

Reliable, Part 1

Pastor Steve Berger October 11, 2015

Perilous Times Will Come — sermon series in January 2014

- consistently taking a courageous stand
- warning about the most dangerous spiritual, cultural and political issues of our day
- happening in the past year:
 - a) rise of ISIS, Israel and Protective Edge, Ferguson and Baltimore riots, school shootings, aggressive homosexual agenda, etc.

Q. What gives you and me the authority to courageously take such a stand?

A. The Word of God, the Scripture, the Bible — charges us to take a stand!

*Q. Well how **reliable** is the Bible; how do we even know if it's God's Word, and not just the archaic opinions of men?*

*A. Over the next four weeks we are going to answer those very questions. What we'll find is that the **Word of God is very Reliable**, because it is **indeed God-breathed**, therefore, we're brought to a **place of decision**, believe it, live it, proclaim it... or deny it... either by our words AND/OR actions!*

The Road Map we will be following:

- 1) Manuscripts
- 2) Archaeology
- 3) Prophecy
- 4) Statistics

Word of God is under attack

- **Defend, Source of, Subtlety of, Safeguard against attack.**

Defend

a) **Jude 1:1-4**

- Jude, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to those who are called, sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ: Mercy, peace, and love be multiplied to you. Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

b) **Contend earnestly** — only time word used in New Testament; already strong to strive more; carry on a heroic struggle further; fight to the death! **Our calling, duty, privilege!**

c) **Crept in unnoticed** — certain lodge stealthily in our midst; believers not paying attention

d) **Turn grace to lewdness, denying, contradicting God** — by twisting scripture, challenging, creating doubt about, lying about — sole purpose to deceive people, to bring the people to themselves — HERE today!

Source of attack

Q. Who inspires these ungodly people to twist, challenge, create doubt, lie about scripture, and to deceive people?

a) **Genesis 3:1-5**

- Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

b) Serpent was cunning, challenging, lying, deceiving... "God really said that?; no judgment; be like God", God is withholder. —The word and character of God were under attack in the garden, and it hasn't stopped!

Jesus elaborated on the devil's character and actions...

a) **John 8:44-45**

- You are of *your father the devil*, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me.

b) the enemy 1) doesn't stand in truth, 2) no truth in him, 3) lies from own resources, 4) father of lies. *Jesus: yet I tell you the truth and you don't believe Me...*

Whether it is a person, community, or entire culture —

**The more you reject the truth of word of God,
the harder it becomes to believe it!**

Notice this very important observation...

a) **2 Timothy 3:13-15**

- But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, 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.

Amazing — *Evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse — we're 2,000 years later— infinitely worse! It's the scriptures that keep you from being deceived, so Satan cunningly challenges and lies about the scriptures in order to deceive people.*

The source of the attack on the Word is Satan himself!

Subtlety of attack

- **greatest threat is within the church**

- a) **Matthew 7:15 (from Jesus)**

- “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.”

- identity (false prophets), they look the part, act the part, then shred and consume

- b) **Acts 20: 25-32 (from Paul to church in Ephesus)**

- "And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God. 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. For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. "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."

- c) savage wolves come in among you; draw away disciples to themselves; Paul warned, and commended word of grace.

- d) **2 Peter 2:1-3 (from Peter)**

- But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

- e) false teachers, secretly, bring in damnable heresies, contradicting Lord; surprisingly many follow; with covetousness in heart of false teacher, exploit with deceptive words

**The subtlety of the attack on the Word
is that it comes from within the church!**

Safeguard against attack

- a) **2 Peter 3:15-18**

- ...as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures. You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

- b) **Beware** — pay attention, to **teachings and tactics**; know the attack is happening and where it's coming from; don't be naïve!

- c) **Grow in grace and knowledge** — continue progressing in your walk and experience with Jesus.

How do you grow?

a) **2 Timothy 2:15**

- Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

b) Beware, Grow, **Be diligent to study, Know the scriptures...**

Next safeguard...

a) **1 Peter 3:15**

- But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear.

b) Beware, Grow, Be diligent to study, Know the scriptures, **Ready to Defend hope...**

Next safeguard...

a) **1 Timothy 6:20-21**

- O Timothy! Guard what was committed to your trust, avoiding the profane and idle babblings and contradictions of what is falsely called knowledge—by professing it some have strayed concerning the faith. Grace be with you. Amen.

b) Beware, Grow, Be diligent to study, Know the scriptures, Ready to Defend hope, **Guard truth...**

Final safeguard...

a) **Jude 1:3**

- ...I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints,

1. Beware
2. Grow
3. Be diligent to study
4. Know the scriptures
5. Be Ready to Defend Hope
6. Guard Truth that was committed to you
7. Earnestly Contend for the faith!

**Doing the first 4 is great, however —
Defending, Guarding, Earnestly Contending
is where we actually engage culture with loving, transforming, scriptural truth —
do the first 4 without letting the last 3 go undone.**

NEXT WEEK — Reliability of the Manuscripts!

House of Prayer

Click on "House of Prayer" on www.gracechapel.net to fill out a prayer request.

We pray for requests for one month, and at our weekly prayer meetings.

Please come join our House of Prayer,
Tuesday, October 13th at 6:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary.