

Masters of the Mind

By

Curtis Dickinson

A friend of mine, a physician and a thorough student of history, said the other day, “At no time in the history of the world has there been such a struggle for the mind of man”. This is true. It is an application of what Paul meant when he wrote that our war was aimed at “casting down imaginations and every high thing that is exalted against the knowledge of God, and bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ” (2 Cor. 10:5).

Since the Redeemed are engaged in such a struggle, the least we can do is to examine its characteristics. In fact, if one is to survive in this struggle, it is absolutely essential that he know the basis of the conflict, the battleground, and the tactics of such warfare.

THE PREDOMINATE CHARACTERISTIC OF THE CONFLICT IS IN THE OPPOSITES: TRUTH VERSUS DECEPTION. Jesus repeatedly emphasized the necessity of knowing the truth. Jesus said:

“If you abide in my word, then are you truly my disciples; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”. John 8-32.

When challenged upon this statement, He made clear that the truth as revealed from God is essential, and is diametrically opposed to Satan’s purposes.

“I speak the things which I have seen with my Father, and you also do the things which you heard from your father. They answered and said unto him, our father is Abraham. Jesus said unto them. “If you were Abraham’s children, you would do the works of Abraham. (That is, they would believe God, as Abraham did. Ed.) But now you seek to kill me, a man that has told you the truth, which I heard from God: this did not Abraham. You do the works of your father. You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father it is your will to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and stands not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father thereof. But because I say the truth, you believe me not” (John 8:38-44).

Note that the devil’s purpose is to destroy (“he was a murderer from the beginning”) and the means of destruction is through lying. Note also that one cannot believe the devil and believe Jesus too “Because I say the truth, you believe me not”. The devil’s intent in the world is to deceive: “he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world” (Rev. 12:9). The conflict described in Rev. 13, and in 17-18 is a conflict that is going on in our own time. The protagonists are God and Satan. The weapon of God is truth, and the weapon of Satan is deception, and according to the Biblical account, most of the world is deceived by him.

Deception is not the same as outright opposition to the truth. The deceiver uses a portion of truth, a half-truth, and never really takes a point-blank stand against truth, at least not until he has conquered his enemy. In this manner men are led to think that various shades of religious opinions are compatible and acceptable, because they contain some truth. But if they should examine most of the religion of our country today they would see that what truth is in it is negated by the many lies of Satan. Many people cannot bring themselves to admit that there is deception in the churches. But, of course, this is part of the deception. If everyone knew and admitted the lies, they would not be deceived. We should expect the master-deceiver of the world to be able to succeed to a large extent, or God would never have given him the title.

The Christian must know the truth-. It is not enough to subscribe to a few doctrines pronounced by the church and adopt its slogans. One may be baptized and faithfully attend the communion each week, and yet be deceived about the very meaning and purpose of these things. We need also to know how the various political and social issues of the day stand in the light of God's truth. Nor can we afford to be timid about holding forth the truth. Paul says we are to be girdled with truth and to speak the truth in love. The Christian who is indifferent to the truth is not only a liability in the Lord's effort, but he is vulnerable to the enemy's deceptions.

In spite of the great amount of emphasis on truth in the scripture, many church leaders, with greater zeal than knowledge, think that truth is of little importance, and action is all that counts. They are so deceived that they do not realize that the mind is the inventor and instigator of the action. Every action must get its "o.k." from the mind. It is still one's hold on truth, or lack of it, that determines his action.

Others even copy the deceiver. Since the enemy has gained a majority with his strategy, they argue that the church must adopt the same deceptive tactic. They therefore seek "decisions" without first imparting the facts upon which a true decision can be made. They enlist the youth for the church when they are too young to understand the Gospel, much less make a decision for life. They bring the unregenerate into the church on the basis of a worldly prestige. They enlist members, not by the power of truth, but by the power of social persuasion. They measure the strength of the church, not by the power of the truth within its members, but by the numbers of members, with or without the truth. Christ instructed us to proclaim the truth of the Gospel, so that men might choose, believe, act and having done this, be added to the church. But the modern system reverses the order: First get a man aligned with the church through social implications and when he is committed to the false bait provided, break the news to him that there are, after all, a few truths he should study (if and when he has time and feels so inclined). It is no wonder that so many persons are easily channeled into the enemy's camp, while all the time loudly professing to be of the household of God.

In Christ's prayer there is an emphatic contrast between the world and the truth. "I have given them thy word, and the world hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world sanctify them in the truth; thy word is truth. As thou did send me

into the world, even so I sent them into the world” (John 17:14, 16-18). Obviously truth is unwelcome to the world as it is deceived by Satan. The Christian is sent into the world to bear witness to the truth, even as Jesus was, and we can expect the same kind of reception. Jesus explained “every one that does evil hates the light, and comes not to the light, lest his works should be reproved. But he that does the truth comes to the light (John 3:20-21). But, of course, “even Satan fashions himself into an angel of light. It is no great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” (2 Cor. 11:14-15).

Jesus said that in the days just prior to His return, “there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; so as to lead astray, if possible, even the elect.” We are in this gigantic battle for the minds of men, to bring men to God our Creator. The sole weapon of our warfare is the truth of the word of God. Deception is all around us. To continue in the battle unarmed is to invite certain defeat! “Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth”, “and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (Eph. 6:14, John 8:32).

Just for You–th

You are in the car with four or five others, and someone says, “Let’s go down to Tag’s for a coke.” You say, “That’s a pretty wild place, I’d rather stay away from there.” “Well, let’s go get some beer,” a fellow says. Again you chime in, “I don’t drink beer.” And before you can think of another course of action you’re the object of a new kind of smear that goes, “What’s the matter, are you AGAINST everything?” “C’mon, don’t be so negative.”

There’s no argument at all. No one tries to defend Tag’s dive, and no one points out the virtues of beer. This new smear-technique doesn’t depend on logic or reason or truth. It’s just a sort of careless swing of the tongue, without too much malice, but when it lands it’s like a blow to the solarplexus.

The sad thing is, it usually works. Most people would rather be considered anything these days but “negative.” So the Christian gives in, in spite of his conscience, at the taunt of “negative”.

But, of course, the accusation is false. (Satan is a deceiver, remember, and all his accusations are false). You are not being negative merely because you have your eyes open. Like the salmon, which fights its way against the current to reach its goal, the Christian must fight his way against the current to attain the goal of the “image” of God. Certainly this is a “positive” ambition. It is the slob who is satisfied with the downward drift of society who is following the negative pattern.

Moreover, the struggle against the current will get harder, as the population increases, and as more and more people come up with ideas contrary to the purpose of God. As the pace of life speeds up, the Christian will encounter more challenges than ever. He will

appear “negative” and “reactionary” to the ever increasing activities being invented by those who have no goal. To illustrate, one may think of a small town, with no traffic lights, and only a few stop signs at the main intersections. He doesn’t have to stop very often. But when that town increases to the size of a metropolis, it is filled with traffic signals and directions. Yet, the driver is not considered “negative” because he observes the rules. He is a positive driver, making sure he reaches his destination, ONLY if he stops at the right signals.

Finally, don’t forget that the communist influence is gaining. There are more organized and professionally produced obstacles in the Christian’s way than ever before. Some of these are so designed to appear as reasonable and desirable objectives, but actually they are substitutes designed for the express purpose of throwing you off the track. The true Christian is forced to examine more closely than ever all that beckons him, and to say “no” more often than he ever did before. He has not become “negative”. The obstacles have simply increased. Of course those who have no positive goal of Life in Christ can drift with the current, and say “yes” to any invitation. But why not, they are not going anywhere anyway! (Unless — maybe you could show them the way.)

To deny false ideas, so say “no” to ungodly activities, and to resist the world’s grasp is to take a positive attitude to truth, to God and His purpose, and to make sure of your destination.

.....
Copyright © Curtis Dickinson. Formatted and Posted by Ken Fortier Ministries.
Permission is hereby granted by Mrs. Regina Dickinson to reproduce and distribute
Curtis’ articles to as many as possible. This statement is to remain attached to this article
for permission to be valid. Vol. V. Number 5.
.....