

Keep Digging in the Intensity of War

September 12, 2021 | Pastor Al Brice

This is one of the most intense times of spiritual warfare that the majority of us has ever seen in our lifetimes. We've experienced many difficulties and so has our nation, but this time we're dealing with an all-out, unprecedented spiritual demonic attack, the likes of that we've never experienced to this capacity, intensity, and with a continual bombardment. But the Bible declares to us these times of spiritual warfare.

1 Peter 4:12 AMP:

¹² Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal which is taking place to test you [that is, to test the quality of your faith], as though something strange or unusual were happening to you.

1. Where are these tests coming from?

Revelation 12:10-12 AMP:

¹⁰ Then I heard a strong (loud) voice in heaven, saying, Now it has come—the salvation and the power and the kingdom (the dominion, the reign) of our God, and the power (the sovereignty, the authority) of His Christ (the Messiah); for the accuser of our brethren, he who keeps bringing before our God charges against them day and night, has been cast out!

¹¹ And they have overcome (conquered) him by means of the blood of the Lamb and by the utterance of their testimony, for they did not love and cling to life even when faced with death [holding their lives cheap till they had to die for their witnessing].

¹² Therefore be glad (exult), O heavens and you that dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in fierce anger (fury), because he knows that he has [only] a short time [left]!

1 John 5:19 AMP:

¹⁹ We know [positively] that we are of God, and the whole world [around us] is under the power of the evil one.

Ephesians 6:11-13 AMP:

11 Put on the full armor of God [for His precepts are like the splendid armor of a heavily armed soldier], so that you may be able to [successfully] stand up against all the schemes and the strategies and the deceptions of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood [contending only with physical opponents], but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this [present] darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly (supernatural) places. 13 Therefore, put on the complete armor of God, so that you will be able to [successfully] resist and stand your ground in the evil day [of danger], and having done everything [that the crisis demands], to stand firm [in your place, fully prepared, immovable, victorious].

a. The devil and the kingdom of darkness are spirit entities; therefore, they demonically influence people, and many times possess them to carry out their ungodly and wicked agendas and deceptive schemes. Their plans, schemes, and agendas are always to eventually stop and overthrow the Church of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:1-3 AMP:

¹ And you [He made alive when you] were [spiritually] dead and separated from Him because of your transgressions and sins, 2 in which you once walked. You were following the ways of this world [influenced by this present age], in accordance with the prince of the power of the air (Satan), the spirit who is now at work in the disobedient [the unbelieving, who fight against the purposes of God]. 3 Among these [unbelievers] we all once lived in the passions of our flesh [our behavior governed by the sinful self], indulging the desires of human nature [without the Holy Spirit] and [the impulses] of the [sinful] mind. We were, by nature, children [under the sentence] of [God's] wrath, just like the rest [of mankind].

2. The Word of God clearly lays out for us the characteristics of the days of the end of time, known as the last of the last of days.

2 Timothy 3:1-2 AMP:

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

a. **Verse 2** tell us that scoffers, haters, and wicked people will arise in these days.

2 Peter 3:3-14 AMP:

³ First of all, know [without any doubt] that mockers will come in the last days with their mocking, following after their own human desires ⁴ and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming [what has become of it]? For ever since the fathers fell asleep [in death], all things have continued [exactly] as they did from the beginning of creation." ⁵ For they willingly forget [the fact] that the heavens existed long ago by the word of God, and the earth was formed out of water and by water, ⁶ through which the world at that time was destroyed by being flooded with water. ⁷ But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly people.

⁸ Nevertheless, do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years is like one day. ⁹ The Lord does not delay [as though He were unable to act] and is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is [extraordinarily] patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.

¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will vanish with a [mighty and thunderous] roar, and the [material] elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and the works that are on it will be burned up.

¹¹ Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be [in the meantime] in holy behavior [that is, in a pattern of daily life that sets you apart as a believer] and in godliness [displaying profound reverence toward our awesome God], ¹² [while you earnestly] look for and await the coming of the day of God. For on this day the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the [material] elements will melt with intense heat! ¹³ But in accordance with His promise we expectantly await new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

¹⁴ So, beloved, since you are looking forward to these things, be diligent and make every effort to be found by Him [at His return] spotless and blameless, in peace [that is, inwardly calm with a sense of spiritual well-being and confidence, having lived a life of obedience to Him].

Jude 1:18-21 AMP:

¹⁸ They used to say to you, "In the last days there will be scoffers, following after their own ungodly passions." ¹⁹ These are the ones who are [agitators] causing divisions—worldly-minded [secular, unspiritual, carnal, merely sensual—unsaved], devoid of the Spirit. ²⁰ But you, beloved, build yourselves up on [the foundation of] your most holy faith [continually progress, rise like an edifice higher and higher], pray in the Holy Spirit, ²¹ and keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously and looking forward to the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ [which will bring you] to eternal life.

b. Vs 5 of **2 Timothy** tells us of a great deception concerning the teaching of Christian doctrine falsely. Let's first look at **2 Timothy 4:2-4 AMP:**

² preach the word [as an official messenger]; be ready when the time is right and even when it is not [keep your sense of urgency, whether the opportunity seems favorable or unfavorable, whether convenient or inconvenient, whether welcome or unwelcome]; correct [those who err in doctrine or behavior], warn [those who sin], exhort and encourage [those who are growing toward spiritual maturity], with inexhaustible patience and [faithful] teaching. ³ For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine and accurate instruction [that challenges them with God's truth]; but wanting to have their ears tickled [with something pleasing], they will accumulate for themselves [many] teachers [one after another, chosen] to satisfy their own desires and to support the errors they hold, ⁴ and will turn their ears away from the truth and will wander off into myths and man-made fictions [and will accept the unacceptable].

(This just came out: More than 60 percent of born-again Christians in America say there's more than one way to get to Heaven. That's according to a new survey from Probe Ministries. These disturbing trends are, yes, due to pastors not consistently teaching biblical doctrine. But they can also be attributed to young Christians who are not paying attention, who are focused — nearly exclusively, it seems — on their phones, social media and other content they deem more compelling," Kerby Anderson, president of Probe Ministries, told Christian Post.

Millennials and Generation Z Christians – between the ages of 18 and 39 say that Buddha, Muhammad, and Jesus are all valid paths to salvation. More than 30 percent of young Christians even believe that Jesus was a sinner. It's a stunning development.

This means, even born-again Christians "can have a false view of Jesus Christ and embrace a pluralistic worldview," Anderson told the Christian Post. " Pastors and church leaders just can't assume any longer that the members of their church or Christian organization have a biblical worldview.")

* Let me address this with the Word of God, the Bible!!

- **Salvation: Acts 4:11-12 NKJV:**

This Jesus is the STONE WHICH WAS DESPISED and REJECTED by you, THE BUILDERS, but WHICH BECAME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE. And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among people by which we must be saved [for God has provided the world no alternative for salvation]."

- **Jesus was not a sinner: Hebrews 4:14-15 NKJV:** ...Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

A culture that allows reason, logic, philosophy, human ideologies with human doctrines, and theory to reign, will suppress the truth of God's Word and attempt to rid itself of the truth and the worship of God, to worshiping and exalting man and his wisdom (humanism). Truth will then be suppressed, attacked, and redefined (even in the church that desires to be accepted by the culture) to align with the culture's lifestyle, desires, and pursuits. This produces a world, society, and culture without God, becomes a culture without absolutes, and walks in the darkness of deception served up and navigated by the kingdom of darkness.

Proverbs 14:12 NKJV:

There is a way that seems right to a man,
But its end is the way of death.

Hosea 8:7a: For they sow the wind [in evil]
And they reap the whirlwind [in disaster].

Psalms 11:1-5 AMP:

In the LORD I take refuge [and put my trust]; How can you say to me, "Flee like a bird to your mountain;
For look, the wicked are bending the bow; They take aim with their arrow on the string
To shoot [by stealth] in darkness at the upright in heart.
"If the foundations [of a godly society] are destroyed, What can the righteous do?"
The LORD is in His holy temple; the LORD'S throne is in heaven. His eyes see, His eyelids
test the children of men.
The LORD tests the righteous and the wicked, And His soul hates the [malevolent] one who
loves violence.

It is a test of the righteous person's quality of faith, patience, and endurance when he sees wicked men committing injustice. The LORD waits, He is long-suffering, desiring that none would perish and to see who will remain loyal to His Word and righteous ways during the times of chaos, confusion, darkness, injustice, and wickedness.

3. What is the Church to do?

Ephesians 3:8-12 (Wuest - The New Testament: An Expanded Translation):

⁸ To me, the one who is less than the least of all saints, there was given this grace, to the Gentiles to proclaim the good news of the incomprehensible wealth belonging to the Christ,
⁹ and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which has been kept covered up from the beginning of the ages in the God who created all things, ¹⁰ in order that there might be made known now to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places through the intermediate agency of the Church the much-variegated wisdom of God, ¹¹ according to the eternal purpose which He carried into effect in the Christ, Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we are having our freedom of speech and entree in perfect confidence through faith in Him.