

# BENDED KNEE



## A SIMPLE AND PURE DEVOTION TO JESUS CHRIST

### PART TWO

MARCH 2024

**Text: 2 Corinthians 11:1-15**

But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. 2 Corinthians 11:3

We will now begin to look at ways, by the grace of our Lord, to protect ourselves from losing a simple and pure devotion to Jesus Christ. Paul's concern was what takes place in the local church and how it affects the common man.

First, we should know that Eve's sin was more than just eating from the forbidden tree. In Genesis 3, we see a progression. She believed a lie and turned from the truth, and with her mind led astray, she disobeyed. The final result was sin that not only resulted in the fall but also the loss of a simple and pure devotion to the God who created her and gave her life.(i)

Therefore, our first line of defense is to know and, by faith, cling to the truth of Scripture. Jesus said, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."(ii)

In reality, all you need is a Bible and the Holy Spirit to know the truth and be equipped to live a life pleasing to God and remain devoted to Christ. For we read in 2 Timothy 3:16-17:

**All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.**

I would take this approach to the study of Scripture.

- 1) Start with prayer, confess your sins, be thankful for your salvation, and ask the Lord to speak to your heart.
- 2) Read- the goal is not the amount you read but to learn what God has revealed and what it says as you study the Word. Keep it in its context. May the Holy Spirit be your greatest teacher.
- 3) Meditate- asking what does it mean and how does it apply to my life?
- 4) Memorize- I believe we should memorize—hide in our hearts—at least 100 verses of Scripture as His disciples. The sooner you start, the better.
- 5) Cross reference- know the whole council of God and let the Scripture explain the Scripture.

It is essential that you believe the Bible as it has been revealed and do not complicate its meaning. "We must settle in our minds that the plain, literal meaning of the Bible is generally the true and correct meaning... Happy is the Bible reader who believes the words of the Bible to mean exactly what they seem to mean."(iii)

H. A. Ironsides concurs:

*God's truth is always manifested right on the very surface of His Word. Wherever people have to enter into a long course of argument in order to support a system which they are trying to foist on the Saints, it is not the truth of God. Anything not characterized by a holy simplicity is not God's testimony. And so, young saint test every teaching by searching the Word, and if you do not find it plainly revealed in the book, reject all unscriptural reasoning, no matter how learned may be the man who does the reasoning.*(iv)

Recently, I was reading a book on biblical doctrine, in which the authors wrote

page after page to give their view that Christ only died for the elect. They state that John's use of the word "world" in John 3:16 and 1 John 2:2 does not mean the whole world but only applies to those who will be saved. In other words, they change the meaning of the word. In all my years as a believer, never once has the Holy Spirit inspired, convicted, or illumined me to change the common meaning of "world." It is hard to imagine that the original recipients of John's gospel understood his use of kosmos to mean anything less than all the inhabitants of the "world." Do we hold to the plain and simple meaning of Scripture, or do we change the meaning of words to fit a man-made system of theology? Ryle states, "Let us not be wise above that which is written, or more systematic in our statements than scripture itself."(v)

Let us not take the Bible out of the hands of the common man. It has often been said, "When the plain sense makes common sense, seek no other sense." When it comes to having a simple and pure devotion to Jesus Christ, what is most important? What is most important when it comes to our reading and studying of Scripture? We must believe what God has revealed. John uses the word "believe" around 103 times. The emphasis is not to intellectualize the meaning of Scripture but to believe what is written. Again, Ryle states:

*Many a poor converted heathen, knows nothing but that he is sick of sin, and trusts in Jesus, shall sit down in heaven, while many learned English scholars are rejected for evermore. Blessed indeed are they that believe!(vi)*

So, if you have a God-given desire to continue in a simple and pure devotion to Jesus Christ, make sure you are coming to the Word, continuing in the Word, and believing the Word as God has revealed it. May the Lord protect you in your simple and pure devotion to Him.

NOTE: Scripture tells us that Jesus "is indeed the Savior of the world." He came "to seek and to save that which was lost", and all the world was lost. This does not mean all will be saved, as is the teaching of universalism (See Matthew 7: 13- 23).

Next: We will look at the second line of defense.

*All articles in this publication are written by Pastor Tom Watson unless stated otherwise.*

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- (i) Genesis 3:1-7
- (ii) John 8:31-32
- (iii) J.C. Ryle, Expository Thoughts on John, Vol. 1, p. 368
- (iv) H.A. Ironsides, Second Epistle of Corinth, p. 231
- (v) J.C. Ryle, Expository Thoughts on the Gospels, John, Vol 1, p. 144
- (vi) J.C. Ryle, Expository Thoughts on the Gospels, Matthew, p. 76

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