

Hate, Deception, Division

How aware and watchful are you?

New year's, Eve 2023-24

Serenity Prayer

***God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.***

***Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time;
accepting hardships as the pathway to peace; taking, as He did, this sinful world
as it is, not as I would have it; trusting that He will make all things right
if I surrender to His Will; that I may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with Him forever in the next.***

Amen.

As we start with the serenity prayer the point I seek to make is that we can follow all the corruption from the past to the present, we can see the actual violations of our legislators from the past right up to those sitting in office today from the lowest levels of government all the way up to the highest position our nation has. I receive podcasts, messages, emails and phone conversations about all of it and I seek to remain informed, but there is a deceptive danger in all of this.

Posed in a firefight would it be a good idea to take your focus off of the target ? The only correct answer here would be no. However, this is what can happen to us as we take the time to follow up on all the news we receive. Who and how can we trust anyone anymore in this world? Lies and cover ups seem to be the norm and yet it is like a movie in which the author strings us along waiting for the plot to thicken. Much of which I read and hear of is very real and factual, but what does it do us if we can do nothing about it? Those who say they hate our nation, protest constantly are willing to live a good amount of their lives causing chaos and destroying things of others, but they have no peace, merely a minuscule moment of contentment through making themselves feel above others believing they are the only people who really know how to run the world.

In all of this we very easily place our attention on evil and set aside our relationship with our Lord. And so the deception is found in our need to expose the corruption only to see it denied about and mocked. Even when the facts are presented one cannot change the minds of others should they not want to believe it. Out of the millions of people who stay informed how many have the time and ability to do anything about any of it. I know the collectively if we stand in unity in prayer to our Lord we will have the power of our Lord. I believe in large numbers our

media would be there if we stood up in the faith God gives us... in confidence and took not to denouncing people but instead praying openly to those who oppose us and one on one we faced off in order to demonstrate love of family, friends, and country toward those would seek to do harm. **Matthew 9:4; But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts?"**

As we have been studying Acts we have been seeing hatred toward a form of religion, called the way, Acts 9:2. It seems the world has always been skeptical of reform, and many times for good reason and other times not so much. People, especially families, have developed traditions over the years, but looking back we find many have lost those traditions that at one time were so important. I grew up in a family that held several traditions, of the largest was the Cooper picnic, a once a year gathering of family and friends held each year in a reserved park in the bay area hills.

I remember how important this day was to our family, with months of waiting and planning the day would finally come and we would jump into the car and head out for the picnic. Those were the times when all the old people had to hug and kiss all the kids, just like in the movies. There were so many people I could not remember names so I avoided calling people by their names, something parents really wanted us to do. As we got older the picnics began to fade, relatives died, children grew up and moved away, both my brother and I went into the Air Force and soon we no longer heard of the picnics.

The point I am making is that traditions come and go, they change and life moves on. Yes, there are many new traditions that get developed that again will come to an end. Paul says in **2 Thessalonians 2:15; Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.**

The Catholic church teaches that tradition and Scripture are equal and one cannot be separated from the other, yet we know from history that even the church's traditions have changed but the Word of our Lord never does. Here is an excerpt from Vatican II written in the 1960s. It would seem one should question most things written during the 1960s since there was so much dissent between so many in our nation. Protests were everywhere, not much different from today but they were not nearly so destructive and harmful.

From the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican, 1962-65.

It is clear, therefore, that sacred tradition, Sacred Scripture and the teaching authority of the Church, in accord with God's most wise design, are so linked and joined together that one cannot stand without the others, and that all together and each in its own way under the action of the one Holy Spirit contribute effectively to the salvation of souls.

We look at what appears to be opposing verses sometimes and the content of such, are they really in contrast with one another or is there something else being taught. Let's look at two verses that seem to be this way.

In Matthew 15:3-6, Jesus addresses traditions and how they have been incorporated into the church. “Why do you also transgress the commandment of God because of your tradition? 4 For God commanded, saying, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘He who curses father or mother, let him be put to death.’5 But you say, ‘Whoever says to his father or mother, “Whatever profit you might have received from me is a gift to God” — 6 then he need not honor his father or mother.’ Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.

Paul writes in 2 Thessalonians 2:15; Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

These verses may sound in opposition with one another but there is a very distinct difference, Jesus is addressing the church leaders who seem to be subjecting their own ideas where God’s word is the fabric that stands out and holds true. Paul emphasizes what he is saying is a different problem than that of Jesus, Paul says, “you were taught whether by word or epistle.” Both word and epistle are not of the leadership of the church but instead the inspired word of God. One corrupts and the other holds true.

This leads us into where our world stands today as so many claim that since it was man who wrote the bible it is not actually of God. The Christian understands that although God uses man as His vessels there exists a certainty that those who were inspired by the Holy Spirit wrote all that they were given to write. **2 Timothy 3:16-17; “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”** So then is it tradition that holds any power or is it the never changing Word of God? Our verses then do not stand in opposition, instead we are taught which of the two to place our trust.

Where does all of this stand in our world today, are not our struggles even much worse today than they were in the early church? Do not the warnings still hold true today? There was obviously a hatred toward the Christian teaching back then that has only become much worse today. Many today attack the church constantly and if you feel it may be only in insult then please pick up a copy of the Voice of the Martyrs publishing. Yes, believers are being put to death for their faith.

Is there something more diabolical in today's movement, something worse than death? Indeed there is, those who suffer persecution and death for their faith will be in heaven upon their last breath, but those who are deceived and die with doubt will suffer an eternal fate much worse than death. They will reside in a place of eternal death in a perpetual state of suffering.

Revelation 9:6 ESV; And in those days people will seek death and will not find it. They will long to die, but death will flee from them.

HATE In the NKJV the word Hate, (šāṭam-Hebrew 7852) is used 86 times in 83 verses, “to hate, oppose oneself to, bear a grudge, retain animosity against, cherish animosity against.” John says in **1 John 3:15; Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has**

eternal life abiding in him. Is this merely a hyperbole or is it a warning of destruction? And here rests another problem in our world today, the problem of down playing those things the Bible teaches about damnation. Many picture hell as a place where there will be constant parties and open sex and drug use will be the style of life, everything that offends God will be considered good. But is this really what hell will be like? What of all the good people that will be in hell? Will their punishment be just as drastic? Why will good people be in hell? Good does not automatically mean saved, we know there will be different measures of punishment, we find this in Matthew 11:22, Luke 10:14. Please, share this with your good friends who are perhaps riding the fence on accepting the gift of faith, that unless they accept they will end this life and be banished to the place of eternal suffering.

Look around at our streets in America today, listen to all the insults and lies perpetrated in our governing bodies, watch the evening news for an hour. Even as bad as things are now I do not believe it to be as bad as the news makes it out to be. I'm sure that if the media actually went out looking for good and encouraging stories they would by far outnumber the bad. This leads us to deception. Many believe that our nation may never bounce back from the lowness we face at the present time. Man's plan and God's plan are at odds, many believe a one world order should come, it eventually will, after all the Bible teaches of it, they will force a one world religion but it will not be a world of peace and harmony as so many believe it will be. It will be a world that denies God and imprisons millions to force worship of pure evil.

"John describes the ruler of this vast empire as having power and great authority, given to him by Satan himself (Revelation 13:2). This ruler receives worship from "all the world" (Revelation 13:3-4) and will have authority over "every tribe, people, language and nation" (Revelation 13:7)." <https://www.gotquestions.org/one-world-government.html>

King David found himself in numerous places and times he feared defeat and at times he felt tormented by those who sought to kill him. He made some bad decisions, but every time he did he turned back to God and found relief and peace. He had many who sought to place snares in his way but God was with him.

Psalms 38:12; Those also who seek my life lay snares for me; Those who seek my hurt speak of destruction, And plan deception all the day long.

In faith we can thwart those flaming arrows that come at us. We can put off the insults that are devised to catch us as a rabbit in a snare, how? Look at how David responds,

Psalms 38 13-14 But I, like a deaf man, do not hear; And I am like a mute who does not open his mouth. 14 Thus I am like a man who does not hear, And in whose mouth is no response.

David closes the door to insult and lies and does not seek to retaliate, He turns to our Lord for patience and understanding, finding strength in God only to rid the intended insults in order to provoke him into a battle, a battle to make him lose control. David realizes that even the emotion of despise is further away from where God likes us to be.

Psalms 38:15-16; For in You, O LORD, I hope; You will hear, O Lord my God. 16 For I said, “Hear me, lest they rejoice over me, Lest, when my foot slips, they exalt themselves against me.”

David knows that by allowing the insult to be received within himself the enemy has already gained ground. Oh believer, where does your armor rest, where is your shield, your helmet of salvation. **Ephesians 6:14-18; 14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.**

How far can deception go, how powerful will you allow it to be? As difficult as it is we have the power and ability to stop it, to guard ourselves against those fiery arrows. Our strength is in our faith.

Luke 21:8-19; 8 And He said: “Take heed that you not be deceived. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am He,’ and, ‘The time has drawn near.’ Therefore do not go after them. 9 But when you hear of wars and commotions, do not be terrified; for these things must come to pass first, but the end will not come immediately.”

10 Then He said to them, “Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. 11 And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines and pestilences; and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. 12 But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name’s sake. 13 But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. 14 Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; 15 for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. 16 You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. 17 And you will be hated by all for My name’s sake. 18 But not a hair of your head shall be lost. 19 By your patience possess your souls.

1 Timothy 4:1; Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,

As our world becomes much worse we find ourselves listening to pointing fingers. What do I mean? We send one another the reports of government deception, lies and hidden secrets of those in power, we hear of wars and rumors of war, we witness the ugliness and fate of horrible decisions our government makes and wonder why we the people cannot stop the insanity faster than need be. We look at those who accuse others of doing the very thing they themselves are guilty of doing and all of this divides our nation. The worst of all of it is that it is intentional; we must remember **Ephesians 6:12; 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.

I am no different from others, I also am guilty of sending out reports of corruption in our nation, the evidence of lies involving covid, exposure of plots and plans of our government and world powers to quench our current beliefs and practices and lead in other directions, away from God. Part of this is in the need for a one world order, one people and eventually a demonic one world religion, that will not be based on the God of the Bible as we know it today. It is difficult to ignore those reports we send to others and I believe that all the disciples of the bible were aware of the plots and plans to destroy Christianity, we find the hate and resentment extremely strong today. It is truly a battle between good and evil and we need to know where to find solace in a world coming to an end.

Many have said over the centuries that the Word of God is all we need to get through life. Yes, it is the only tool we have to lead us down the proper path, but it is not the one and only thing we need to be aware of, for in it, it warns of those experiences in life that we need to be aware of, those lies and deception that take us away from our faith. I believe the Serenity Prayer is most beneficial in looking at those issues that pop up and grab all of our attention. I am convinced we need to keep our eyes and our ears open and focused on all that is righteous and good, storing up treasures in heaven where moths and . However, for those of us who do their best to keep up with all that is rapidly running out of control it leaves us somewhat traumatized.

Look here at this writer's words.

Laura Vismara is an integrative health and science writer based in the UK. “The words trauma and traumatized have been consistently in the spotlight for the last two decades, rapidly surging to become commonplace and reaching new peaks of popularity in recent years, according to internet search trends. Propelled by major world events that rightfully fall under the label of traumatic—pandemics, wars, and episodes of violence to name a few—trauma has become epidemic.

Turn to God. Since we have become a nation that has put our bibles on a shelf with all of the other old books that merely take up space, we have lost the unity our nation seemed to have in the past. Even large numbers of our churches have become politically correct, afraid to stand against the politics that are robbing our morals and ethics and making threats against those who speak out about the moral decay we are facing now. We cannot afford to lose any more of our youth to the lies and the depravity we are experiencing today.

May God guide us once again. May we turn to Him and repent of all the evil we are witnessing and once again lift up our hands and voices praising Him and turning to Him for guidance. Without more Him we are sure to watch the freedoms we once had rapidly slip away and our nation never return to who we once were. Amen