

The Battle Begins!

by Keith Malcomson

This sermon delves into the battle for the mind, focusing on the deception that began in the Garden of Eden with Eve being deceived by the serpent's cunning questioning of God's word. The sermon emphasizes the importance of receiving a love for the truth and believing in the truth to combat the strong delusion and deception that will intensify in the last days. It warns against the urge to lead, make decisions independently, and manipulate, stressing the need for submission to Christ's authority and the written scriptures to resist the devil's attacks on the mind.

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Description

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Transcript

Tonight we're coming to our next Bible study and we are going to ask you to turn in your Bible to Genesis chapter 3 here tonight, Genesis chapter 3, and we're on this series, The Battle for the Mind, and I want to really start getting into this tonight. Our message is the battle begins, reading from Genesis chapter 3 and verse 1. As we've already seen, the series that we did one year ago on the mind is such a vital series for this hour, and I believe that God was even preparing us for all that we are facing that has happened in our world over the past year. I believe that God does prepare his church, his bride, for things that are going to happen.

How does he prepare his bride? It is through the ministry of the word of God. He speaks to his bride. Even a church like Laodicea, he spoke to her, seeking if any individual was in that church that had an ear to hear.

So please turn in your Bible tonight, Genesis chapter 3 and verse 1, and our message, the battle begins. We're going right back to the battle beginning, to the beginning of this entire warfare for the person of Christ being demonstrated in the midst of his people. It says in Genesis chapter 3 and verse 1, the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field, which the Lord God had made, and he said unto the woman, yea, and this is the serpent speaking to the woman, yea, hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden.

Let's pray together. Father, I thank you for the word of God tonight. I thank you that you give us a clear message, that you speak to us clearly, that there's no darkness in your words, no confusion, no contradiction, nor God, that there's nothing lacking in the word of God that you've given us.

And I pray tonight, make that word clear in Jesus' mighty name. Will you open our hearts and our minds? Will you prepare us as a church, as a people for this last hour? We already know after the past year that we're embarking in one of the most remarkable hours in all of history, in all of church history, and that we are here in this hour to play our part. Help us so God to stand steadfast on the word of God, resisting the evil one in Jesus' mighty name.

Amen. My message tonight, the battle begins. We are here in this series, The Battle for the Mind, volume two, and we're going to go through several messages, and I believe these messages are going to be so specific concerning that we are living in.

Never has the mind of any generation been more under attack than this generation. I believe that we are seeing a mass attack on the mind of man, of this generation, like we've never seen before. And as we come to Genesis chapter three and verse one, listen to this first sentence spoken by Satan, the devil, the serpent, the dragon, to a woman, to mankind.

The very first sentence, listen carefully. Yea, hath God said. The first word that Satan ever offered or uttered to mankind was, hath God said.

I want you to hear that so clearly. Underline it, inscribe it, mark it down, that when the devil comes, he always comes saying, hath God said. If the devil's going to attack you in your mind, if he's going to bring a thought, an imagination, a dream, a word, some gossip, some bit of information, some teaching, do you know what is going to be the central core of it? Hath God said.

He's going to come challenging the word of God. That is the nature of Satan. And that is the nature of the battle for our mind.

Here in this message, I want to take you right back to the beginning of this battle. But before I do, I want to take you right forward to the end of this battle. We're going to look for a moment here in this first point at our day, our generation, and what is happening and about to happen in our world.

You see, I don't believe you are fitted that you're able to face what's just about to happen unless we go back and look at how Satan began this battle when he first approached man. I believe as we go back to the book of Genesis, we will be equipped to look at the things that are contained in the book of Revelation and concerning Bible prophecy in the last days. And so our message is the battle begins.

I believe we'll look tonight at the battle beginning 6,000 years ago, but something more than that. I believe a remarkable battle has just been unveiled and there is a breaking forth of a new battle that is remarkable. I believe it's not flesh and blood, but it's powers and principalities behind this attack on the very mind of

man in this generation.

My first point in this message tonight is deception in the last days. Deception in the last days. We will go back to Genesis chapter three, but let me for a few moments here, take you to the New Testament, Matthew 24 and verse four, Jesus speaking to his apostles, the church of the first generation, warning those that would be alive in our day, take heed that no man deceive you.

Jesus gave 10 marks of the beginning of sorrows, how we would know it is the last day that things are coming to a finality, that things are coming to an end, not the end yet, but approaching the end. He gave 10 clear signs. The first sign and the most important was this one in Matthew 24, verse four, take heed that no man deceive you for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ and shall deceive many.

This was the first and greatest and most repeated warning of Christ about this hour that we live in. I believe we're in the beginning of birth pangs. I believe they're becoming faster, that they're becoming stronger.

Do you realize that the World Economic Forum just a few days ago, they noted this and made a point of it, that all the things happening around us are speeding up and they're intensifying. The wording was so remarkable that immediately I thought about the beginning of sorrows and Matthew 24. This is an hour where everything will become more intensive.

You will not be able to think in this hour unless you hide your mind in the scripture. In Matthew 24, Jesus repeats this warning about deception in the church four times. In verse four, verse five, verse 11, and verse 24, he uses this word deceive.

Take heed that no man deceive you. What Jesus is talking about is our generation. He's showing how to protect yourself, how to guard yourself, how to be prepared, how to stand, how to walk through this hour that we live in.

What did he say? Take heed that no man deceive you. Many in the church have read this warning. They know it's an hour of deception.

They know deception is coming. They're in fear of deception, but you know what? They do not take heed. The word take heed, and we're dealing in this series with the battle for the mind.

This taken heed is a thing of the mind. It's an attribute of the mind. God has given you a mind, a thought realm to protect yourself, and part of that mind is to take heed.

The word take heed that Christ used here, it means to look carefully, have your eyes open, to stare, take time. Since you realize you'll get deceived in this hour, if you don't slow down, if you're not careful, if you do not take heed, it means don't take your eyes off things. Don't just trust men without testing, without judging, without scrutinizing, without applying the word of God.

You see, Christ says, engage your brain, open your eyes, open your ears, begin to consider. If you swallow everything you're fed, you are in trouble in this hour because mass deception is abroad. You see, I believe Christ starts here because if a church gets deceived within itself with false prophets, if it cannot keep itself in order, then politics will deceive it.

The social world will deceive it. The religious world will deceive it. And so he deals with fundamental deception in the church.

He says, I want you to have a mind that is alert, knows how to take care, how to judge, how to see, how to perceive things that are going on in the church. We're not just to love everyone. We are to scrutinize what is going on.

Take heed that no man deceives you. No man, no man. He's saying when this deception comes, it will not primarily come through an angelic demonic force.

It will actually come through men in the church. Deception in the last days. He says that many men are going to come in the church.

Notice here the devil uses vessels. He uses people. He uses people in the church.

He uses people coming in the name of Jesus. Jesus warned that when they come, they will come in his name. In my name shall they come.

They're coming to deceive. Jesus said, you better have your eyes upon them. You better keep your eyes upon them.

When they come, they'll claim his authority. They'll say that Jesus sent them, that they represent the Lord Jesus Christ. And they shall say, I am the Christ.

When these deceivers come in the last generation, at the very end, I mean, many of them are going to come in the church as deceivers. They will come saying Jesus Christ is the anointed one. He is the Messiah.

He is the one that fulfills Old Testament prophecies. He is the predicted one. And notice this.

It says, for many shall come in my name and deceive many. Now notice here, this word deceive, I want you to stop and underline it and concentrate on it here tonight in this message. We're talking about the battle begins.

And here we see deception in the last days. What is going to be at the forefront of it is mass deception. The word that Jesus used here is *plenio*.

It means to cause you to roam, to lead you astray, to seduce you, to be out of the way. Do you know that's a thing of the mind? Do you know when deception comes, the first port of call before reaching your heart is your mind. Men are going to come in the church and they're going to seek to cause you to roam, to lead you in a certain direction, to seduce you, to draw you after themselves.

You see, they're going to seek to take you away from the narrow way of the scripture. How do you know the real way of Christ? I mean, the biblical way, the real Christian life, the real message of the gospel. How do you know it? It is a narrow way.

The gate is narrow. The way is narrow. It takes agony to press through that gateway.

That's how you know the biblical way of God. It's a way of holiness. It's a way of truth.

It's a way with boundaries, but we are going to see many come in this last hour who are going to lead us in a different direction, to move us away. Friends, do you realize mass deception is going to be in the church and it's an attack on the mind? We're going to see that in this message as we go along. It's always been an attack on the mind.

Deception with words, arguments, lies, scriptures out of context, with doctrines of men, all of this is going to be an attack on the mind. You are going to have to fight deception in your mind. Do you know how to fight it in your mind? Do you have a mind that knows how to discern deception and see through it? It says that in these days, many should be deceived.

That means most are more than half. You know as well, a little bit later in Matthew 24, Jesus said in verse 11, many false prophets shall arise. This is the same deception which is going to come in our generation.

Is it not here? Is it not widespread within the church? Many false prophets, notice that they come claiming to have one of the five fold ministries of the book of Ephesians. What Paul the apostle taught about those five beautiful ministries, they claim a gifted supernatural ministry. They can predict the future.

The Holy Spirit shows them things. They have dreams. They can tell what's going to happen.

They can reveal things about your life. It is a supernatural ministry. It's a remarkable ministry and this is the ministry that's going to be dominant in this hour.

If you know anything of what's going on in the church, you know this, that deception has come into the church through the ministry of prophets and of prediction. Again, Jesus says in verse 24, for there shall arise false Christs and false prophets and shall show great signs and wonders and as much that if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. So you see a mass movement coming in these last days.

One of the 10 marks that we have reached the beginning of the sorrows, which is going to intensify and become stronger and more dominant is deception in the church by false prophets, many of them, and they're going to do signs and wonders in order to deceive, if it were possible, the very elect of God. Do you see that Satan has raised this attack up? He's using false prophets, gifted ministry, and he wants to deceive. He comes in the church before he ever raises up Antichrist, before he ever goes in and dwells that man of sin.

He's going to come to the church with deception, seeking to deceive. Again, it says in 2 Thessalonians chapter 2 and 3, let no man deceive you by any means. What command saints? They're for this hour, for this day.

It shocks me that when we see the hour that we have come to, that you've got some of the most political richest men in our world, the ones who are molding our world in this hour, all the tech companies like Google, Facebook, and Microsoft, all the organizations like the United Nations, like the World Economic Forum, all the world banks, the central banks, and the World Monetary Fund, all these organizations are talking about this conversion of technology with man. Now, for the first time, they're coming out publicly and saying by 2025, we're going to have our mobile phones, the chips in them, inserted in our hand, that the whole economic, political, social system is going to converge. All the Bible prophecy is at the door.

Do you see the hour that we live in? And yet after this past year, there are thousands of church leaders, pastors in Ireland, in Northern Ireland, out across Britain, leaders who think this is a health crisis that we're in right now. They don't see Bible prophecy in it. They don't see anything dangerous in it.

They don't see the enemy coming to deceive. And you know what that shows? There's a terrible blindness in the church of this generation. You see, we've got a warning, 2 Thessalonians 2 and 3, let no man deceive you by any means, for that day shall not come, the return of Christ, the catching up of the saints to meet him in the air, that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.

Do you see this warning again of deception in the last days? And notice what the deception is in the last days. It is a deception in that day, in this hour, that there shall come a falling away first. This word falling away is the Greek word apostasia.

It means a defection, a moving away from something. Do you see like Matthew 24, the deception is going to mean a mass moving away within the church. There's going to be a great deception to move away from the narrow way, the biblical way, and the way of truth.

The word apostasia is only used one other time in our whole New Testament, and it's in Acts 22 verse 21. It's when Paul the apostle was accused by the Jews for forsaking the law of Moses. That word forsaking the law of Moses, or the teaching of Moses, or the written scriptures, is the word apostasia, or apostasy.

In other words, they were accusing Paul of apostasy. Do you know what they're saying? Paul, you're moving away from Moses. You're teaching against the written scriptures.

You're actually teaching men that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs of Moses. So we get a picture of what apostasia is. What does it really mean? It is a move away from the written scriptures, its commands, its teachings, its customs, its instruction, the apostasy.

I mean, there's coming an apostasy. I know there's been many. I know it's been going on for hundreds of years, especially the past hundred years.

I know it's been encroaching on our lifetime in the church, but here there's a prophecy that suddenly at a certain point, something is going to happen worldwide. I believe we're going to see it. It's going to be so marked.

It will be visible. It'll be real. You could date it.

You could discern it. There's going to be an apostasy, a moving away in the church because deception so comes. There's going to be an apostasy, a falling away, a moving away from the written scriptures.

I believe this is the great rebellion the Bible talks about that's going to happen in the last days. It is an apostasy. This word apostasy also comes from the word apostolion, which is to divorce.

It's used by Jesus in Matthew 5. It's the word for divorcing your wife or your husband. It means to separate, to become disengaged. So he uses that for a writing of divorcement, to put away your wife.

So we see, this is what I believe with all my heart the Bible shows, there's about to take place a rebellion because of deception coming in through the ministry of prophets, of signs and wonders. I believe in prophets. I believe in signs and wonders.

I believe that Christ still heals. I believe he still confirms his word. I'm talking about a false movement prophesied by Christ.

This deception is going to lead away from the narrow, straight path of scripture, from the authority of scripture. It's going to be a rebellion against scripture. There's going to be a renunciation of submission to the written scriptures.

There's going to be a divorcing and a moving away. I believe this is prophesied and I believe it's right for this hour, since the whole stage before there'll be an antichrist, there's going to be a great rebellion that's going to be seen on our day and generation. Now I'm going somewhere.

I'm talking about a battle for your mind. That's what our series up here is. And I'm going to make these messages very specific for the hour we live in, very specific concerning the battle for the human mind, the mind of man.

And you know what? While the devil is seeking to do that in this generation, his real target is the mind of those in the church. My first point, deception in the last days, an apostasy from the written word of God. You better make sure your mind is soaked in this word of God.

You better love it with your mind and love it with your heart. You better believe it with your mind. Your mind is about to be so attacked.

Some event is about to happen in our world where it's going to cause a rebellion, a mass widespread, immediate rebellion, a separation of what's called Christianity from the written scriptures. I know it's already all around us, but I believe this is all still small. Something greater is coming that's going to happen prior to the final fulfillment of prophecy.

Second of all, God's original plan for man. Now let me take you back to Genesis chapter one and chapter two and begin to look at this original plan of God for a man, for his mind. God created man with the mind and with that mind he was to love God, to love God's word with his mind, with his thoughts, with his memory, with his decisions, with his choices, with how he judges, with all these faculties of the mind.

God created man to communicate with him. The ability to speak was to come forth out of that mind. When we go to Genesis chapter one, we see that Adam, man, was made on the sixth day of creation.

Now let me tell you, I believe in six literal days of creation. The word day there, and many argue against it, this is part of the apostasy. Men who begin to give ground in Genesis one, they begin to slowly move away from a literal interpretation of the Bible.

Before you know it, they're going to be in rebellion against the written scripture. They'll begin to say homosexuality isn't that bad. Hillsong's, the leaders of Hillsong's worship, I've said it before, they actually refuse to call homosexuality sin.

You know what, that had a root somewhere, but it always carries you into deception. The word day in Genesis chapter one, I believe means a literal day. The word day there is the word yom.

It is used 2,300 times, more than that, in the Old Testament. When we come to Genesis through the Deuteronomy, the first five books of Moses, it is used 650 times. Moses was the main compiler of these books, the main author under the Holy Spirit.

When Jesus said Moses wrote that, I assure you, he was inspired of the Holy Ghost. Moses used it 650 times. The word day used in Genesis one is the same as it's used elsewhere in the books of Moses and in

the Old Testament.

It means a literal day. This is the only place in the entire Old Testament that people want to argue about the day not meaning a day. But notice with me in Genesis chapter one, the day is distinguished from night and darkness.

Day is defined and it's explained very clearly in clear terms. Again, it speaks repeatedly about evening and morning and trying to show you that these were six literal days of creation. There can be no doubt that these are literal days of 24 hours in time.

There isn't a boundary to that day. You can't make it a thousand years or a hundred thousand years. It is one literal day.

The Bible says that, Adam, isn't it sad, I have to emphasize these things in this day, that men no longer have confidence in their Bible. Although they see what it says, they have so many doubts, so many arguments. There is a battle raging for the mind of man on what they believe concerning the Bible.

Don't tell me it's not going to intensify. It will. When we come to Genesis one and Genesis two, my Bible tells me that God made man.

Notice that he made man and woman. He made them at different times. He made them in different ways.

He molded man out of the dust of the earth, and yet he took woman as a rib out of the side of man. He made them differently. They weren't the same.

They're made different by the hand of God. Oh, what confusion has come in to our world in this hour. Who would have ever thought the world out there would begin to deny that a man is a man and a woman is a woman? What confusion is coming in? But let me say, the church has to be clear.

We're going to preach a man is a man. We're going to preach a woman is a woman. We're going to preach that homosexuality is sin, just like fornication or lying or any other sin, getting drunk.

We're going to call sin, sin. And you know what? We're going to have to go back to the Bible again. We need to go back to Genesis chapter one to three and begin to revisit our roots about the battle that is raging in this hour.

If you give ground in Genesis one, then you will in Genesis two, then Genesis three, then the first 10 chapters. And before you know it, you'll begin to doubt the very one who redeemed you by his own precious blood. Man and woman, right at the beginning, were made with a different purpose.

From the very creation, they were distinct. It wasn't the fall that made them different. It wasn't sin entering that made them different.

God made man and woman different biologically, in their minds, and also in their complete makeup. Both were unique and they were complementary in their roles. They have similarity.

They have unity. They have compatibility. And yet what variety.

It is beautiful. I'm glad for Candice being different from me. She's so alike to me, so similar to me, and yet so different from me.

I love the local church. This church, no two of you are the same. You're a bunch of dolly mixtures.

You're so different. I love that God has made us different and yet made us so similar in his plan and purpose. Both have what the other does not have.

God has made man and woman different, and yet together, he made them that they were to rule and to subdue. There is equality, but equality does not mean that their roles are interchangeable. The role of a man and woman is not.

Not in the home, not in the church, not in the world. They're made uniquely different. I will open the door for a woman.

I will lift the bags for a woman. You guys, you can carry your own bags. I assure you, there is a difference.

There is a difference, and I do treat a woman in a certain way with far greater respect than even a man. I want to show you, this is being destroyed in this hour. The fall of man did not introduce the difference.

It only damaged the order of God. You see, Adam and Eve together were to conquer, to keep under, keep in subjection, to reign and rule. They have delegated authority.

They were to keep the garden. They were to look after creation. Adam named the men.

Do you know what that tells me about their mind? Their mind was a remarkable creation of God. That mind that Adam could name every single animal. He could look at every single animal, study them, look at them and name them.

That is a remarkable mind that God gave to Adam. I believe their perception, their thinking, their remembrance was utterly perfect, created by God. It says in Genesis chapter 126, and God said, let us make man in our image or in our resemblance, after our likeness.

Now we are concentrating on the battle for man's mind. I'm showing you here at the beginning, God's original plan in creating man. Do you know man was created in God's image? I believe the mind of man was fashioned in the image of God.

I believe the ability to think, to scrutinize, to talk, to decide. All these faculties, man was given an ability that God had. You see, to be made in the image of God means to be fashioned in a very special way.

An image is like a graven image. It means to carve out or to be carved into a certain shape. It's not talking about man's outward appearance.

It's talking about that inward realm of man, his self-consciousness, his moral consciousness, God consciousness, aware of other people, able to love, able to commit yourself and make decisions, holiness, wisdom, creative abilities. All of this, we were molded and made like unto God. It says in Genesis 1.27, so God created man in his image.

In the image of God created him, male and female, created he them. To create means to build. He accomplished something.

This was the work of God. He built the body. Then he breathed into him the spirit, the spirit of life, the ruach, the breath of God.

And when the spirit met the body, do you know what the Bible says? Man became a living soul. This is what God had created. He wanted God to serve him in his physical body with his spirit dominating and with a soul.

What is the soul? It is your will, your intellect or your mind and your emotions. Some people add conscience to this. Now listen for a second.

We're going to move on, but I want you to hear this. Again, we've repeated it, but I want to say it. What is the mind? The mind is the seed of intelligence.

What is the mind? It's a part of that soul made in the image of God. It means to know, to think, to imagine, remember, to reason, to examine, to judge, and to understand. All of this and much more, we have been molded in the image of God.

That mind as a part of the soul was given to man. It's who you are. That mind is such that what it is is who you are.

You can't separate yourself from it. It is a vital part of your soul realm. Listen to me.

That soul will either spend eternity in the presence of God, first in heaven, then reigning upon a new heaven on earth. That mind of the soul is eternal. It'll either be with God or be in hell, but that soul, that mind, that intellect, that remembrance, the man in hell that Christ talked about, that rich man, it said he remembered.

That faculty of the mind, he remembered. He asked questions. He remembered his brothers back on earth.

He's in hell, but that mind, that mind is there functioning. This is who he is. He is in hell eternally.

God never planned that. God didn't desire that. You see, God gave us a mind that we could communicate with him, love him, walk with him, have knowledge of him, take counsel with him, to imagine things, to remember, meeting with the Lord Jesus Christ, all these beautiful things.

You see, God's plan, well, he put them in the Garden of Eden after creating Adam. It must have been in the West because it says that he created a garden. He planted a garden.

God done this in the East. He planted that garden. Adam was already created.

I believe Adam was watching this. He's seen God plant a garden. Now, listen carefully before we move to point three and to Satan's first attack upon man.

I want you to see that God gave a garden to man. I want you to see the care of God, the provision of God. He put rivers in there.

He looked after man. He planted every manner of tree in there. Trees that produce fruit that were pleasant to the taste, that were beautiful to look at.

I can imagine every type of flower. Do you see God's actual plan for man? He gave him a mind, an intellect that perceived through eyes, through the ears, through touch, through smell, through taste, and God opened up, allowed that mind to enjoy his creation. That's why I enjoy my dog Shiloh.

God created dogs. God placed them here as man's best friend. They're a wonderful thing.

I can be spiritual, dead to this world, and yet enjoy the birds that sing outside. I can do that. God gave man a mind, and that mind was to enjoy all of God's creation and to walk with him in the cool of the day and to fellowship with God and to love God and to remember God's word.

We were to have a mind that remembered of all these trees eat, but not that one tree, just one tree not to eat. You're to remember the word of God, the promises of God, the provision of God. Since I'm taking you somewhere, point three, Satan's first attack in the Garden of Eden.

Someone recently said that they thought I was speaking too much about the devil. I want to tell you the Bible gives clear warnings about the devil. As soon as you open up the Bible, you only get to chapter three, and there he is.

There he is. In the New Testament, Paul said in 2 Corinthians chapter 2 and 11, lest Satan should get advantage of us, we are not ignorant of his devices. Paul was teaching to the church, you're not to be ignorant.

Ignorance is a thing of the mind. Don't close your eyes to the devil. What did Jesus say in Matthew 24? You're to beware of men being used by the devil, bringing deception in, telling you lies, moving you away from the Bible, trying to take you away from the narrow way of the gospel.

You're to be, you're not to be ignorant. If you're ignorant of Satan's devices or his thoughts or his attacks, then do you know what? It's a thing of your mind. You're wide open to deception.

Listen, in Genesis chapter 3, we actually read about Satan's first attack. I believe as we look here for a few moments at Satan's first attack upon the mind of man in the garden of Eden, as we look at this, we are going to get much wisdom, much insight concerning concerning the attack that's coming in the last days. I believe we get much insight here.

As you go to Genesis chapter 3, notice these things. Satan came to Eve, not to Adam. Do you see that? He came to Eve when she was alone.

Make sure you're not alone. I know we're scattered everywhere. There's some people listen to us, feel like this is their church.

And yet, do you know what? They want to join themselves to this church, to be a part of this church. They want to identify. God bless you tonight, if that's what you're doing.

It's not good for us to be alone, to be isolated, to be off by yourself. Make sure that as best as you can, you're not alone. You see, Satan came to Eve when she was alone.

He didn't come directly to Adam. Adam had authority. He was given.

We know that the Bible teaches so clearly that man is the head of the woman, given authority to lead, given authority to protect and to guard and to love and to lay his life down. Well, you know what? The devil didn't go to Adam. He ignored the authority structure and he went straight to Eve.

That's what the devil always does. He tries to break the order of God every single time. And so, Satan came to Eve when she was not with Adam.

She couldn't discuss things. She couldn't question. Be very careful.

Do not isolate yourself as best as you can. Be in the midst of believers. Do whatever it takes to be with some other believers.

Also notice further, Eve acted independently or autonomously from Adam. She entered a conversation with the devil. She embarked in this new task.

She didn't go and look for Adam. She acted without consultation, without fellowship, without questions. You know, questions can be a wonderful thing to keep you from wrong and deception.

She took the lead. She made the decision. She began to lead Adam.

And that's been the fight between men and women ever since that point. Adam neglected his position. Eve took up that position of leadership.

She began to make decisions apart from the word of God, apart from the structure and around her. You know, as a church, I'm submitted to you as the body of Christ. I don't want to go and do my own thing.

Every decision I make in my home, in my ministry, I now think of you in this church. I don't even make decisions without thinking of you individually. How it could affect you.

I could say I'm free from all that responsibility, but that would be negligent. When you carry responsibility, you care for those that are in around you. Notice that Adam followed her.

He knew what she was doing. He wasn't deceived. Eve was deceived.

And this is the warning. In the New Testament, Eve is an example to the church of deception. What Eve was in the Garden of Eden, the church is warned in the New Testament, take heed to Eve, how the devil approached her, because it's happened all through church history.

And I believe right now, how the devil approached Eve, he is going to approach the church like he never has been. This is going to be the greatest hour of deception. It's going to intensify.

It's going to speed up. It's going to strengthen. It's going to seem more supernatural than it ever did in the past.

It's going to seem more wise than it ever did in the past. If you thought deception had hit the church in the past 2000 years, just wait. We are living in an hour.

And I believe it's the warning of scripture that the attack to divorce from the word of God is going to come. In these few moments, let's look at this attack. In Genesis chapter three and verse one, it says the serpent, the serpent, notice here, the devil comes disguised in an animal.

Many theologians and scholars believe this serpent wasn't like our present day serpent. Remember the curse, you're going to go in your belly. Many scholars, and I agree with them, believe that this was a beautiful animal that stood up on its legs, that it was beautiful.

It was eloquent. It would have stunned you at its glamour, that it actually stood up. If you look at a serpent, if you know anything about snakes, they have minute, tiny legs, four legs that they once could go upon.

And now they go in their belly. Do you know when the devil comes to the scene, he comes clothed in a body. Brother Clendenin has always said the devil never come to church unless he wore some man's trousers or some lady's skirt.

In other words, he'll always come in a vessel, an instrument. He'll use a preacher, someone called a brother, a sister, someone claiming to be a sheep of God. And yet they're tares, they're goats, they're rebels against the word of God.

You can always identify eventually because they'll challenge the word of God. Notice how the devil approaches Eve. This is an attack on the mind that God has given them.

The mind is in the image of God. The mind takes in information from the eyes, the ears, and the taste, the five senses. But notice he comes disguised in this beautiful, eloquent serpent, clothed upon.

This is the masterpiece of Satan. The first time he appeared to Eve, how he appeared to Eve, how he approached Eve, he approached the church of Corinth. He has approached the church for 2,000 years.

And here in this hour, he'll come the same way. Matthew 24, he'll come as a prophet doing signs and wonders, claiming to standing in the authority of Jesus Christ. The Bible says in Genesis 3 that this serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

God made the serpent a beautiful animal. He made it more subtle, more wise, more cunning, more careful. Isn't it like the devil to take and to use what God has created? He twists it.

Lucifer himself was made wise, but that wisdom has become cunning deception. That's why deception is Satan's master plan. Deception, taking the word of God, attacking the word of God, talking you out of the promises of God and the provision of God.

He takes a wise serpent, a creature. He clothes himself with it, and he uses that cunning wisdom. The devil uses what God creates for good.

The devil seeks to use for evil. He desires to use it for his own end. Listen, it says in Genesis 3, and these are the words of Satan to Eve.

He said unto the woman, yea, hath God said. Church, this is an attack on your mind. This is an attack on the mind of Eve.

This was the devil coming personally to Eve. This is how he comes to the church in every generation. This is Matthew 24.

The devil is going to choose his vessel, and he'll come saying, yea, hath God said. There is coming a rebellion against the written scripture. Do you know where it starts? Hath God said, a simple question.

Today, we think there's nothing wrong with questions. Many questions are good. I encourage questions, but there are certain questions when they come from the wrong heart, the wrong person, and for the wrong reason.

When they come in the guise of deception, when they come with a motive, they're very dangerous. You see, this question of Satan, all he done, first of all, was to ask a question, but hidden within that question is a denial. He is making a suggestion.

He is inferring something about the word of God. He is actually approaching Eve concerning what God has said. Now, how is the devil going to approach you? As a Christian, a born again Christian that loves Christ, how does he approach you? He goes straight.

This is his first port of call. He goes to your mind, and he asks a question about what God has said. That is how he approaches you.

That's how he's always approached us. He comes, and he directly begins to discuss what God has said, asking a question. He doesn't want to talk about the weather, or the affairs of this world, or something in nature.

He wants to discuss this book with you. When the devil came to Jesus, he said, cast yourself off the pinnacle of the temple. He said, does not the Bible say that he'll give his angels charge over you? Do you know the devil came with a Bible in his hand, a promise in his mouth to Jesus? Do you see the cunningness of the devil? This is deception.

Eve couldn't see through it. She was deceived. She couldn't see it was the devil.

She didn't see what was in it. Adam did. Adam saw through it.

So does Christ. Christ, our husband man, has a full awareness of what the devil is doing. Stick close with him.

Submit to his authority. Recognize his position. Go to him in prayer.

Don't be alone when you're tempted. Run to the Lord Jesus Christ. Look at this question that comes to Eve.

It is an inference, but it's accusing. It's actually accusing God of bringing restrictions, of bringing a narrowness through his word. He's actually insinuating in this simple question, yea, hath God said? He's saying, you've lost your freedoms.

You're missing out on something. There's something more beyond this Christianity. This way is too narrow.

You're restricted. You're under legalism. You know, the devil will come accusing you saying, I've got a broad way.

I've got a message of grace. I've got a broad way of Christianity. He won't come with a beer bottle in his hand.

He'll come with the Bible saying, I'll show you a greater way to enjoy your Christianity. There is a broad way, a great way, a joyful way. He begins to question the word of God.

That's how you know it's the devil. As soon as someone says, has God said? You need to be on your guard. You need to watch men.

You need to beware of men, lest they deceive you. Preacher or no preacher, mega puppeteer or nothing. It doesn't really matter.

He leads you through questioning. That's how the devil approaches. And I believe this is the onslaught that we are going to see increase and intensify in our hour.

The devil wants to mislead you, deceive you, lead you astray by questioning. By questioning the word of God, the character of God, the commands of God and the provision of God. He went further here.

He didn't stop with this. Yea, hath God said? He goes much further. But look at Eve's response to him.

Her response was to immediately become defensive, to justify. She added and she subtracted to the word of God. Notice, she is fighting the devil.

She thinks that she's standing against any challenge against the Bible. And yet immediately, she begins to add and subtract. Charles Spurgeon, many years ago, he said, the Bible doesn't need defended.

It's like a lion. Just open up the cage door and it will defend itself. Friends, I never, I try to give answers to sinners.

I do engage and persuade men and I do have an answer for all men. But you know what? I just authoritatively preach the word of God. It is a dynamic power.

It can save men. It can convict men. It can deal with sin in the heart.

You don't need to defend the Bible. Just preach it. Stand upon it.

You know, this church, and let me warn you very carefully, some of you want to defend this church, this preacher, or how we do things in this church. We as a church, we try to do everything biblically. We want our message to be biblical, our leadership to be biblical, our conduct to be biblical.

People come in and challenge that. And you want to defend it. Be very careful.

Some of you are in danger of defending. And as you do, you add the scripture or you subtract from it. What did Eve do in Genesis 3 and 2? Listen to her reply.

And the woman said unto the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden. You may say she gave an accurate response to the serpent. No, she didn't.

She said, we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden. Listen to what God said. He said of every tree of the garden, thou mayest freely eat.

Do you see two words that she lost in repeating this to the devil? Every and freely, all and freely. You see, God is bountiful. What he has provided is freely, freely.

I give unto you. I provide everything for you. I planted a garden for you.

Thank God, there's a garden there. I know God doesn't mind us enjoying our gardens. Gardens are a biblical thing.

One of the first things God provided for a man, that means it's good for his mind, good for his heart, good for his walk with God. My wife is going to be glad I preached that tonight. But listen, God in his command, it was a protection, but there's bountifulness.

There's freeness. There's a generosity. And yet here Eve is becoming defensive.

She's already losing ground thinking that God has been less than generous. She's forgetting that God is generous. She's become vague about the commands of God.

She has become general in protecting and defending and quoting the word of God. Do you see how dangerous it is when the devil engages you? He attacks your mind. Saints of God, learn this tonight if you learn nothing else.

When the devil approaches you to tempt you, to attack you, to deceive you, he always comes challenging the word of God. Don't defend the word of God. Stand on the word of God.

Rest on the word of God. Resist the devil on the basis of the word of God. She said, but of the tree of the fruit, the fruit of the tree, which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, you shall not eat of it.

Neither shall ye touch it lest ye die. Do you know what she's just done is added? God didn't say don't touch it. He said, don't eat it.

Don't eat it. Here she is trying to defend God, trying to defend herself, trying to defend the words of God. Already the devil is questioning and she feels there's holes in the word of God.

You know, many Christians in our generation, they've lost confidence in Genesis chapter one, chapter two, chapter three. They are retreating. You're on dangerous ground.

You may say, I believe in Christ, the blood, the cross. I believe in the new Testament. When you begin to deny Jonah and the belly of the whale, Israel crossing the red sea and apartment too.

When you begin to deny that Genesis one to three is literal and to be taken literally, you know what you're very dangerous ground. She added instruction and said, God said, don't touch it. No, he didn't.

Do you ever notice that people who begin to change this, they feel at liberty. He felt at liberty to add. She thinks she's protecting the word of God.

No, you're damaging the word of God. You're undermining your confidence. When you feel you need to add to this word and that it's not sufficient, not authoritative, not reliable.

When you think that this word cannot defend itself, you're on dangerous ground. I don't need you to go find all sorts of evidence. The Bible is the word of God inspired of the Holy spirit.

She added to it. She actually made the way narrower, stricter. She interpreted the words of God and added her thoughts.

That mind is a dangerous thing. Don't you dare change the word of God. Do you know what's happening now? The devil is bringing you onto that realm of the mind.

You're not using your intellect, your brain, your mind, your thoughts, your intelligence. You're engaging with the devil. And you know what you think, you know, better than God.

How dare you since I'm sorry, but I mean this, I have worked hard to not go beyond scripture, not add to scripture. A real church believes in the authority of scripture. Don't you dare think that you know better than the Bible.

When someone out there, some center, a backslider says, why don't you do this as a church? You ought to be going back and say, what does the Bible say? Stop taking up their arguments. Stop trying to create what we ought to be as a church. You know what? We are the church, the body of Christ.

We're not here to entertain. We're not here to facilitate people who are rebels against the word of God. Oh no, we're not.

Since what I'm showing you in Genesis three is what happens all through church history. And it's here. This is the deception of the last hour.

It is Matthew 24, but where lest any man deceive you? It is exactly the same thing. You know, the Lord said that you can take up all the trees, donate. But Eve had to go beyond that and say, don't touch, don't touch.

You know what the serpent said onto the woman, you know, as soon as you start moving Christians away from the Bible, they feel they have to defend it. They believe they have to add to it. They believe the wisdom in this book that they in their own mind have greater wisdom.

I know what we should do in the church. I know what you ought to do. I think this, and they think they know, you know what? You're wide open to deception.

You have no confidence in the word of God. When this preacher just preaches the word of God, you think you know better. Do you know what? You're like Eve.

You're like Eve. It's a dangerous place. You're not submitting to the authority of Christ.

You're trying to take control. What a dangerous place that is. That is a really dangerous place.

I want to warn you as we begin to study how Lucifer, Satan approached her. He said, you shall not die. You can eat of that fruit.

You can disobey God. You see, he's got her on the run now. Now you can begin not only to ask questions.

He lies to her. He challenges the word of God. First, he raises questions about the character of God, the wisdom of God's words, of the benefit of all these provisions.

Now he says, you will not die, but he doesn't stop there. He goes further. For God knows that in the day you eat thereof.

In other words, God's keeping things from you. God knows this. Your eyes shall be opened and ye shall be as God's, knowing good and evil.

You're going to become wise. Are you seeking wisdom and yet you're disobeying the word of God? You're not submitting yourself to the word of God, the authority of scripture. You're inventing ideas.

You know, there's one of those popular preachers. A few years ago, he came out and preached that it was wrong to say, how do you know God loves you? Because the Bible told me so. He said, that old children's hymn is wrong.

He said, it was utterly wrong. I want to tell you, men like that are dangerous, but they're very popular in this hour. They're the ones I'm talking about tonight.

They come and outright deny the scripture, yet they claim to be Christians. They're preachers. They're popular.

They're preaching to vast multitudes. They're men of mild words, men of eloquence, men of beauty. They look like that serpent in the garden, but oh, if only you could see what is behind all of this.

You see, the mind is the means that Satan attacks. If he wants your heart, he'll attack your mind. It says in 1 Timothy 2 and 14, and Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

It says in 2 Corinthians 11 and 3, but I fear less by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety. Listen, this is to the church. So your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Notice the attack of the serpent against Eve was an attack on her mind. It was an attack to move her away from the simplicity in Christ. Paul preaching to the church says, what the serpent done to Eve, he'll do to you, the church.

This is how he approaches with the same words. It's an attack on the mind. He actually says, the serpent threw his attack on Eve's mind with these arguments, questioning the written word of God, he corrupted her mind.

Do you remember what the word corrupted there means? Concerning Eve's mind and what can happen in the church. The word corrupt there means to shrivel, to weather, to waste away, to spoil, to ruin, to defile, to destroy. Do you know the deception of this hour? The attack on God's written word, his authoritative word, the word that we're meant to meditate on day and night, not church strategies, not the latest gimmick, not the greatest, the latest Christian book, we're to meditate on this word.

Since I can't read this Bible enough, I can't meditate on it enough. It says in 2 Corinthians 4 and 3, if our gospel be hid, it is hid from them that are lost and whom the God of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God should shine onto them. He has blinded the minds of sinners.

You know what that means? It means to harden. Blinded eyes always lead to hard hearts. He has blinded the minds.

He has made them cold, strong, hard against the glorious light of the gospel. It's not natural that men don't believe. It is a spiritual warfare.

Praise saints of God. Pray for the lost. Fourthly, the consequences of the fall.

Notice what happened to Eve. She crumbled under this onslaught against her mind. Her mind withered.

The mind God had given her, created her with to commune, to fellowship, to remember his promises, to walk with him in the cool of the night. She withered. She sinned against God.

She took of that fruit and she ate it. She ate it. Notice what it says here.

The consequence of the fall. Genesis 3 and 16. What were the consequences? What did God say to Eve? And thy desire shall be true thy husband and he shall rule over thee.

Now notice here, I'm applying this to the church. I know it's true of you women and there's also a clear command to man as well. But listen, I'm talking about a type of the church and the deception that's coming and the consequences.

It says here, thy desire shall be to thy husband. The word desire there means that Eve, this is what God is saying to Eve and all women from that time. Your desire from this moment because of your deception, your desire shall be towards your husband.

The word desire means stretching out after. It literally means a desire to lead, to make your own decisions, to control your own life, to manipulate your husband, to possess or to steer the way ahead. God was saying this urge is going to be in you from the fall.

This urge to do this is still present in our world, but the man will rule. He'll have dominion. He'll govern.

He'll reign. There is a struggle for dominion between man and woman since the garden. God said it there that there's going to be an urge, a deep rooted urge.

And I know a man can send like this as well, but I'm just telling you what the Bible says. It's showing something that comes up in the church. Listen so carefully before we move on.

Within the church, there's a great danger within churches to actually dominate their husband Christ that he will not reign. You see, Christ rules over the church by the written scriptures, the word of God. That is his authority.

He's a good husband. He loves, he is the head. He rules, he administers, he commands, he instructs, he leads, he takes control.

But there is an urge in the body of Christ in the church, the desire to lead, to make decisions independent like he did, to make her own way, to act apart from the word of God. But you know what? Christ rules over the body of Christ. He rules over the church.

The most vital teaching in the New Testament on spiritual warfare, against the devil, is given in Ephesians chapter 6, verse 10 to verse 20. A remarkable teaching in Ephesians 6. But notice that it is just preceded by teaching on marriage and the relationship between a man and a woman and the order. And in teaching about that relationship of man and woman, the order of headship, submission, authority, love, all those beautiful things.

Then he finishes in I'm not just talking about a marriage, a man, a woman, I'm talking about Christ and his church. Why do you think there's a talking about submission in the home and in the church to Jesus Christ before dealing with authority and with the spiritual warfare? You know why? The Bible says, submit yourself to God, then resist the devil. The only way you're going to resist the devil as the church in this last generation, in this last chapter of church history, is to be submitted to Christ.

There is coming a rebellion in the body of Christ on parallel. If you haven't seen anything yet, I predict it. I promise you on the basis of God's word, there's going to come an intense, overwhelming, sudden apostasy that we'll say, yes, there's always been apostasy, but this is it.

This is actually it. My fifth and last point, let me finish here tonight. And we're just beginning here.

The battle begins, the battle for the mind. This is our second volume. We dealt with several messages a year ago, but I'm bringing you back to this and we're engaging since we're getting ready for the last onslaught of hell against the real church.

And there is going to be a real bride that submits to Christ and the word of God. My fifth and last point, the antidote for deception in the last days. What is the answer? It's given again in second Thessalonians chapter two and verse 10.

After talking about that hour of deception, the apostasy that would come just before the return of Jesus Christ, he goes further and says that God is going to send a great delusion to our world. It says in second Thessalonians two and 10, and with all deceivableness, notice deception, of unrighteousness in them that perish because they receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved. There's two antidotes in this hour.

Eve could have taken a hold of them. The church has to take a hold of it. And in this last hour of deception, I'm telling you those who won't get deceived in this hour.

I tell you authoritatively two simple things that will preserve you and protect you from being deceived. You know what the first one is? Receiving a love for the truth. It doesn't say have a love for truth.

It says receive a love for the truth or the love for the truth. That means to accept, embrace, make it your own. Do you know love and truth comes from God? And he said this hour, not only is it going to be the devil deceiving, but after this great apostasy, this falling away from the written scriptures, when men have made their choice, God is going to send a great delusion to this world.

And the only people that aren't going to be deceived are those who receive a love. The word love is a gappy love, a supernatural love, a God-given love for the truth. I love the truth, not the truth about things and facts and figures, but the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ, the truth about the gospel, the truth about the commands of God.

I love the truth of God. I have received a love. It's not of me.

Since there is a strong love for the word of God, a love for truth, a love for the inspired scriptures that is not natural. Don't let anyone mock you out of a love for the Bible. They may say you worship the Bible.

You're replacing Christ with the Bible. That's foolishness. That is utter foolishness.

Christ constantly quoted the word of God, meditated on the word of God and lived in it. That's the first thing, receive a love for the truth. Then verse 11, and for this cause shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie, that they might all be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleasure and unrighteousness.

The second thing here is believe in the truth, loving the truth, believing the truth. How can you know what truth is? It's here, saints of God. I love the word of God.

I believe the word of God. I trust it. I rely on it.

I lean on it. There is coming a strong delusion, deception. This is going to be the most deceived generation of any in 6,000 years.

Satan known as time is short is going to come down as a dragon. Who is the dragon? He is that old serpent that was in the garden. Don't you know that this devil is coming one last time against the bride of Christ to try and seduce her and deceive her, but there is going to be a real church in this hour.

Now the spirit speaketh expressly that in the latter time, some shall depart from the faith, the body of doctrine, given heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. That means demonic teaching spirits. In other words, demon spirits that teach doctrine, false doctrine to deceive, and many shall depart from the biblical faith, doctrinal faith.

We are there. The Bible says that we are to try the spirits because many false prophets have gone out into the world. We are told to preach the word of God in season, not out of season.

Why is it that we're to rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and for the time will come when they will not ensure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heed to themselves. Teachers have an itch in the ears and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned to fables. If you do not believe the word of God and hold to word of God, you will be deceived and get led astray in this last hour.

With this I close. Many years ago, when I was in my 20s, I was preparing the church for the Sunday morning service, Sunday evening service. And on that Saturday, as I'd done every week, I would clean the toilets, brush up the building, clean and polish every single seat underneath and over it.

That entire building, I cleaned from top to bottom before leading the service on the Sunday. That's what I'd done. I prayed as I cleaned.

That Sunday afternoon, as I was sweeping up the floor, as I'd done every week. And as I was in the middle of that floor of that church building, there come an overwhelming flood. I mean, I've never before that felt it.

I have never since felt what I felt in that room that day, as I cleaned the church. There came a spirit, a delusion sweeping over that room. I mean, my thoughts got washed over with a feeling, emotion, a flood of thoughts, saying that God is in heaven for 30 seconds.

My mind was just wide open to this. And it was God is in everything. Everything is God.

God is in all religions. All religions lead to God. I mean, I've never once entertained that thought in my life and never once since.

And yet it was a strong power, a dominating influence. I mean, I stood there with my brush in my hand, stuck to the ground, standing still as this, it was like a mighty ocean sweeping over me. And after 30 seconds, I shook myself and went, what was that? I was utterly shocked.

That night, I talked to my brother on the phone. He was in a different country, in a different place. I rarely spoke to him.

And on that phone, when I got on, I very rarely spoke to him. And when I got on that call, I said to him, you're not going to believe the experience I had this afternoon. He said, no, wait, let me tell you an experience I had.

And he described the very same thing happening at three o'clock. He was in another country and another place. And he said, I've never had that thought before.

Never had that thought. We both had the same experience, two different countries. He was older than me.

We were hardly in touch and yet had the same experience at the same time. I believe there are doctrines of demons. There are spirits of deception that are going to get unleashed in this hour.

God let me experience that as a warning. I believe I've only had that experience once. Don't tell me this isn't real.

There is coming such an hour of deception that's going to come into the church. Will you pray with me tonight? We're beginning on this new series of the battle for the mind. And I've got very important messages that I'm going to deal with as I lead you through and show you the final battle for the church, the battle that we're going to have to fight here.

And you know what? We're going to have to do that as a local church. I'm going to have to do that as a preacher in my preaching, in my teaching. I love the bride of Christ.

I've been put here to preach. I love her. God's given me a love for the body of Christ, the bride of Christ, for her purity, her holiness.

And I want to be one of those friends of the bridegroom, the presenter to the Lord Jesus Christ on that day. Let's pray here. Father, we thank you for the written scriptures, the word of God.

And father, we want to be aware. We don't want to be ignorant of Satan's devices, strategies, his intellectual attacks on the mind, how he comes to argue against the Bible, how he will come against this church, against me as an individual. Father, I pray that we might beware of men, that we attest all things by the written word of God, not our own intellect, that we would submit to the Lord Jesus Christ, that we would submit ourselves to the authority of scripture, and that we would give him all glory.

We don't want to be in control. We don't want to be manipulating the man of Calvary. We don't want to be trying to control things and usurp authority.

We want to be a faithful bride of Christ, a church that submits itself to its head, the Lord Jesus Christ. You have warned us that this is going to be the most intensively deceptive generation of any generation. And you have told us to receive a love for truth, to believe that truth, and to resist the devil on the basis of the written scriptures.

We love you tonight and ask that you prepare us in our minds, in our hearts, for this great fight, this final battle for the truth of God in our world. In Jesus' mighty name. Amen.

Amen.

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