

The Narrow Gate Update

A Ministry of The Berean Way Fellowship
Published quarterly by Walt and Jill Hartwich

1st Qtr 2021

No. 71

“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.” (Matt. 7:13-14)

Watch videos of Walt’s sermons on: YouTube and at <https://thebereanwayfellowship.org>

MAN’S POWER OVER THE ENEMY

If Satan is anything, he’s envious of man. In the first place, he’s envious that only man was made in God’s image. We humans, and only we, are imago Dei beings. In the second place, Satan is envious of us in that God placed him under the power of the truly born-again man. Luke 10:19 makes that crystal clear. The devil is even under lost men, because men possess the power of choice. Unfortunately, men succumb to, what theologians call, their **power of contrary choice**. This is where choices are deliberately made knowing full-well that those choices are detrimental, wrong to make, and will bring about consequences.

Irenaeus tells us in the intro to his *Against Heresies* volume of books: **“Inasmuch as certain men have set the truth aside, and bring in lying words and vain genealogies, which, as the apostle says, minister questions rather than godly edifying, which is in faith, and by means of their craftily-constructed plausibility’s [sic] draw away the minds of the inexperienced and take them captive, [I have felt constrained, my dear friend, to compose the following treatise in order to expose and counteract their machinations.] These men falsify the oracles of God, and prove themselves evil interpreters of the good word of revelation. They also overthrow the faith of many, by drawing them away, under a pretense of [superior] knowledge, from Him who rounded and adorned the universe; as if, forsooth, they had something more excellent and sublime to reveal, than that God who created the heaven and the earth, and all things that are therein. By means of specious and plausible words, they cunningly allure the simple-minded to inquire into their system; but they, nevertheless, clumsily destroy them, while they initiate them into their blasphemous and impious opinions respecting the Demiurge [a being which is responsible for creating the universe]; and these simple ones are unable, even in such a matter, to distinguish falsehood from truth.”** [last brackets & underline mine]

He continues: **“Error, indeed, is never set forth in its naked deformity, lest, being thus exposed, it should at once be detected. But it is craftily decked out in an attractive dress, so as, by its outward form, to make it appear to the inexperienced (ridiculous as the expression may seem) more true [sic] than the truth itself.”** (ibid)

This is what Epictetus (1st Century B.C.) termed “The Fourth Kind.” He laid out four kinds of appearances: 1. Things appear as they are. 2. Things don’t appear as they are. 3. Things don’t appear to be, but are. 4. Things actually appear to be, but are not.

For those who may not be aware, Irenaeus was a true brother in the Lord who stuck to the guns of his faith in Christ Jesus and His Gospel, and that, under severe persecutions from Rome. He lived in the 2nd Century around 120/140 – 200/203 A.D. and was martyred. He was taught by Polycarp who was mentored directly by the Apostle John, one of three in Christ's "inner circle" of apostles along with Peter and James.

Satan envies man and became apostate to the divine law of God. Such a thing as envy is completely foreign to God! Envy is, of course, related to covetousness, which the Lord commanded us not to engage in. "And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." (Colossians 1:17 NKJV)

The devil can be likened to a lawless, apostate man who invades a country to terrorize and enslave the inhabitants. He harasses the residents with fear. He glories in his theft of innocence, wealth, and life. The devil, however, is envious of man. And, these satanic, apostate men are the supposed great leaders, tacticians, and despots in war, according to historians.

Man became aware of Satan's apostasy by the Word of God through His prophets. According to Irenaeus, "*Satan, now exposed for all to see, became ever more envious of man*" and desires for man to have his own desires of a false glory beginning with pride, the seminal sin, and ending in full apostasy and separation from God, as he, himself, is. This, in fact, is an attack by Satan against man. Men who are self-deceived, for all deception is self-deception, cannot grasp the significance of willfully joining a side that cannot win. Satan's promises of glory and power are a lie. These men settle for the measly few years of perceived stardom and red-carpet treatment as a noteworthy accomplishment. Indeed, they have their reward! We, the Church, the Bride of Christ are looking to the eternal reward that has no end, but grows as God continuously blesses all those who love Him throughout all eternity.

By this envy of man and by attempting to persuade them to side with him, Satan has actually been conquered by God by means of human nature. Thus, the Lord God has put the devil under the power of man, for He says so in Luke 10:19. Irenaeus says that this was done because, "*as he [Satan] obtained dominion over man by apostasy, so again his apostasy might be deprived of power by means of man turning back again to God.*"

When the devil broke from God in heaven, his doom was sealed. He thus attempted to have that same doom come over all men. However, God already beat him in that, salvation of His imago Dei human was designed in the mind of God before the foundation of the world. The Lord promised back in Genesis 3:15 the Savior would come at the appointed time and actually satisfy God's righteous decree: that spotless and full payment must be made by man in order to legally set him eternally free. Enter Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of the Living God, The firstborn of all new creation by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said "***I have overcome the world.***" This is partly what it means when Jesus led captivity captive. He was going back to heaven after having successfully defeated Satan on the Cross. Jesus said, "***be of good cheer***" because I have out-manuevered the devil and flat-out defeated him, and I did it with the very thing with which he successfully tempted Eve. The success was that Satan succeeded in perverting Adam and Eve's nature and they lost their God-given glory, which covered them so that they weren't naked and thus ashamed, that is, they weren't without righteousness. Their relational standing with God was perfect before the Fall except for one thing, they hadn't yet been tested for obedience in order to be confirmed.

The holy angels, however, stood the test of Satan's feeble attempt to overthrow God. The temptation the devil offered was wisely rejected by them and they were thus confirmed in their holiness.

One of the heretics, whom Irenaeus comes against is Marcion, whose modern disciples are the J W's. Valentinus is another, and indeed Irenaeus comes against all the Gnostics of his time, (those who falsely thought they had true knowledge). These all taught another Father, and God, from the true One published by the prophets and revealed by Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ. He said that these heretics should be known as "agents of Satan."

"Truly has Justin [Martyr] remarked: 'That before the Lord's appearance Satan never dared to blaspheme God, in as much as he did not yet know his own sentence, because it was contained in parables and allegories; but that after the Lord's appearance, when he had clearly ascertained from the words of Christ and his apostles that eternal fire has been prepared for him as he apostatized from God of his own free will, and likewise for all who unrepentant continue in the apostasy, he now blasphemes, by means of such men, the Lord who brings judgment [upon him] as being already condemned, and imputes the guilt of his apostasy to his Maker, not to his own voluntary disposition.'" (Book V, Ch 26)

Irenaeus points out that the guilty always blame someone else for their sins. When punishment overtakes the lawbreaker, they blame the lawmakers. In like manner, he says, these men filled with a satanic spirit, bring innumerable accusations against the Lord God. They refuse to admit that the judgment of God is just. ***"Wherefore also they set about imagining some other Father who neither cares about nor exercises a providence over our affaires, nay, one who even approves of all sins."*** (Book V, Ch 26)

This is exactly the situation today. Men who purposely distort and lie about God's Holy Word and seek thereby to receive absolution for their sins, as if they're not as bad as God lets on in His Word.

The fact is that Satan has no power over any human except he is able to procure it by stealth. For the true born-again child of God, this should present no problem at all. As for the masses of lost humanity, they actually aid the devil in their very own eternal destruction. It's as simple as being selfish in what they want. The devil promises success in possible fame and fortune when following his prescribed methods of attaining these and, indeed, enough of a small percentage achieve that status, which makes it plausible for the rest to falsely believe they can also find success in the world.

Satan's anti-Christ system of governance so far has completely devoured humanity in that they are so busy eating the lies that they are not able to stop long enough to even consider the consequences. In fact, "damn the consequences" most would say, in order for the imagined glory to manifest in their lives at least a little bit. Obviously, what they don't realize is that what is damned is not just any consequences, it's their very souls. The consequences are only the here-and-now results of disobedience to God. Once the soul is sold, eternal destruction is all that is left.

Yes, Satan has been put under the power of men the moment God made us in His image and sanctioned for us to be able to use the power of choice. This is the human wall of protection the devil attacks in various ways so that he might get people to choose him either directly as Satan worshippers, or indirectly, as in, not caring about the Lord and His Christ. So, men are weak in the flesh and honor Satan through fornication, abuse of all kinds, drugs, booze, and perversions galore. This is the devil's only power over men, namely their weaknesses when their allegiance isn't given to God.

Serving self **IS** serving the devil! He has his way, whether he gets the credit or not. The Father of Lies has a spiritual and eternal spreadsheet on each of his apostate children who are as rebellious to God as he is. The only way to avoid this disaster is to get with the program the Lord has laid out for His imago Dei beings

from the very beginning. Simply put, all must believe His report as published in His Word. As the man Jesus is the Yeshu'a Christ, the Bible is the Yeshu'a Logos – the written report on how to get and stay saved from eternal death, hell, and the grave.

The Bible speaks of three types of death: Physical death – which we will all experience; Spiritual death – with which we all come into this world; and Eternal death – which we will experience if we don't believe God's report, do what it says, and become born-again in order to escape it. We can't change the fact of our impending physical death, although this is the one the Godless world focuses on: concepts of longevity of this earthly life, the fountain of youth, cryogenics, time travel desires, drugs, and cosmetics that attempt to slow the aging process, etc.

We have the power to change Spiritual death by bringing it to life again through faith in Christ Jesus and His Gospel. The world only focuses on this death in terms of psycho-babble, which eliminates the spiritual death aspect of their already spiritually dead body.

We who believe the Lord's report are to contend for this faith of ours until the end of our physical lives, come what may. The devil can't really harm us except through weakening our trust in the Lord. Remember, Timothy is already deemed "saved" yet, Paul tells him to "lay hold of eternal life." (1 Tim 6:12) Inasmuch as Timothy maintained his faith, the devil was powerless against him, and so it is with us.

Almighty God has already put Satan under our power; therefore, let no one be deceived and give their power away. Satan is only roaring because he can't actually bite without our help! (1 Pet 5:8) In Christ, we've already overcome the world! (1 Jn 5:4,5) ~

~~~~~  
**"No man can be true to God and escape unpopularity."** (Author Unknown)  
~~~~~

(The following Q&A is taken from the January 2021 issue of The Berean Call newsletter, Dave Hunt, Founder.)



Q. Please comment on the payment of income taxes and turning our country back to God's law, the "common" law. I have studied law and believe that "common law" was originally God's law.

A. I, too [Dave], have studied law and have never interpreted common law as God's law, although it does rely heavily upon conscience. My understanding is that we are to preach the gospel of God's grace and lead people to a saving knowledge of Christ rather than attempt to bring them under the law. Sadly, it's a hopeless task to try to reform America, *nor do I believe that task was ever given to Christians*. As for paying income tax, Christ himself told them to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's," and gave the example of having Peter gather the fish with a coin in its mouth and using that coin to pay tax to the government for Peter and for Himself. Romans 13 states that we are to be subject to those in authority and we are to pay custom to whom custom is due. Therefore, I do not understand from the Word of God any basis for refusing to pay income tax.

The nonpayment *might* be justified due to the evil purposes for which that money is used, but tax money was also used for evil purposes in Christ's and Peter's time, and there is given no

justification for withholding it on that basis. We must make up our own minds. One day we will give an account to God.

We welcome any questions you may have regarding any subjects we have written about in this newsletter, any of Walt's sermons you may have seen on YouTube, or any other biblical subjects.

You may send them via

email - jw.hartwich@gmail.com

text - 765-714-5113

or regular mail - P.O. Box 823, Frankfort, IN 46041 ~



WORSHIP SERVICE & BIBLE STUDY...The Berean Way Fellowship: Sunday 10:30 am. Lafayette. **Home Bible Study:** Wednesday night 6:30pm, Lafayette; call 765-714-5113 for location. ~



WALT'S SUNDAY SERMONS can be seen on YouTube or on our website at <https://thebereanwayfellowship.org>. The archives can also be accessed on YouTube by searching for Walt Hartwich, Victory Seekers Church, or Victory Seekers Ministries. ~

Aahoou!!



PRAYER REQUESTS....We hope that you all will join us in our prayers, remembering the Persecuted Church, praying for the health of all brothers and sisters in Christ, asking that we might live according to the will of God.

Pray for His wisdom, especially in not being deceived by the enemy. Pray also that all believers in Christ Jesus would be good witnesses for Him by the way we live our lives and our obedience to His commandments. Pray for the salvation of all the unsaved family members of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ and that the fullness of the Gentiles would come in per Romans 11:25. Pray for our leaders, as Paul says in 1 Timothy 2:1-2. Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem—the soon coming of our Lord Jesus, because only when He comes will there truly be peace.

Praise God in all things and to God be the glory for all that is good! ~

////////////////////////////////////
We wish to thank God for supplying the ways and means for publishing this quarterly update, and those whose hearts He has moved to donate to the cause of teaching the church. **All donations are appreciated and should be sent to The Berean Way Fellowship, P.O. Box 823, Frankfort, IN 46041, with "for NGU" in the memo for a tax-deductible qualification.**

We solicit your prayers for our ministry that we will continue with boldness as we present the truth, no matter what, and that we will not be deceived as **no one** is immune.

If you would like Walt to speak at your church or Bible study or other group, or if you have questions regarding anything you've read in our Update or on any biblical subject, you may send your requests via mail, or by email to jw.hartwich@gmail.com, or by calling 765-426-1413.

If you wish to add someone to or be deleted from this mailing list, respond by mail or email. We apologize if we do not get the change administered quickly; sometimes things fall through the cracks. **Changes of address are appreciated to keep the cost of mailing to a minimum.** If you wish to receive your newsletter via email rather than regular mail, please notify us of that as well. ~

Narrow Gate Ministries
P.O. Box 823
Frankfort, IN 46041

Standard
US Postage Paid
Frankfort, IN
Permit No. 13

Return Service Requested

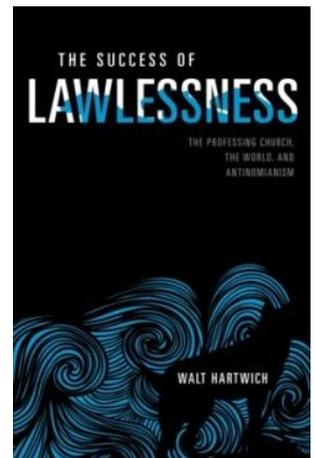
THOUGHT-PROVOKING, SOBERING, POLITICALLY INCORRECT AND CONTROVERSIAL, YET QUITE REVEALING.... Gary Kah, popular author and conference speaker

***THE SUCCESS OF LAWLESSNESS: The Professing Church, the World, and Antinomianism*, by Walt Hartwich**

The unconscionable destruction of planet earth as we know it, which results in the battle of Armageddon or WWII, will be the culmination of global lawlessness.

In *The Success of Lawlessness* the author details how and why lawlessness is a success. He points out that world leaders routinely deviate from the dictates of their governments' constitutions in the five basic realms of modern human existence: political, financial, educational, medical, and spiritual. This deviation is what results in complete lawlessness, which is achieved by incorporating the concept of the fourth kind of appearances as it was first formulated by first-century-B.C. Greek philosopher Epictetus.

There's only one sensible conclusion the searching mind can reach considering the evidence presented in these pages: **Sin = Lawlessness. (I John 3:4)**



Preview and purchase online at amazon.com, 256 pages paperback – used from \$8.41 + S&H; \$10.99 eBook.
Purchase from The Narrow Gate Update, 256 pages – new \$3.00 + S&H.