

# **“The War For Your Mind”**

*“That’s the Truth of the Matter”*

## **Colossians 2:4,8**

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Are you ready for college? Are you ready for college classes like Sociology, Math, Philosophy, etc.? You may be ready for the academics of it, but are you ready for the test of your faith? Are you ready for the temptation of college parties? Are you ready for the professor that will hammer Christians? Are you ready for the external and internal attacks on your faith?

### **Starts with Deception**

**Colossians 2:4,8** “<sup>4</sup> Now this I say lest anyone should deceive you with persuasive words... <sup>8</sup> Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ.”

- IN THE MIDST OF DECEPTION.
  - BEWARE!
    - BE ON GUARD!
      - Be on look-out for someone that would kidnap you into a false faith, doctrine, or philosophy!
- *Against “ANYONE”*
  - *A Deceiver*
    - i. **Unrepentant mankind taken captive by the enemy.**
      - a. This could be a teacher, professor, or even someone claiming to be a pastor or bible teacher that is twisting the truth.
        - **2 Corinthians 11:13-15** “...such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. <sup>14</sup> And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. <sup>15</sup> Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.”
        - **2 Timothy 2:26** “...*that* they may come to their senses *and escape* the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to *do* his will.”
        - **Philippians 3:18-19** “<sup>18</sup> For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: <sup>19</sup> whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things.”

- **2 Peter 2:1-3** “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. <sup>2</sup> And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. <sup>3</sup> 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.”
- **2 Peter 3:15-16** “Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, <sup>16</sup> 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.”

ii. *Identify the real enemy*

a. **Satan, demons, fallen angels**

- **2 Corinthians 10:3-5** “<sup>3</sup> For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. <sup>4</sup> For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, <sup>5</sup> casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”
- **Ephesians 6:11-12** “<sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles (Schemes) of the devil. <sup>12</sup> 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*.”

a. *Scheme* – a secret plot with intent to deceive

iii. *Understand the goal of the enemy*

**1. To keep people away from God through deception.**

- b. **Romans 1:21-23** “<sup>21</sup> ...although they knew God, they did not glorify *Him* as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. <sup>22</sup> Professing to be wise, they became fools, <sup>23</sup> and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things.”

**2. To take Christians hostage through deception or**

**sin.** (For the sake of this study, we are going to stick to deception)

○ *Don't be deceived by persuasive words!*

- The wrong pursuit will lead you astray and take you captive.

- *Deceived* – to deceive by false reasoning
  - *Persuasive* – false speech resulting from the use of well-constructed, probable arguments.
- You can be led astray when people take biblical topics and make a doctrine around them.
- Or well-crafted arguments, which seem probable, but are against the truth.
  - A well-crafted lie always includes a good amount of truth, and then twists it in an ever so subtle way.
- ***Beware!*** – Watch out for, to notice carefully, ***pay attention to what you hear!***
- Remember that deceivers will use human reasoning and wisdom to try and take you captive!
  - **1 Corinthians 1:18-21** <sup>18</sup> For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup> For it is written: *“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent.”* <sup>20</sup> Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? <sup>21</sup> For since, in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom did not know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe.”
  - ***What will they use?*** Philosophy and empty deceit
    - *“Peake says the best sense of the phrase cheat you is actually, “lead you away as prey.” It also had the ideas of robbing and plundering. “Their goods were the salvation they had received from Christ; and both the Gentile and Jewish teachers endeavored to deprive them of these, by perverting their minds, and leading them off from the truths of Christianity.” (Clarke)*
    - ***Bible Definition of “Philosophy”*** – human understanding or wisdom and, by implication, in contrast with divinely revealed knowledge—‘human understanding, human wisdom, philosophy.’
    - ***WWW Definition of “Philosophy”*** - The noun philosophy means the study of proper behavior, and the search for wisdom. The original meaning of the word *philosophy* comes from the Greek roots *philo*-meaning “love” and *-sophos*, or “wisdom.” When someone studies *philosophy* they want to understand how and why people do certain things and how to live a good life. In other words, they want to know the meaning of life. Add the suffix *-er* to *philosophy*, and you get a word for someone whose job it is to think these big thoughts.
    - By Definition then, a Philosopher is a man/woman that would use human wisdom to counteract widely revealed truths about God.

- **Richard Dawkins** – “If God wanted to forgive our sins, why not just forgive them? Who’s God trying to impress? Presumably himself, since he is judge and jury, as well as execution victim.”
- **Dawkins on Faith** - Faith is the great cop-out, the great excuse to evade the need to think and evaluate evidence. Faith is belief in spite of, even perhaps because of, the lack of evidence.
- **Steven Hawking on God** - I regard the afterlife to be a fairy story for people that are afraid of the dark” (From an interview with Charlie Rose)
- *Empty Deceit* – without content, trickery, misleading, or a flat-out lie.
- *Tradition of Men* – ideas that they pointed to as being believed by a long line of men before them.
  - They will actually point to a long line of men before them that hold to the same lie as an establishment of their supposed truth.
- *Basic Principles of the World* – principles that underlie the nature of something.
  - Don’t allow these worldly philosophies, these man-made doctrines rob you of fully enjoying a relationship with Christ!

## So, Stand Guard!

**Colossians 2:6-7,9-10** <sup>6</sup>As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, <sup>7</sup>rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving... <sup>9</sup>For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; <sup>10</sup>and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.”

- In the midst of attack
- *By Remaining steadfast in Christ!*
  - *Steadfastness* – “a support, foundation,” denotes “strength, steadfastness,”
    - **1 Corinthians 15:58** “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.”
    - **Colossians 1:21-23** <sup>21</sup>And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled <sup>22</sup>in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight—<sup>23</sup>if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel.”
- *By building your faith!*
  - *Rooted* – speaks of sustainment, nourishment. (It’s past-tense.)
  - *Built Up* – speaks of the solidarity (It’s present-tense)
    - **Ephesians 3:17** “...that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love.”

- *Established* – Cause to believe, verify, increase in inner strength.
  - **Luke 6:47-48** “<sup>47</sup> Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: <sup>48</sup> He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock.”
  - **1 Corinthians 3:11** “For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”
- The pursuit of the right thing will keep you centered and steadfast.
- As you received Christ, so walk in Him!
- *Established* – increase in inner strength, with the implication of greater firmness of character or attitude.
- *In the Faith* –
  - **Romans 10:17** “...faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
  - **1 Corinthians 2:5** “... your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God.”
  - **1 Corinthians 16:13-14** “Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. <sup>14</sup> Let all *that you do* be done with love.”
  - **2 Corinthians 1:24** “...for by faith you stand.”
  - **1 Timothy 6:11-12** “<sup>11</sup> But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness. <sup>12</sup> Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.”
  - **2 Timothy 2:22** “Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”
  - *So then, what is faith?*
    - **Hebrews 11:1-3** “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. <sup>2</sup> For by it the elders obtained a good testimony. <sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible.”
      - *Evidence* – confidence
      - “*Faith is to believe what we do not see, and the reward of faith is to see what we believe.*” Augustine.
- *By examining your heart!*
  - **2 Corinthians 13:5** “Examine yourselves as to whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?”
  - **2 Corinthians 13:5** “Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you— unless, of course, you fail the test?” NIV

- *Examine* – Put yourself on trial

### 1. Do you have works that prove your faith?

- a. Do you live what you claim to believe? Are you a Christian because you have received Christ into your life? Or do you go through the motions because it keeps your parents off your back?
- b. **James 2:15** “faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.”
- c. **James 2:18-20** <sup>18</sup> “But someone will say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’ Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. <sup>19</sup> You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! <sup>20</sup> But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead.”
- d. **John 15:5-6** <sup>5</sup> “*I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned.*”

### 2. Do you love?

- a. God first, then others
  - i. **Mark 12:29-31** “‘*The first of all the commandments is: ‘Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God, the LORD is one. <sup>30</sup> And you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ This is the first commandment. <sup>31</sup> And the second, like it, is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.*”
  - ii. **Galatians 5:22** “But the fruit of the Spirit is love.”
  - iii. **1 Corinthians 13:13** “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.”
  - iv. **1 John 4:12-16** <sup>12</sup> “No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. <sup>13</sup> By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. <sup>14</sup> And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup> Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup> And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.”

*“Faith and works should travel side by side, step answering to step, like the legs of men walking. First faith, and then works; and then faith again, and then works again -- until they can scarcely distinguish which is the one and which is the other.”*

William Booth

*“The Bible recognizes no faith that does not lead to obedience, nor does it recognize any obedience that does not spring from faith. The two are opposite sides of the same coin.”*

A.W. Tozer.