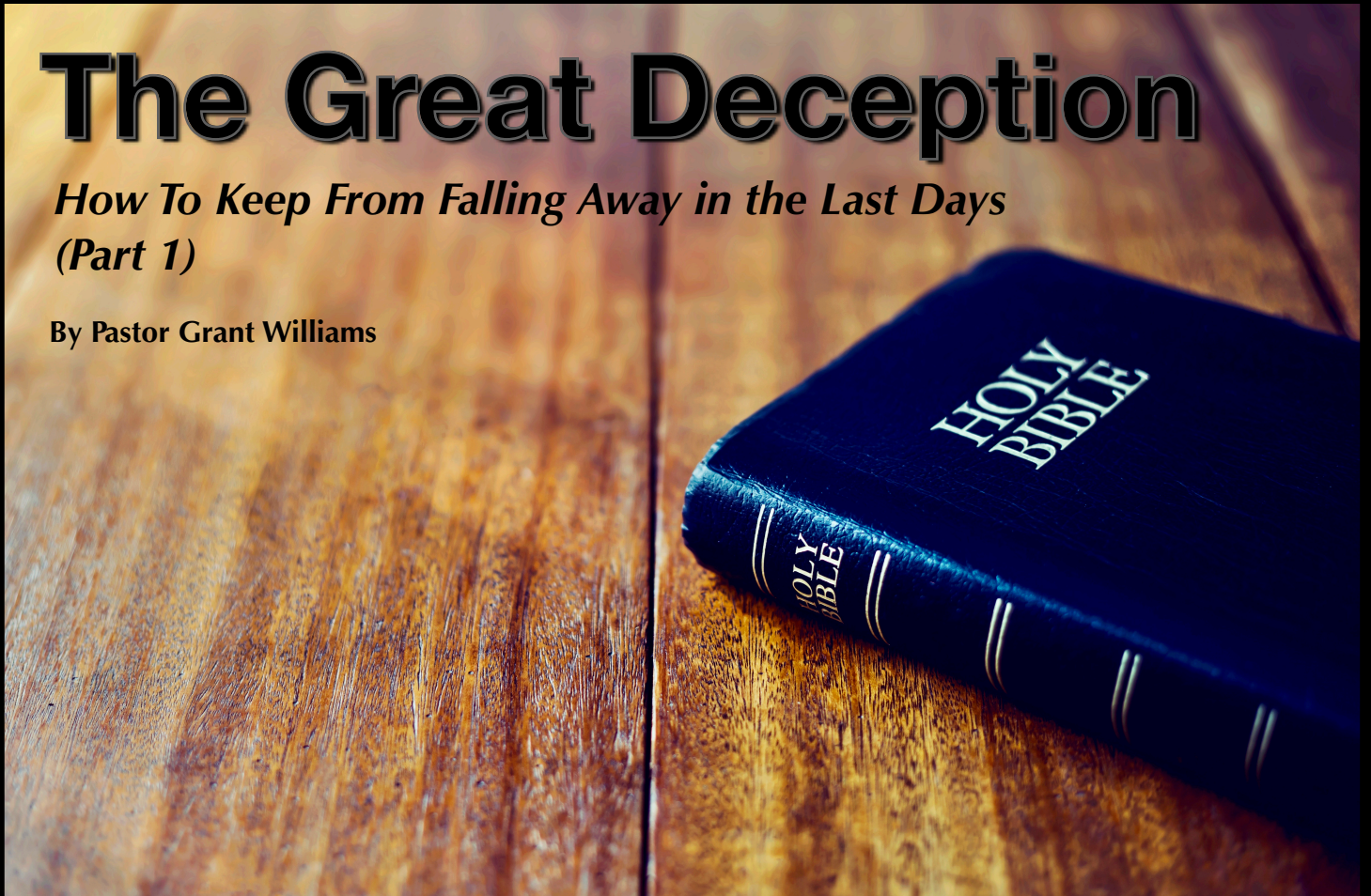


The Great Deception

How To Keep From Falling Away in the Last Days (Part 1)

By Pastor Grant Williams



Jesus said in giving His final instructions to His disciples when asked the question, “What will it look like, what are the signs or ‘things’ we should look out for to know when You will return again”?

Matthew 24:4 AMPC

*4 Jesus answered them, **Be careful** that no one (preachers/teachers/church friends) **misleads you** [**deceiving you and leading you into error**].*

God’s Word warns you and I, for such a time as this, when all the other signs and things foretold in His Word are happening, that His followers or imitators of Jesus Christ be careful that no one (preacher, teachers, authors, friends) misleads you and I.

Jesus continued in Matthew 24 with pointing out spiritual deception, the lack of teaching or passivity and false teaching that would be happening regarding sin, judgment, righteousness and the prophecies that are yet to come (John 16).

Matthew 24:5 AMPC

*5 For **many** will come in (on the strength of) My name [appropriating the name which belongs to Me], saying, I am the Christ (the Messiah), and **they will lead many astray**.*

Matthew 24:5 KJV

*5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and **shall deceive many**.*

Passivity defined:

Acceptance of what happens, without active response or resistance; the state of inactivity.

Deceive defined:

Deceive defined: cause (someone) to believe something that is not true, typically in order to gain some personal advantage.

Mislead defined:

Cause (someone) to have a wrong idea or impression about someone or something... **Synonyms:** deceive, delude, lie to, fool, hoodwink, lead astray, throw off the scent, send on a wild goose chase, put on the wrong track, pull the wool over someone's eyes, pull someone's leg, misguide, misdirect, misinform, give wrong information to; bamboozle, lead up the garden path.

Dupe defined:

Deceive or trick, beguile; a victim of deception...**Synonyms:** hoax, swindle, defraud, cheat, double-cross, gull, mislead, take in, fool, delude, misguide, sucker, stooge, sitting duck, simpleton.

In verse 5, Jesus is telling the End Times church that many pastors, preachers, teachers, authors (people who come in My name) will twist God's Word regarding sin, judgement and righteousness and End Time events. They will throw pages out, deleting pages and deceiving many for their own gain.

Prophet defined by 1828 Webster's Dictionary:

- 1. One that foretells future events; a predictor; a foreteller.**
- 2. A person illuminated, inspired or instructed by God to announce future events; as Jeremiah, Elijah, Isaiah, Ezekiel etc.**

A Prophet is never wrong - NEVER WRONG !

Matthew 24:10 AMPC

10 And then many will be offended and repelled and will begin to distrust and desert [Him Whom they ought to trust and obey] and will stumble and fall away and betray one another and pursue one another with hatred.

Matthew 24:11 AMPC

11 And many false prophets will rise up and deceive and lead many into error.

Jesus, tells you and I several times throughout the gospels along with the other New Testament writers to be on guard, don't be deceived, don't be duped, don't be misled, don't fallaway, don't stumble, don't be led into error, don't listen to false teaching, many false prophets/preachers will be speaking (deceivingly) contrary to God's Word.

Peter, Paul, Jude and John all echoed Jesus' Words regarding the spiritually difficult times that the followers of Jesus Christ would have in the Church at the Time of the End (prior to the Rapture). But, Paul told us that we need to be meeting together even more often as The Day or Rapture approaches.

So, what should we do?

Galatians 1:1-24 AMPC

1 Paul, an apostle—[special messenger appointed and commissioned and sent out] not from [any body of] men nor by or through any man, but by and through Jesus Christ (the Messiah) and God the Father, Who raised Him from among the dead—

2 And all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia:

3 Grace and spiritual blessing be to you and [soul] peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah),

4 Who gave (yielded) Himself up [to atone] for our sins [and to save and sanctify us], in order to rescue and deliver us from this present wicked age and world order, in accordance with the will and purpose and plan of our God and Father—

5 To Him [be ascribed all] the glory through all the ages of the ages and the eternities of the eternities! Amen (so be it).

***6 I am surprised and astonished that you are so quickly turning renegade and deserting Him Who invited and called you by the grace** (unmerited favor) of Christ (the Messiah) [and that you are transferring your allegiance] to a different [even an opposition] gospel.*

7 Not that there is [or could be] any other [genuine Gospel], but there are [obviously] some who are troubling and disturbing and bewildering you [with a different kind of teaching which they offer as a gospel] and want to pervert and distort the Gospel of Christ (the Messiah) [into something which it absolutely is not].

8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to and different from that which we preached to you, let him be accursed (anathema, devoted to destruction, doomed to eternal punishment)!

9 As we said before, so I now say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel different from or contrary to that which you received [from us], let him be accursed (anathema, devoted to destruction, doomed to eternal punishment)!

10 Now am I trying to win the favor of men, or of God? Do I seek to please men? If I were still seeking popularity with men, I should not be a bond servant of Christ (the Messiah).

11 For I want you to know, brethren, that the Gospel which was proclaimed and made known by me is not man's gospel [a human invention, according to or patterned after any human standard].

12 For indeed I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but [it came to me] through a [direct] revelation [given] by Jesus Christ (the Messiah).

13 You have heard of my earlier career and former manner of life in the Jewish religion (Judaism), how I persecuted and abused the church of God furiously and extensively, and [with fanatical zeal did my best] to make havoc of it and destroy it.

14 And [you have heard how] I outstripped many of the men of my own generation among the people of my race in [my advancement in study and observance of the laws of] Judaism, so extremely enthusiastic and zealous I was for the traditions of my ancestors.

15 But when He, Who had chosen and set me apart [even] before I was born and had called me by His grace (His undeserved favor and blessing), saw fit and was pleased

16 To reveal (unveil, disclose) His Son within me so that I might proclaim Him among the Gentiles (the non-Jewish world) as the glad tidings (Gospel), immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood [did not consult or counsel with any frail human being or communicate with anyone].

17 Nor did I [even] go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles (special messengers of Christ) before I was, but I went away and retired into Arabia, and afterward I came back again to Damascus.

18 Then three years later, I did go up to Jerusalem to become [personally] acquainted with Cephas (Peter), and remained with him for fifteen days.

19 But I did not see any of the other apostles (the special messengers of Christ) except James the brother of our Lord.

20 Now [note carefully what I am telling you, for it is the truth], I write this as if I were standing before the bar of God; I do not lie.

21 Then I went into the districts (countries, regions) of Syria and Cilicia.

22 And so far I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Christ in Judea (the country surrounding Jerusalem).

23 They were only hearing it said, He who used to persecute us is now proclaiming the very faith he once reviled and which he set out to ruin and tried with all his might to destroy.

24 And they glorified God [as the Author and Source of what had taken place] in me.

Paul said leave that church! Don't be deceived, misled, be a fool, (by their words or lack of words, the passive pastor). But, we are still to meet to be taught the truth, to know what is to come, it is a command. **John 14:15** ***“If you [really] love Me, you will keep (obey) My commands”.***

Hebrews 10:23-26 AMPC

23 So let us seize and hold fast and retain without wavering the hope we cherish and confess and our acknowledgement of it, for He Who promised is reliable (sure) and faithful to His word.

24 And let us consider and give attentive, continuous care to watching over one another, studying how we may stir up (stimulate and incite) to love and helpful deeds and noble activities,

25 Not forsaking or neglecting to assemble together [as believers], as is the habit of some people, but admonishing (warning, urging, and encouraging) one another, and all the more faithfully as you see the day approaching.

26 For if we go on deliberately and willingly sinning after once acquiring the knowledge of the Truth, there is no longer any sacrifice left to atone for [our] sins [no further offering to which to look forward].

Hebrews 10:25 KJV

*25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: **and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.***

Hebrews 10:25 GNT

*25 Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, as some are doing. Instead, **let us encourage one another** all the more, **since you see that the Day of the Lord is coming nearer.***

Paul is consistent and continually answering and comforting the Church about the question did we miss the Rapture and is this the Tribulation...

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 AMPC

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a loud cry of summons, with the shout of an archangel, and with the blast of the trumpet of God. And those who have departed this life in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we, the living ones who remain [on the earth], shall simultaneously be caught up along with [the resurrected dead] in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so always (through the eternity of the eternities) we shall be with the Lord!

18 Therefore **comfort and encourage one another with these words.**

Paul said we need to comfort and encourage one another with what is happening so we need to know. We are commanded to know the signs, to watch out so we are not deceived, duped, tricked and misled about: sin, judgment, righteousness and the things (prophecies regarding the end of time) that have yet to happen but are coming soon.

We need to hear Jesus is coming, we are commanded to know from the Pastor about the deception that will be taught. Remember, they are answering the questions “did we miss the Rapture, is this the Tribulation because the Romans/government are killing us, taxing us unfairly, family and friends are being imprisoned...”

Revelation 1:1, 3 AMPC

1 [This is] the revelation of Jesus Christ [His unveiling of the divine mysteries]. God gave it to Him to disclose and make known to His bond servants certain things which must shortly and speedily come to pass in their entirety. And He sent and communicated it through His angel (messenger) to His bond servant John,

3 Blessed (happy, to be envied) is the man who reads aloud [in the assemblies] the word of this prophecy; and blessed (happy, to be envied) are those who hear [it read] and who keep themselves true to the things which are written in it [heeding them and laying them to heart], for the time [for them to be fulfilled] is near.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 AMPC

*13 Now also **we would not have you ignorant**, brethren, about those who fall asleep [in death], that you may not grieve [for them] as the rest do who have no hope [beyond the grave].*

14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will also bring with Him through Jesus those who have fallen asleep [in death].

*15 For this we declare to you **by the Lord's [own] word**, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord shall in no way precede [into His presence] or have any advantage at all over those who have previously fallen asleep [in Him in death].*

16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a loud cry of summons, with the shout of an archangel, and with the blast of the trumpet of God. And those who have departed this life in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we, the living ones who remain [on the earth], shall simultaneously be caught up along with [the resurrected dead] in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so always (through the eternity of the eternities) we shall be with the Lord!

*18 Therefore **comfort and encourage one another with these words**.*

Paul gave Timothy, Reverend Timothy, Pastor Tim, instructions on what to do and it was recorded for our benefit. Remember, they thought they missed the Rapture, they thought they were going through the Tribulation...the New Testament writers said no, you didn't miss the Rapture and this is not the Tribulation but this is what it will look like, remember what the prophets already spoke. Paul was telling the Pastor what it will look like spiritually as well.

2 Timothy 3:1-17 AMPC

*1 But understand this, that in the last days will come (set in) perilous (**spiritually difficult**) times of great stress and trouble [hard to deal with and hard to bear].*

2 Timothy 3:1 KJV

1 This know (this is a command, I command you to know) also, that in the last days perilous times (spiritually difficult) shall come.

2 For people will be lovers of self and [utterly] self-centered, lovers of money and aroused by an inordinate [greedy] desire for wealth, proud and arrogant and contemptuous boasters. They will be abusive (blasphemous, scoffing), disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy and profane.

3 [They will be] without natural [human] affection (callous and inhuman), relentless (admitting of no truce or appeasement); [they will be] slanderers (false accusers, troublemakers), intemperate and loose in morals and conduct, uncontrolled and fierce, haters of good.

4 [They will be] treacherous [betrayers], rash, [and] inflated with self-conceit. [They will be] lovers of sensual pleasures and vain amusements more than and rather than lovers of God.

5 For [although] they hold a form of piety (true religion), they deny and reject and are strangers to the power of it [their conduct belies the genuineness of their profession]. **Avoid [all] such people [turn away from them].**

6 For among them are those who worm their way into homes and captivate silly and weak-natured and spiritually dwarfed women, loaded down with [the burden of their] sins [and easily] swayed and led away by various evil desires and seductive impulses.

7 [These weak women will listen to anybody who will teach them]; they are forever inquiring and getting information, but are never able to arrive at a recognition and knowledge of the Truth.

8 Now just as Jannes and Jambres were hostile to and resisted Moses, so these men also are **hostile to and oppose the Truth.**

They have depraved and distorted minds, and are reprobate and counterfeit and to be rejected as far as the faith is concerned.

9 But they will not get very far, for their rash folly will become obvious to everybody, as was that of those [magicians mentioned].

10 Now you have closely observed and diligently followed my teaching, conduct, purpose in life, faith, patience, love, steadfastness,

11 Persecutions, sufferings—such as occurred to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra, persecutions I endured, but out of them all the Lord delivered me.

12 Indeed all who delight in piety and are determined to live a devoted and godly life in Christ Jesus will meet with persecution [will be made to suffer because of their religious stand].

13 But wicked men and imposters (**preachers/teachers in the church**) will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and leading astray others and being deceived and led astray themselves.

14 But as for you, continue to hold to the things that you have learned and of which you are convinced, knowing from whom you learned [them],

15 And how from your childhood you have had a knowledge of and been acquainted with the sacred Writings, which are able to instruct you and give you the understanding for salvation which comes through faith in Christ Jesus [through the leaning of the entire human personality on God in Christ Jesus in absolute trust and confidence in His power, wisdom, and goodness].

16 Every Scripture is God-breathed (given by His inspiration) and profitable for instruction, for reproof and conviction of sin, for correction of error and discipline in obedience, [and] for training in righteousness (in holy living, in conformity to God's will in thought, purpose, and action),

17 So that the man of God may be complete and proficient, well fitted and thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Remember Isaiah told you and I that God told us from the beginning what would happen in the end... the condition of the Church, the pastor, the teacher, the follower of Christ. Remember, don't be deceived... (satan knows the word).

Isaiah 46:9-10 AMPC

9 [Earnestly] remember the former things, [which I did] of old; for I am God, and there is no one else; I am God, and there is none like Me,

10 Declaring the end and the result from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure and purpose

So, what was declared from the beginning that would happen at the end? Deception, twisting the truth, misleading in order to take personal advantage. The other "things" were Shem, Ham and Japheth's descendants returning to surround Israel, wickedness in high places (government, church, education, entertainment) as in the day of Noah and then as in the days of Lot, the Church no longer calling homosexuality a sin.

Here's how it all started, "In the Beginning" the first deception. Adam and Eve were duped and it was subtle, it was crafty....

Genesis 3:1-13 AMPC

1 Now the serpent was more subtle and crafty than any living creature of the field which the Lord God had made. And he [Satan] said to the woman, Can it really be that God has said, You shall not eat from every tree of the garden?

2 And the woman said to the serpent, We may eat the fruit from the trees of the garden,

3 Except the fruit from the tree which is in the middle of the garden. God has said, You shall not eat of it, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.

4 But the serpent said to the woman, You shall not surely die,

5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing the difference between good and evil and blessing and calamity.

6 And when the woman saw that the tree was good (suitable, pleasant) for food and that it was delightful to look at, and a tree to be desired in order to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she gave some also to her husband, and he ate.

7 Then the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves apronlike girdles.

8 And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

9 But the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, Where are you?

10 He said, I heard the sound of You [walking] in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.

11 And He said, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?

12 And the man said, The woman whom You gave to be with me—she gave me [fruit] from the tree, and I ate.

*13 And the Lord God said to the woman, What is this you have done? And the woman said, **The serpent beguiled (cheated, outwitted, and deceived) me, and I ate.***

In the beginning, Adam and Eve, made in the image of God, made righteous, were deceived by satan. It happened very quickly and with only 2 people on the earth. How did it happen? She listened to false teaching, she was misled and as a result she deceived Adam. They told God, we were tricked...

Galatians 1:6-7 AMPC

*6 **I am surprised and astonished that you are so quickly turning renegade and deserting Him Who invited and called you by the grace** (unmerited favor) of Christ (the Messiah) [and that you are transferring your allegiance] to a different [even an opposition] gospel.*

7 Not that there is [or could be] any other [genuine Gospel], but there are [obviously] some who are troubling and disturbing and bewildering you [with a different kind of teaching which they offer as a gospel] and want to pervert and distort the Gospel of Christ (the Messiah) [into something which it absolutely is not].

8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to and different from that which we preached to you, let him be accursed (anathema, devoted to destruction, doomed to eternal punishment)!

The never wrong Prophet Isaiah said, I told you from the beginning what would happen at the End (Isaiah 46:9-10). Solomon, the wisest man who ever lived said...

Ecclesiastes 1:9 AMPC

*9 The **thing** that has been—**it is what will be again**, and that which has been done is that which will be done again; and there is nothing new under the sun.*

After being disobedient to God's commands and being kicked out of the Garden we know from reading God's Word that sin continued in many other descendants. They knew first hand of God's laws and what happens if they were disobedient but continued in their sinful lifestyle and did not repent.

God's Word tells us just a few chapters later Enoch was raptured for being righteous and habitually walking or it "was his habit" to be obedient to God's commands.

Genesis 5:22-24 AMPC

22 Enoch walked [in habitual fellowship] with God after the birth of Methuselah 300 years and had other sons and daughters. 23 So all the days of Enoch were 365 years.

24 And Enoch walked [in habitual fellowship] with God; and he was not, for God took him [home with Him].

We can see judgement from the beginning of time, and it always results into one of two things, reward or punishment. In Genesis chapter 6 we can see that the world became so wicked that God wanted to wipe mankind off the face of the earth. God told Noah how to escape the punishment and to preach, to proclaim to others about the judgment to come.

Genesis 6:5-13, 18 AMPC

5 The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination and intention of all human thinking was only evil continually.

6 And the Lord regretted that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved at heart.

7 So the Lord said, I will destroy, blot out, and wipe away mankind, whom I have created from the face of the ground—not only man, [but] the beasts and the creeping things and the birds of the air—for it grieves Me and makes Me regretful that I have made them.

8 But Noah found grace (favor) in the eyes of the Lord.

9 This is the history of the generations of Noah. Noah was a just and righteous man, blameless in his [evil] generation; Noah walked [in habitual fellowship] with God.

10 And Noah became the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

11 The earth was depraved and putrid in God's sight, and the land was filled with violence (desecration, infringement, outrage, assault, and lust for power).

12 And God looked upon the world and saw how degenerate, debased, and vicious it was, for all humanity had corrupted their way upon the earth and lost their true direction.

13 God said to Noah, I intend to make an end of all flesh, for through men the land is filled with violence; and behold, I will destroy them and the land.

18 But I will establish My covenant (promise, pledge) with you, and you shall come into the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you.

So what happened ? Why did billions of people who knew what happened to Adam and Eve, who knew what happened to Enoch, who knew of God's laws miss or not believe judgment was coming?

They were deceived, they were duped and misled... how? That is what we are going to study in this series. We will identify from God's Word not just the deception but who is and will be doing it, why they are and will be, how to guard against being deceived, and how to fight it and warn others.

We have been commanded to fight and not to be passive.....

1 Timothy 6:12 AMPC

12 Fight the good fight of the faith...

This is a spiritual battle that will be fought in the natural and in the spirit realm. We wouldn't be told to put on the armor if we weren't supposed to fight. We are fighting against deception, passivity, governments, education, entertainment, and false prophets/misleading pastors who are duped themselves, but also ones who are intentionally deceiving their church for their own advantage. These are God's Words... He commands us to know.

Ephesians 6:10-13 AMPC

10 In conclusion, be strong in the Lord [be empowered through your union with Him]; draw your strength from Him [that strength which His boundless might provides].

11 Put on God's whole armor [the armor of a heavy-armed soldier which God supplies], that you may be able successfully to stand up against [all] the strategies and the deceits of the devil.

12 For we are not wrestling with flesh and blood [contending only with physical opponents], but against the despotisms, against the powers, against [the master spirits who are] the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenly (supernatural) sphere.

13 Therefore put on God's complete armor, that you may be able to resist and stand your ground on the evil day [of danger], and, having done all [the crisis demands], to stand [firmly in your place].

Here's some final words, instructions as we conclude Part 1 from the Apostle Paul writing the Church. This is what we need to watch out for:

Romans 16:17-20 AMPC

17 I appeal to you, brethren, to be on your guard concerning those who create dissensions and difficulties and cause divisions, in opposition to the doctrine (the teaching) which you have been taught. [I warn you to turn aside from them, to] avoid them.

18 For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ but their own appetites and base desires, and by ingratiating and flattering speech, they beguile the hearts of the unsuspecting and simpleminded [people].

19 For while your loyalty and obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, I would have you well versed and wise as to what is good and innocent and guileless (without deception) as to what is evil.

20 And the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah) be with you.

We are instructed to know the Word and be able to rightly divide it. Not be divided by what people are twisting and making us feel inferior about what God's Word says.

2 Timothy 2:15 KJV

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15 AMPC

15 Study and be eager and do your utmost to present yourself to God approved (tested by trial), a workman who has no cause to be ashamed, correctly analyzing and accurately dividing [rightly handling and skillfully teaching] the Word of Truth.