

A Simple and Pure Devotion to Jesus Christ

PART FOUR

JUNE 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

Have you been led astray from a simple and pure devotion to Christ? Have you fallen for empty promises that cannot be found in Scripture? Has someone or something complicated or perhaps brought confusion to your spiritual life? As the church continues to decline and have less and less influence in the world, there is no doubt many have abandoned a simple and pure devotion to Christ. If it happened to Eve in a day of innocence, it certainly could happen to us in a day of deception and evil.

First, we said the Bible needs to be our primary source of knowledge and the Holy Spirit, our primary teacher. Second, we said we need to grow in our knowledge and relationship with Christ as He lives out His life in our life. Third, this article emphasizes the importance of not losing sight of all we have in Christ Jesus.

The serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, resulting in her losing sight of all the Creator had done for her and convincing her there was something better. What did Eve have in her relationship with God at the time of her deception? Here are a few things:

- ✓ She was living in the absence of sin.
- ✓ She walked with God with nothing to hinder her or separate her from God.
- ✓ She had no knowledge of evil or worldliness to corrupt her.
- ✓ Death was not an issue.
- ✓ She had no worries about health, food, finances, or even the weather.
- ✓ There were no thistles, thorns, so-called climate change, or cancel culture to contend with.
- ✓ There was no media, politicians, experts, scholars, or elite acting like they knew more than God.
- ✓ Marxism, Socialism, and all the other "isms" were not drawing her away from her faith.
- ✓ She was in a sinless marriage, as a sinless wife with a sinless husband.

I could go on, but you get the point. In reality, Eve had it all. The Scripture confirms that all was good. But the serpent came along and told her I have something else for you. I have something better for you. "You will be like God!"ⁱ Being led astray, she lost her simple and pure devotion to the God who had given her life, and all that was good within it.

We face the same danger today. How many books have been authored by those who have actually admitted they wanted more than what God had revealed? Books like "Jesus Calling" where Jesus is claimed to have said more than is confirmed by Scripture. How many sermons have been preached, promising more than God has promised? This is not limited to the Health and Wealth gospel. How many have been led astray, starting with one book or one sermon?

When you become dissatisfied with what God has done for you and given to you, like Eve, you become open to the deception. "Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." ⁱⁱand that someone is you.

The Bible tells us you are complete in Christ. ⁱⁱⁱ **What are you missing?** Do not let anyone or anything rob you of your child-like faith in the sufficiency of Christ and Scripture for all that you need to know in your relationship with God. In your simple and pure devotion to Christ, always be content and thankful for all that the Lord has done for you and all that He has given you – including a spiritual understanding of Scripture. ^{iv}

ⁱ Genesis 3: 5

ⁱⁱ 1 Peter 5:8

ⁱⁱⁱ Colossian 2:10

^{iv} 1 Corinthians 1:12

BKI Update

We were recently in the Carolinas, where we were given the opportunity to proclaim the Word, the Gospel, and share our ministry in two churches. We were at Crossroads Baptist Church in Westminster, SC, pastored by Rod Lyda in May. They were joined by Shiloh Bible Church, pastored by Tommy James. The James' family is a longtime friend of ours. It was a blessing to be among the prayerful, mission-minded believers.

In June, we were at Acqouni Baptist Church in Cherokee, NC, on the Cherokee Reservation, pastored by Merritt Youngdeer. Pastor Merritt, his wife Luli, and their friends Lyman and Bernie Clayton have ministered with us in previous years on the Navajo Reservation. This church was also a great encouragement to us.

In late August, we will make our way to the Navajo Nation Fair in Window Rock, AZ. This fair is probably the largest in America among Native people. It is reported that only 7% of the Native people have come to Christ. Among the tribal people of the United States, Christianity is often seen as the "white man's religion." Among the tribal people of Siberia, it is often seen as "America's religion." May we be clear and bold in our proclamation that they may see the gospel for what it really is, the only hope of salvation and life eternal.

Thank you for your prayers and support,

Tom