJV)

The false ministers not only told lies; they had no love of the people that they served. In fact, they detested and looked down on them and considered them inferior. Verse 13:

13) This testimony is true. Therefore ... (NKJV)

Put up with it?

*13b)... rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith,
14) [Notice!] not giving heed to Jewish fables and commandments of men who turn from the truth. (NKJV)*

Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown on that says,

These formed the transition to subsequent Gnosticism... (We know—Gnosticism. We know better. We are right. We know.) yet the error was but profitless, not tending to godliness, rather than openly opposed to the faith.

Matthew Henry's Commentary:

Fancies and devices of men in the worship of God are contrary to truth and piety. Jewish ceremonies and rites, that were at first divine appointments, the substance having come and their season and use being over, are now but unwarranted commands of men, ...

In other words, when there was a physical covenant and there were physical things, God required certain physical acts. It was all, now with the new covenant, it was internal.

"... which not only stand not with, but turn from, the truth,"

That's what Matthew Henry says.

Verse 15:

15) To the pure all things are pure, but to those who are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; ... (NKJV)

It's never good enough. It's never right. Let's cast some doubt on it.

*15b)... but even their mind and conscience are defiled.
16) They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work. (NKJV)*

That's what God inspired to be written about those that were trying to teach them these Jewish fables.

Chapter 2 verse 1:

Titus 2:1. *But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: (NKJV)*

You know, brethren, God's ministers, if they're true ministers, don't have a lot of wiggle room. We can't go out on a limb and start saying, "Well, let me just tell you what I think you ought to be doing."

I Timothy 4. If we are a minister of God, if we meet those qualifications, we are to speak the things that are proper for sound doctrine. 1 Timothy 4:7, he says to Timothy; Paul writes to Timothy:

1 Timothy 4:7. *But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise [yourself] rather unto godliness. (KJV)*

Again, these things have nothing to do with a relationship with God, with taking on God's character, with having our hearts changed. And here is what Adam Clarke says about it. It says: "[But refuse profane and old wives' fables.] This seems to refer particularly to the Jews, whose Talmudical writings are stuffed with the most ridiculous and profane fables that ever disgraced the human intellect."

Remember when Christ walked this earth, the God that created us, He was constantly running into this. And at no point did He ever say, "You ought to listen to that part. They've got that right with their phylacteries and with their offerings that they would stand and with their groanings when they would fast." None of that impressed Christ and none of that should impress us now.

1 Timothy 1 verse 4, just back a little. It says,

1 Timothy 1:4. *Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, ... (KJV)*

"We have Abraham for our Father. I can trace myself all the way back. I know who I am. And I have, by right of my genealogy, I have a special 'in' with God."

4b)... *which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do. (KJV)*

Barnes Notes' says,

That is, that they should not bestow their attention on fables, or regard such trifles as of importance. The "fables" here referred to were probably the idle and

puerile superstitions and conceits of the Jewish rabbies [sic]. The word rendered "fable" [Greek 3454, still reading.] muthos means properly "speech" or "discourse," and then fable or fiction, or a mystic discourse.

That's where we get the word "myth." It's a myth. It's not true. And he continues on (Barnes' Notes),

One of the most successful arts of the adversary of souls has been to mingle fable with truth; and when he cannot overthrow the truth by direct opposition, to neutralize it by mingling with it much that is false and frivolous.

2 Timothy 4. Here is what Paul said that those of God should be doing. 2 Timothy 4:1, he says:

2 Timothy 4:1. *I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:
2) Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. (NKJV)*

God inspired Paul in his instruction to Timothy to focus on God's word. As a minister, I think all of our goal in speaking should be to try to spend more time reading God's word and what God says and less time telling what we think. I think a minister's job is sort of maybe like a tailor. Our job is to try to stitch the scriptures together so that the relevant scriptures to a subject fit together, but the main goal of our preaching should be just that—preach the word.

Remember it was Satan, and we read about this the last time, that had the unmitigated gall to try to do what the very author or tried to convince Christ Himself, who had written the word, tried to use the scriptures to prove his ideas. And that's a trap that we can all fall into. Rather than us using the Bible to prove the point, we can extract an idea or come up with our idea and then we'll try to put in scriptures to make it fit that. And there is a difference. If one is not grounded and close to Christ, some of it might start making sense to human reasoning.

2 Timothy 4:3 continuing on:

3) For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, ... (NKJV)

He's talking about in the future.

3b)... but according to their own desires [their own lusts], because they have itching ears, (NKJV)

Because they want to hear something new; because they want to hear something exciting; they want to hear something that's titillating.

3 continued) they will heap up for themselves teachers; (NKJV)

I'll tell you one thing. God's Church is scattered, but one thing we don't lack is the abundance of teachers. We can find teachers that will teach us just about any type or flavor of heresy that we want. And it makes us feel good because it gives us secret special knowledge. It gives us a leg up on God. We've somehow cornered God. We've put Him into a box and it's just me and God because I have this esoteric knowledge and no one else has it—knowledge that is in our deceived mind and it places us above others. In your own study, look into the subject of Gnosticism. And the bottom line of your study will be it is a path that will take us away from God's truth into a morass of human devised ideas.

Continuing with the concept of deception as spiritual seduction, those ideas are titillating and they're exciting. I don't know. Those of you who have been in the Church thirty or forty years, you've probably read through the Bible four, five, six, seven times. Here's something exciting. Here's a paper that someone wrote on a different bend on things. And I will tell you—I can't say I've seen them all, but there's about five or six or seven different categories they fit into and I've seen attempts at all of them. But staying with that concept, label that—I think I used this in my last one—as spiritual pornography. In other words, it's something that is a different take on things. It is a different way of looking at things and the end of that will lead one away from the truth and into spiritual adultery.

Verse 4, notice this!

4) and they will turn their ears [Notice!] away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. (NKJV)

To myths, to muthos, trying to bring in fables into our worship of God. Surely God will be pleased. Here's the question: "Did this problem exist in Paul's day because the Pharisees and the Sadducees were the leaders of the people in general and did not have access to God's written word?" Or let me put it another way: "Is this something we don't need to be concerned with today since our leaders and the influences of the Pharisees is long gone and we now have a plethora of Bible translations and study aids? Can we just discount all of these things that Paul says because now we have our own Bibles; we have our own translations; we can study it? And I'll ask you the question now: "Is the general condition of God's Church today just this?"

We're told in the scriptures that we have to endure to the end; to hang onto it as if it was our lifeline and our eternal lives depended on it. 2 Timothy 3 and verse 1, notice what Paul said not about his time, not about the time in between, but in the very last days. 2 Timothy 3:1, this is a prophecy that he delivered.

2 Timothy 3:1. *But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:
2) For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud,
blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,*

- 3) *unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good,*
4) *traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,*
(NKJV)

Now we go, “Yea, that’s the world out there! That’s not us. That’s not talking about God’s Church. That’s the world.”

- 5) *having a form of godliness ...* (NKJV)

Uh oh! Now, you just quit preaching and went to meddling! He’s talking about having a form:

- 5b) *... but denying [the] power. And from such people turn away!*
6) *For of this sort are those who creep into households and make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts,*
7) *always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.*
8) *Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith;*
9) *but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was.*
10) *But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance,*
11) *persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra — what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me.*
12) *Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*
13) *But [Notice!] evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving [and that word is translated “seducing”] and being deceived [being seduced].*
(NKJV)

I would submit that there’s not one among us that doesn’t look at the Children of Israel after entering into the covenant with God at Sinai and then just almost immediately going off in some of the foulest, basest forms of sexual idolatry and wondered how they could do such a thing. Tsk, tsk, tsk!. Those dough heads! They just made this promise and look what they did. We could never do that!

Brethren, for us the stakes are infinitely higher. Our spiritual purity depends upon not just our calling and original commitment, it depends on our ongoing commitment. Notice verse 14:

- 14) *But you must [What?] continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them,* (NKJV)

Where did he learn them? They were learned from God’s true ministers that were grounded in truth, but also the things that were verified through God’s word. Remember the Bereans?

15) and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. (NKJV)

I find that interesting “make you wise to salvation through faith.” You have to believe that God says what He means and He means what He says.

16) All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, (NKJV)

Why?

17) that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work. (NKJV)

Proverbs 7, I've been trying to get to this chapter for the last two. As I've mentioned, this scripture has been used to warn young men about the perils of following after the harlot and rightly so, but for us today, brethren, there is a much greater lesson and warning given to us in God's Church. I just love that God inspired this to be written. Before writing about the poison of the wrong path, just like God, he [Solomon] always shows he wanted the correct path and the approach to be recorded first. Proverbs 7:1, notice how he starts this.

Proverbs 7:1. *My son, keep my words, and treasure my commands within you. 2) Keep my commands and live, and my law as the apple of your eye. (NKJV)*

God's Law and His commands should be the very center of our focus. It should be the governor of our lives. God's law should be first and foremost.

3) Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart. (NKJV)

This phrase “Bind them on your fingers,” Let me just read what Matthew Henry says. And again remember we're talking about the Bride of Christ, talking about being espoused. Matthew Henry says:

Bind them upon thy fingers; let them be precious to [you]; look upon them as an ornament, as a diamond-ring, as the signet on [your] right hand; wear them continually as [your] wedding-ring, the badge of thy espousals to God. Look upon the word of God as putting an [honor] upon [you], as an ensign of [your] dignity. Bind them on [your] fingers, that they may be constant memorandums to [you] of [your] duty, that [you may] have them always in view, as that which is graven upon the palms of [your] hands.

In other words, when we're tempted, remember we're espoused to Christ. We have an engagement ring on. We're wearing that spiritually. Verse 4:

4) *Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and call understanding your nearest kin, (NKJV)*

Will that preserve us? Is that our strength—our intellect, our superior discernment? You know Psalm 119, which is the longest chapter in the Bible and it is an acrostic Psalm which every letter starts with the alphabet and it goes through. I've covered that in previous sermons, but acrostic scripture was intended to be memorized and committed to memory verbatim. We have our, "This is the love chapter and that's the love chapter." I submit to you that Psalm 119 is the love chapter of the love between a person and God's law. That's the way and if you read it and you think about it as the love chapter of the psalmist or you expressing your love of God's law and His truth. I would encourage you to make a study of that Psalm in the light of what we're going through.

Verse 5, continuing on:

5) *That they may keep you from the immoral woman, from the seductress who flatters with her words. (NKJV)*

Notice the seductress is a flatterer. Just hold your finger there. Turn over to Daniel 11 verse 31. Here's a prophecy, but just notice and remember we're talking about the future.

Daniel 11:31. *And forces shall be mustered by him, and they shall defile the sanctuary fortress; then they shall take away the daily sacrifices, and place there the abomination of desolation.*

32) *Those who do wickedly against the covenant he shall corrupt with flattery; but the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits.*

33) *And those of the people who understand shall instruct many; yet for many days they shall fall by sword and flame, by captivity and plundering. (NKJV)*

There is a great martyrdom that's coming for those that understand and instruct—back to Proverbs 7—but notice they "corrupt with flattery." (Daniel 11:32) Proverbs 7 and we'll pick it back up in verse 6.

Proverbs 7:6. *For at the window of my house I looked through my lattice,*

7) *And saw among the simple, I perceived among the youths, [And note!] a young man devoid of understanding,*

8) *Passing along the street near her corner; and he took the path to her house (NKJV)*

You know this was not just a random happenstance of just happened to walk by and there he was. This is to see how close he could get to it and still get away. Again, this is how close can we get to these things, how close can become titillated by them and still not give in?

8) *Passing along the street near her corner; and he took the path to her house*
9) *In the twilight, in the evening, in the black and dark night. (NKJV)*

I don't even need to make a comment there. Is this children of the light or is it children of the dark?

10) *And there a woman met him, with the attire of a harlot, and a crafty heart.*
11) *She was loud and rebellious, her feet would not stay at home.*
12) *At times she was outside, at times in the open square, lurking at every corner. (NKJV)*

She didn't stay home. She was all over the place.

13) *So she caught him and kissed him; with an impudent face she said to him:*
14) *"I have peace offerings with me; today I have paid my vows. (NKJV)*

"I'm a religious person. I've given my peace offerings. I've paid my vows."

15) *So I came out to meet you, diligently to seek your face, and I have found you. (NKJV)*

"I'm one of you!"

16) *I have spread my bed with tapestry, colored coverings of Egyptian linen.*
17) *I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon. (NKJV)*

Maybe it's just my neurosis. Smells are a very powerful thing. About a month before Christmas, go into Wal-Mart and you smell the cinnamon flavors and all of those sweet flavors that they're different. And I'm convinced that that's not just the fact that they put out stuff that smells that way. I'm convinced that that is designed to entice and to get people's mind on that.

18) *Come, let us take our fill of love until morning let us delight ourselves with love.*
19) *For my husband is not at home; he has gone on a long journey;*
20) *He has taken a bag of money with him, and will come home on the appointed day."*
21) *With her enticing speech [her seductive speech] she caused him to yield, with her flattering lips she seduced him. (NKJV)*

I'm going to use a big paint brush here, and I'm going to apologize before I say it. I don't want what I'm about to say to include all salesmen. Okay? Because there are honorable professions and some salesmen. But have you ever notice how salesmen talk loud and fast and they flatter. "You have to act now. Don't think about it. This offer is going to be gone if you walk out that door." Have you ever noticed on television they

turn up the volume and it's loud and they talk fast and it is to get you moving and to ... out of impulse. "And if you don't consider it now, it's gone!"

Let's me just read what Gill's Exposition of the Bible says.

Ver. 21. *With her much fair speech, she caused him to yield,*... Or, "to decline" from the right way: ... {d}; his ear to listen to her, and his heart to go after her and along with her. This she did, by using a great many words, by her prolixity and by some taking and striking expressions; lewd women are generally very talkative {e}. It may be rendered, "by her much doctrine: {f}, as the words is in Pr 4:2; so Jezebel called herself a prophetess, and sets up for a teacher of men; and, by her false doctrine, deceives some who are called the servants of Christ to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols, Re 2:10;

with the flattering of her lips; she forced him to go along with her, not against his will, but with it: though at first there was some reluctance, conscience rose up and opposed; but her words, which were smoother than oil, found a way into his heart, and prevailed upon him to yield to her entreaties; ...

Spiritual pornography, you can't sidle up to it; you can't think about it and then still resist it.

... he could no longer withstand her attacks, but surrendered to her; her charming voice, and flattering lips, had more effect upon him than her kisses; notwithstanding these he was reluctant, but could stand it out no longer against her alluring words and soothing language....

Verse 21:

21) With her enticing speech she caused him to yield, with her flattering lips she seduced him. (NKJV)

Just hold your finger there. Let's go over to 2 Thessalonians 2.

While you're turning, I just want to read the King James Version where it talks about enticing speech. It's from the Hebrew word Strong's 3948, leqach (leh'-kakh). And it means *doctrine, learning, fair speech; properly, something received, i.e. (mentally) instruction (whether on the part of the teacher or hearer); also (in an active and sinister sense) inveiglement in doctrine or learning*. In other words, to be coerced, to be convinced of something against your will.

2 Thessalonians 2 and verse 7, it says:

2 Thessalonians 2:7. *For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.*

- 8) *And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.*
9) *The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,*
10) *and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, [Why?] because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. (NKJV)*

They didn't keep it as the center of their focus, as the apple of their eye, God's truth. They allowed themselves to go "Oh, way a minute. Maybe there is something more to this." And the end of that, brethren, it says there is death.

- 11) *And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,*
12) *that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*
13) *But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth,*
14) *to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
15) *Therefore, brethren, [Notice this!] stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle. (NKJV)*

Stand fast! Hold onto what you were taught.

Back to Proverbs 7 and I'll pick it up in verse 22.

- Proverbs 7:22.** *Immediately he went after her, as an ox goes to the slaughter or as a fool to the correction of the stocks,*
23) *Till an arrow struck his liver. As a bird hastens to the snare, he did not know it would cost his life.*
24) *Now, therefore, listen to me, my children; pay attention to the words of my mouth:*
25) *Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways, do not stray into her paths;*
26) *For she has cast down many wounded, and all who were slain by her were strong men. (NKJV)*

So you think you're tough? You think I'm well-grounded and I can see how close I can get to that? It says all of them were strong men. And that Hebrew word is 6099 `atsuw (aw-tsoom'); or `atsum (aw-tsoom'). It does not just mean *great and mighty*. It also means *numerous*.

Do we rely on our wisdom, our understanding, our knowledge to get us through this? Do we believe that because we're part of a group that there is safety in numbers? You know this many people can't be wrong! If we believe that for one second, we've already been seduced and defeated.

Verse 27:

27) Her house is the way to hell, descending to the chambers of death. (NKJV)

Brethren, I hope as a result of these three sermons, you can see as the espoused Bride of Christ that God requires that we remain faithful to our marriage covenant with Christ. While the entire world suffers and will continue to suffer, we are at the locus of one of the most concentrated conspiracies that's ever been launched. Satan, the God of this world desires nothing short of our seduction and the disqualification of us as the virgin bride.

Turn over to Ephesians 6 and verse 12. It says:

Ephesians 6:12. *For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. (NKJV)*

The good news to all of this is God hasn't left us powerless to withstand the attacks that are going to continue as long as Satan is the God of this world. God has given us an arsenal of tools to withstand and to allow us to prevail against that enemy. Verse 13:

13) Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. (NKJV)

God has given us tools.

For a final scripture, Revelation 3 and verse 7, very familiar:

Revelation 3:7. *"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, 'These things says He who is holy, He who is true, 'He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens':"*

8) "I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. (NKJV)

Interesting. It's referring to a special secret pronouncement? Or is this name calling him, "My Husband, My Lord, My Savior?"

Continue:

9) Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, ... (NKJV)

It's interesting He uses the word "synagogue." That word "synagogue" is used thirteen times in the New Testament and it means a Jewish assembly. He didn't say the Church

of Satan because the word “church”—remember he wrote this to “the church at”.... He made a distinction between the “church” (the ekklesia) and the synagogue.

“Those of the synagogue of Satan” and this is the second letter to the churches that he uses that term.

9b) ... who say they are Jews and are not, but lie — indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.

10) Because you have kept My command to persevere, [to hang on to continue with what you’ve been given] I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

11) Behold, I am coming quickly! [Notice!] Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. (NKJV)

And again that word, “hold fast” is used in four of the letters—“Hold fast what you have.”

12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name. (NKJV)

At that wedding supper, we are going to get His name.

13) "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." (NKJV)

In part 4 of this series, we’ll examine those tools that God makes available to us on a daily basis to avoid being deceived. And by using them, we, like Joseph and many others, can fulfill our priceless calling and truly become “Prevailers with God.”