



BOB AND DOTTIE (Connor) BINGHAM (303) 761-5005 Fax (303) 761-3682 e-mail: [info@shepherdinggrace.org](mailto:info@shepherdinggrace.org) VOLUME 15.3 September 2008

## Why is the Christian's Grace Walk Hindered?

When one responds to the Gospel it is often taught and believed that trials and tribulations are gone forever. However, it is not long before the new Christian experiences opposition to their desire for an intimate walk [life] with Jesus Christ. Why? Isn't God able to protect the Christian?

### Jesus' Teaching His Disciples

Jesus told His disciples what they should expect as His followers, "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves. "But beware of men, for they will hand you over to the courts and scourge you in their synagogues; and you will even be brought before governors and kings for My sake, as a testimony to them and to the Gentiles. "But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say. "For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you" (Matt. 10:16-20).

Jesus continued, "Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. "You will be hated by all because of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved" (vs. 21-22).

False teachers and prophets draw men and women away from walking with Christ, "Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the head, from whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God" (Col. 2 :18-19).

Why? Isn't God able to protect the Christian?

### Jesus Does Protect His Own

"Therefore do not fear them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. "What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

housetops. "Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. "Are not two sparrows sold for a cent? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. "So do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows" (vs. 26-31).

**The opposition that Jesus refers to is human -- from mankind, fellow believers and family.**

### The World's System Hinders

The world is a system that is political, financial, social, ethical, religious and is in opposition to and alienated from the God of the Scriptures. **The world system desires to clone and make everyone the same. Advertising plays into this by assuring that if one uses their product they will be part of the elite.** It began with Cain, "Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod [wandering]" east of Eden (Gen. 4:16).

Jude identifies the world system as "The way of Cain" [jealousy], the "error of

*Balaam*” [love of money and compromise] and the “*rebellion of Korah*” [resisting God’s leaders and authority] (vs. 11). John adds the “*teaching of the Nicolaitans*” [hedonism and situation ethics] (Rev. 2:15).

The Apostle John further identifies examples of the world as the ‘lust of the flesh’ [like Cain] and the “*lust of the eyes*” [like Balaam] and the “*boastful pride of life*” [like Korah] (1 Jn. 2:16).

The Apostle Paul warns, “*See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ*” (Col. 2:8). Why? Isn’t God able to protect the Christian?

### **Jesus Does Protect His Own**

Jesus said, “*In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world*” (Jn.16:33). Jesus prayed to the Father for us, “*I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. “I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil one. “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world”* (Jn.17:14-16).

### **The Flesh Hinders**

*The flesh* [self, old nature, old man] **desires to be in control of its own destiny and be its own God thus trying to reduce God into being its servant.** The World War II saying, “God is

my co-pilot” is a good example of the flesh’s desire -- self is the pilot and God is the assistant.

The flesh was activated when Adam and Eve chose to follow Satan’s suggestion to eat the fruit and become as God themselves (Gen. 3:4-5). The flesh became Adam’s legacy passed on to all mankind, “*Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned*” (Rom. 5:12).

Why? Isn’t God able to protect the Christian?

### **Jesus Does Protect His Own**

“*For if by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ*” (Rom. 5:17). “*But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life*” (Rom. 6:22).

### **The Devil Hinders**

***Satan opposes God and also opposes all who desire to live for and please God. His purpose is to accuse, deceive and destroy.*** The Devil masquerades as God and is able to counterfeit most of what God does; “*Satan disguises himself as an angel of light*” (2 Cor. 11:14; Rev. 12:9). “*The god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God*” (2 Cor. 4:4). He is a deceiver and

destroyer who promotes false religious practices making them appear genuine and Biblical, “*But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, by means of the hypocrisy of liars seared in their own conscience as with a branding iron*” (1 Tim. 4:1-2). See also, (2 Cor.11:14 and 1 Pet. 5:8). Why? Isn’t God able to protect the Christian?

### **Jesus Does Protect His Own**

The Apostle Paul was being **hindered** by “*a messenger of Satan*” He prayed that Jesus would remove it three times. Jesus answered, “*My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.*” Paul responded, “*Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me. Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong*” (2 Cor. 12:9-10).

“*But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him [the Lord Jesus Christ] who loved us*” (Rom. 8:37).

**Jesus does protect us and uses hindrances, oppositions, trials and sufferings; expose one’s weakness, and draws the Christian to Jesus for His strength and His comfort. Jesus also uses adversity in the believer as a testimony to His power and faithfulness.**