

Rebuilding Spiritually

REBUILDING AND MATURING THE SPIRITUAL MAN

**DEFENDING AGAINST SPIRITUAL ATTACK -
DISTORTION**

DR. KENNETH W. JONES



Scripture

- ▶ Nehemiah 4:6: So we built the wall and the whole wall was joined together to half its *height*, for the people had a mind to work.
- ▶ Nehemiah 4:7,8: Now when Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites and the Ashdodites heard that the repair of the walls of Jerusalem went on, *and* that the breaches began to be closed, they were very angry. **8 All of them conspired together to come *and* fight against Jerusalem and to cause a disturbance in it. (NASB)**
- ▶ **Nehemiah 4:7,8:** But it came to pass, *that* when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, *and* that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth,
8 And conspired all of them together to come *and* to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it. (KJV)

How Does Satan Do This?

- ▶ **Discouragement** - to hinder, hold back, forbid, disallow, restrain, frustrate (Numbers 32:7)
- ▶ **Deception** – to lead aside from the right way; to be led away into error and sin
- ▶ **Disrupt/Delay** – To hinder or slow down progress
- ▶ **Distort – Distorting the Truth to confuse and mislead you and distorting your testimony to render you ineffective in your witness**
- ▶ **Destroy** – to render useless; to cause one to lose eternal salvation
- ▶ **Divide** – Causing Dissension within a group (Romans 16:17; 1 Cor 3:3; 1 Cor 11:18)

A Good Offense is a Good Defense

4

- ▶ **Determine** – Resolve to stay committed
- ▶ **Devote** – Devote your time and effort to the task (Luke 9:62)
- ▶ **Discipline** – Stay strong in the spiritual disciplines
 - ▶ Disciplines: prayer, fasting, worship, meditation of Word
- ▶ **Defend** (thought life, intercede, fortify your position, repair) – put on your prayer armor; cast down imaginations; (2 Cor 10:4; Ephesians 6:10-18)
- ▶ **Do (Doer of the Word)** – Trust in the validity of God's Word and the principles, obeying and doing the Word (James 1: 22-23; Proverbs 3:5,6)

D



If you attack your opponents, they will be so busy fighting off your attack that they will not be able to attack you.

Nehemiah 6:5-9

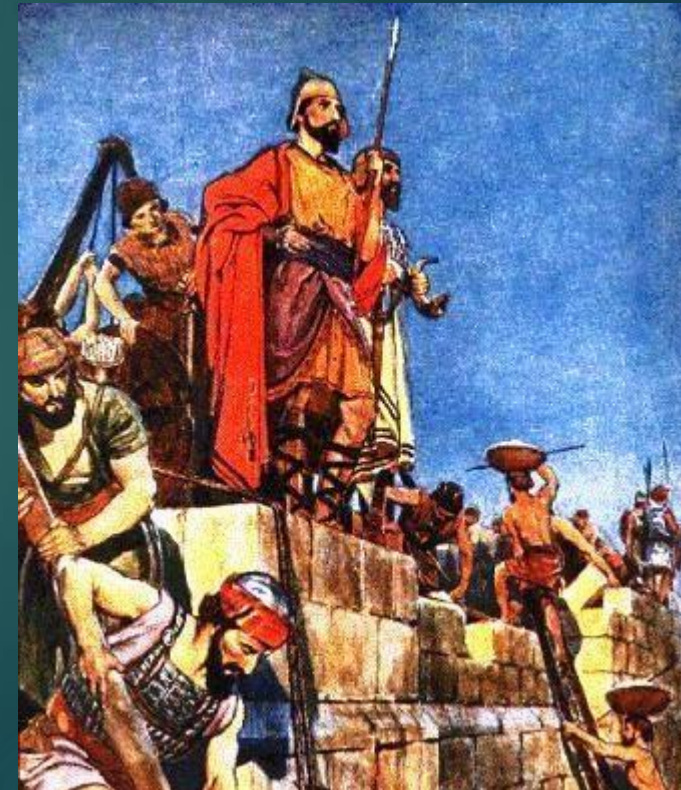
Then sent Sanballat his servant unto me in like manner the fifth time with an open letter in his hand;

6 Wherein was written, It is reported among the heathen, and Gashmu saith *it*, that thou and the Jews think to rebel: for which cause thou buildest the wall, that thou mayest be their king, according to these words.

7 And thou hast also appointed prophets to preach of thee at Jerusalem, saying, *There is a king in Judah*: and now shall it be reported to the king according to these words. Come now therefore, and let us take counsel together.

8 Then I sent unto him, saying, There are no such things done as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of thine own heart.

9 For they all made us afraid, saying, Their hands shall be weakened from the work, that it be not done. Now therefore, O God, strengthen my hands.



Be On Guard

Acts 20:28-30: "Be on guard for yourselves and for 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 "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock;

30 **and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.**

Speaking perverse things - Crooked, perverted, distracting doctrines to divide the church

"Yea God hath said."



How Is God's Word Distorted?

▶ By adding to or taking away from the truth

▶ Example: Conversation between Eve and the Serpent: Gen 3:1-5

- ▶ **What God said:** And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: [17](#) But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.
- ▶ **What Eve said:** “Neither shall ye touch it” - Did not the woman add this to what God had before spoken?
- ▶ **What the serpent said:** Genesis 3:4 - And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:
- ▶ **Before you blame Eve:** God has said: Eve's ignorance of exactly what God said was really Adam's responsibility. He did a poor job of relating to his wife the word God gave him.

How is the Word Distorted

- ▶ We Have Changed the Names. When you change the name of something, you also change the nature of it.
- ▶ Sin – Mistakes, or just “falling short”
- ▶ Holiness – Morality
- ▶ Spirit Consciousness – Social consciousness
- ▶ Obedience – Tolerance
- ▶ Set apart (Sanctification) – Inclusiveness
- ▶ Rebellion – Assertiveness
- ▶ Praise Ministry – Praise Industry
- ▶ Evangelism – Recruiting

How is the Word Distorted

▶ **By Minimizing Doctrine – Making the Word of God to none effect**

- ▶ **Tradition:** Matthew 15:6 - And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.
- ▶ **Repetition:** Isaiah 29:13 - And the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near Me with their mouth and honor Me with their lips but remove their hearts and minds far from Me, and their fear and reverence for Me are a commandment of men that is learned by repetition [without any thought as to the meaning],
- ▶ **By Application:** James 1:22 - But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.
- ▶ **Lack of Conviction/Commitment: Ezekiel 33:32** - And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument: for they hear thy words, but they do them not.

How the Word of God Distorted

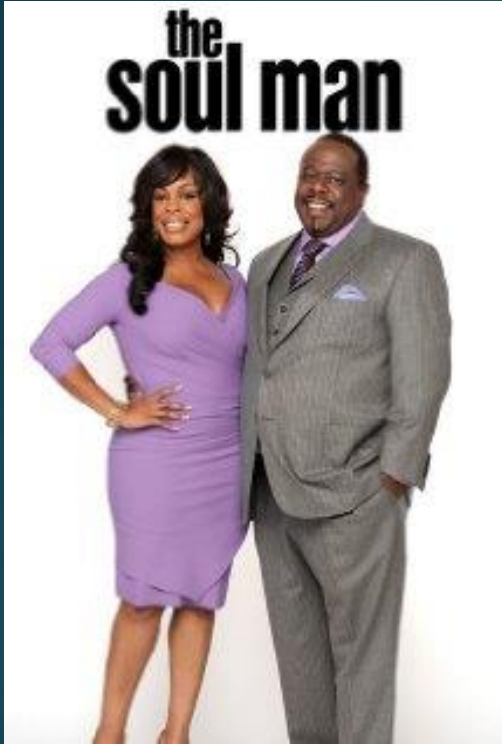
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- ▶ **Minimizing the Piety and Holiness of God's Word & the Spirit**
 - ▶ People abuse and distort the Word of God because they have no reverence for the Word of God
 - ▶ Acts 7:51 - "You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears are always resisting the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did."
 - ▶ Example: "God is my Co-Pilot" – That still means that you are still in control
- ▶ Even when we minimize the ministry of His servants, we minimize the impact of the gospel on our lives



Minimizing the Ministry

11



Preachers of L.A. Reality Show

This is a poor representation of the Kingdom of God. These preachers' lifestyles are NOT promoting Christ[-like] ethos but rather their cars, homes, relationships and their justification on why they want viewers to see them as having fleshly desires as everyone else does."

Article: Charisma Magazine

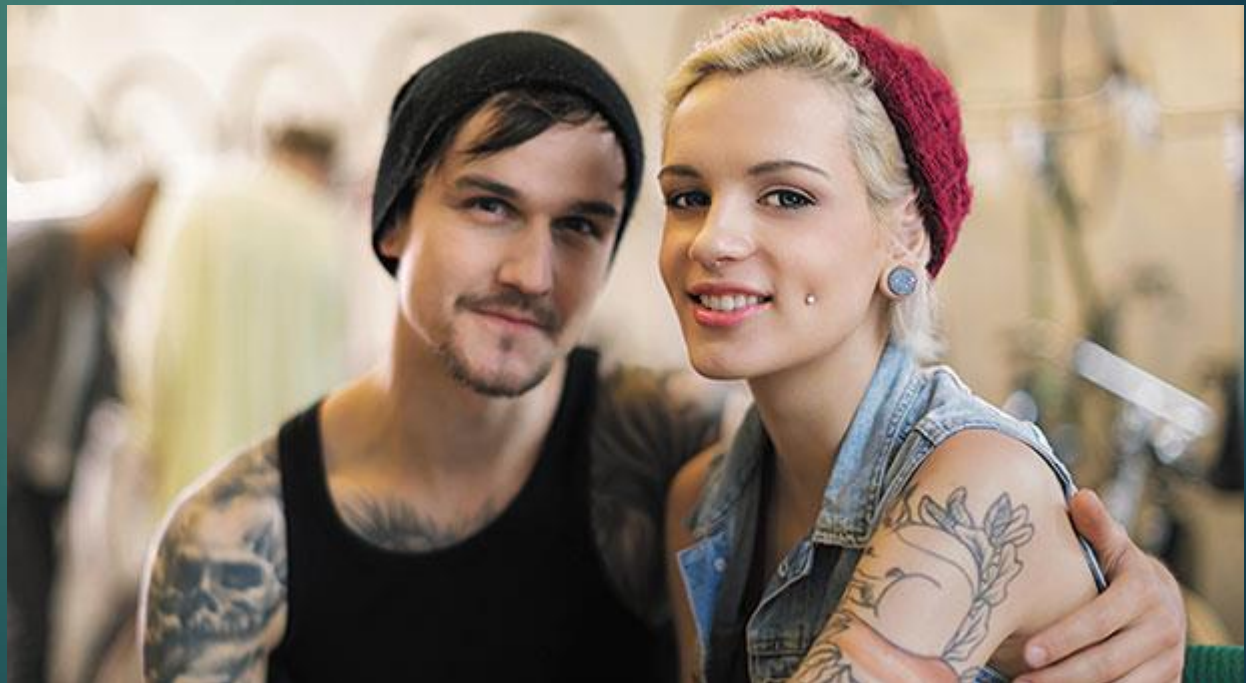
12

Here's How the New Christian Left Is Twisting the Gospel

9:00AM EDT 3/9/2015 Chelsen Vicari

<http://www.charismamag.com/life/culture/22494-how-the-new-christian-left-is-twisting-the-gospel>

“Peek behind the curtain of some "progressive" or "hip" evangelical churches, past the savvy technology and secular music, and you will find more than just a contemporary worship service. You'll find faith leaders encouraging young evangelicals to trade in their Christian convictions for a gospel filled with compromise.”



Article Points: Distortion

- ▶ **Young Evangelical are leaving the faith due to traditional churches**
 - ▶ Reason is due to a more “pleasing gospel” and seducing spirits
 - ▶ But now popular culture is being aided by Christ-professing bedfellows whose message to "coexist," "tolerate" and "keep out of it" is more marketable to the rising generation of evangelical
- ▶ **Article states that in this uphill cultural battle, mired by scare tactics and fear, three types of evangelical Christians are emerging:**
 - ▶ **Couch-potato Christians:** These Christians adapt to the culture by staying silent on the tough culture-and-faith discussions. Typically this group will downplay God's absolute truths by promoting the illusion that neutrality was Jesus' preferred method of evangelism.
 - ▶ **Cafeteria-style Christians:** This group picks and chooses which Scripture passages to live by, opting for the ones that best seem to jive with culture. Typically they focus solely on the "nice" parts of the gospel while simultaneously and intentionally minimizing sin, hell, repentance and transformation.
 - ▶ **Convictional Christians:** In the face of the culture's harsh admonitions, these evangelicals refuse to be silent. Mimicking Jesus, they compassionately talk about love and grace while also sharing with their neighbors the need to recognize and turn from sin.

Article: Christian Left

- ▶ The millennial generation's susceptibility to "feel-good" doctrine is playing a big part in America's moral decline.
- ▶ Millennials' religious practices depend largely on how the actions make us and others *feel*, whether the activities are biblical or not. For example, we only attend churches that leave us feeling good about our lifestyle choices, even if those choices conflict with God's clear commandments.
- ▶ **It is not that millennial evangelicals were not taken to church by their parents. It is that their training has been hijacked by ineffective and sometimes intentionally distorted doctrine.**
- ▶ In order to safeguard the trajectory of young evangelicals, we must uphold the authoritative Word of God.

Those Who Distort the Truth

15

- ▶ In Nehemiah chapter Six, Sanballat was trying to intimidate Nehemiah by saying that we would distort the truth about Nehemiah's project to the king
- ▶ Through his distorting of the truth, Sanballat wanted to slander Nehemiah
- ▶ **Come now therefore, and let us take counsel** – He wanted Nehemiah to come and justify himself. This was a trick to get Nehemiah into his power
- ▶ There are many people (i.e. same-sex marriages) that want to do more than have you accept them, but they want you to violate your principles and accommodate them

Points of Emphasis

- ▶ When we receive Distorted Texts and Principles, it is like eating food that is bad for you
- ▶ As you receive the Word, ensure that you “read the label” properly; check for the manufacturer, and observe warning label
- ▶ A poor diet will lead to poor spiritual growth
- ▶ Be careful and discern wisely where you “Feed”



A Different Gospel

17

Galatians 1:6-10: I am amazed that **you are so quickly deserting Him** who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel;

7 which is *really* not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.

8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!

9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed

10 **For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.**

- ▶ The reason to pervert or distort the gospel is to please men and bring confusion so that people will turn from the truth
- ▶ Be careful to what gospel you expose yourself to

Different Gospel

- ▶ **To pervert the gospel of Christ:** The “other gospel” was really a *perversion* or a *distortion* of the true gospel of Jesus Christ. What people were doing was using the names and ideas familiar to the Galatian Christians, but it slightly twisted the principles, and this made their message all the more deceptive.
- ▶ **To pervert the gospel is a way to “prevent” the gospel from being effective in people lives.** Remember the gospel has “Transforming powers” (Romans 1:16)
- ▶ You may find this hard to believe, but there is something about the message of the true gospel that is deeply offensive to human nature
 - ▶ It offends those who say, “I don’t need a Savior” – Pride
 - ▶ “I can’t find scientific knowledge to support it” – Knowledge & Pride
 - ▶ “What do you mean I have to change” – Rebellion

Paul's Letter to Timothy: 2nd Peter 3:14-18

19

Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, spotless and blameless,
15 and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,
16 as also in all *his* letters, speaking in them of these things, **in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.**
17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, **be on your guard so that you are not carried away by the error of unprincipled men and fall from your own steadfastness,**
18 **but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.** To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen. (NASB)

- ▶ The gospel promotes spiritual growth and understanding which is why the enemy wants to distort it
- ▶ We cannot grow spiritually apart from the grace of God and the working of His Spirit in or lives

Guzik's Commentary

- ▶ **In which are some things hard to understand:** Though Peter praises Paul's ministry, he will admit that some things in Paul's writings are hard to understand, and those who are untaught and unstable can use some of the difficulties to their own ends, twisting Scripture.
- ▶ **Twist . . . the Scriptures:** Peter reminds us that the Scriptures can be twisted. Just because someone quotes the Bible doesn't mean that they teach Biblical truth. It's possible that they twist . . . the Scriptures. That's why we should be like the Bereans, who *searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so* ([Acts 17:11](#)).

Distorting the Truth About You

21

- ▶ Satan wants to distort the truth and the image of you in an attempt to ruin your witness and render you ineffective in witnessing to others
- ▶ **Be careful of your witness – Be an example of a believer**
 - ▶ 1st Timothy 4:12:13: Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, **in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.** [13](#) Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.
- ▶ **We are epistles, known and read of all men**
 - ▶ 2 Corinthians 3:2 - Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:
 - ▶ How are people reading you? How is your family reading you? People at work?

Distorting the Truth About You

22

- ▶ **People want to distort the truth about you for the same reason they want to distort the gospel**
 - ▶ “Who are you to tell me about salvation and what I need?” - Pride
 - ▶ “Are you saying you know more about the Bible than me now? – Knowledge
 - ▶ “Didn’t I see you cursing out the woman at Kroger’s’ yesterday – Damaged Witness
 - ▶ “You see, you’re not perfect. No one is” – Self Justification for their sins and lifestyle
 - ▶ “How can you minister to me when you need help yourself?” – Justification and Relief of Guilt

The Word of God Instructs Us

23

- ▶ Titus 2:12 - instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age,
- ▶ 2 Timothy 3:16 - All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:
 - ▶ I also like to think of it as providing instructions for “right thinking” (righteousness is also a state of mind as well as a state of being)
- ▶ **That the man of God may be complete:** When we come to the Bible and let God speak to us, it changes us - it makes us complete and transforms us. (Romans 12:2)
- ▶ **The Word of God is profitable** - It is useful; it is adapted to give instruction, to administer reproof

D.R.A.W. From the Text

- ▶ **D- Discern Properly** – The scriptures, the intent by which it was given;
- ▶ **R – Read Diligently with Readiness of mind** - Acts 17:11 - These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.
- ▶ **A- Ask for Clarification when needed.** Don't be afraid or hesitant to ask for clarity and direction from God and those He appointed over you
- ▶ **W – Watch and Pray** – Be alert; sober, and watchful of Satan's scheme so that he won't mis-lead you

Be Committed to the Truth

25

2 Corinthians 4: 1,2 (Amplified): THEREFORE, SINCE we do hold *and* engage in this ministry by the mercy of God [granting us favor, benefits, opportunities, and especially salvation], we do not get discouraged (spiritless and despondent with fear) or become faint with weariness and exhaustion. 2 We have renounced disgraceful ways (secret thoughts, feelings, desires and underhandedness, the methods and arts that men hide through shame); **we refuse to deal craftily (to practice trickery and cunning) or to adulterate or handle dishonestly the Word of God, but we state the truth openly (clearly and candidly).** And so we commend ourselves in the sight *and* presence of God to every man's conscience.