

Introduction1
 Trigger Warning: Don't Read the Bible!3
 The End-Time's Predominate Trend: Deception.....4
 Welcome, New Church!.....13
 Conclusion17

2026 Brave New Year: Deception and the Last Days, Part 2: The End-times' Predominate Spirit-Trend

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Introduction

1) Good morning, Church!

Last time we started a special New Years’ mini-series called: *2026 Brave New Year: Deception and the Last Days*.

And we looked at a number of difficult trends that are impacting the world around us and even the Church itself.

✝ We looked at how AI is being used to create so-called worship music and we asked the thorny question: *Can machines, computers create music meant to worship a God they cannot know?*

We also pointed up the importance of the Holy Spirit in worship – and in everything else a believer does. Worship, Jesus said **MUST** be in Spirit and in truth; and a machine cannot have the Spirit. So, if this isn’t what *the Bible* calls worship, then it is a counterfeit.

✝ We looked at an AI church service that was led by an AI-generated ‘pastor’ in Germany. And an ‘AI Jesus’ that one church in Switzerland created for its congregation to interact with one-on-one.

✝ We looked at a trend of pastors asking AI to write the sermons (or large portions of their sermons) that they'd deliver to the congregation.

And to that, we asked again, *'Where's the Holy Spirit?'* *'What has happened to the responsibility of the pastor to go before the Lord and ask Him what this congregation needs?'*

✝ We looked at a ministry that created a 'prayer bot' to actually pray with people over their specific needs to save the pastor time. As Corey Minor put it, "This isn't Artificial Intelligence, it's Artificial Ignorance."

So, we bemoaned the fact that ...

God's role in worship is being marginalized.

God's role in preaching is being marginalized.

And God's role in prayer is being marginalized.

2) Moving from the Church to the world around us we noted that ...

✝ A new study from George Barna's *Cultural Research Center* revealed that millions of Americans no longer see many behaviors once considered sinful as wrong at all.¹ But the problem is, when what God calls sin is no longer sinful, then there's no longer a need for a Savior.

✝ Compounding this problem is OpenAI's decision to introduce AI-generated, personalized "erotica for verified adults."² AI, which has already blurred the lines between reality and illusion is about to take this 'great blur' into the stratosphere. Scripture warns, "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life is not of the Father, but of the world" (**1 John 2:16**). AI erotica takes all three and packages them into a single glowing screen.

✝ We ended last time by showing how people are already forming deep, intimate personal relationships with AI bots and how it's even led to the loss of life in some teens.

¹ From 'Most "Traditional Sins" No Longer Considered Wrong by Americans,' by Ken Ham, November 06, 2025; <https://answersingenesis.org/morality/most-traditional-sins-no-longer-considered-wrong-by-americans/>

² From 'The Coming Flood of Evil: ChatGPT's Adult Content Will Create Digital Babylon,' by Prophecy News Watch Staff, October 17, 2025; https://www.prophecynewswatch.com/article.cfm?recent_news_id=8986

Young people are still developing emotionally and are extremely vulnerable.

- We watched the testimony of parents describe how an AI bot, unprovoked, instructed their 13-year-old daughter to remove her clothing and engage in sexual violence.
- And another case where a young teen was counseled by AI to stop taking her anxiety meds and told her how to hide it from her parents.
- And, finally, we saw three examples of how AI literally coached teenagers to take their own lives, which they did – even providing step-by-step instructions for the methods they used.

2026 is going to be a Brave New Year indeed, Church!

Trigger Warning: Don't Read the Bible!

- 1) Now all of this is very concerning, and everyone agrees that young people need to be protected, right?

Well, the University of Sheffield in the United Kingdom is definitely concerned about the young adults in their charge.

So much so that they've warned its students that studying events in Scripture, such as the crucifixion of Christ, can be “triggering”.

Therefore, they warn, studying Scripture should be avoided by “some.”³ The University placed the “trigger warning” on the four Gospels – Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John – claiming, without explanation, that the events leading up to the death of Christ depict “graphic bodily injury and sexual violence.”

The same label was also placed on the book of Genesis for its account of Cain and Abel.

³ ‘University Places ‘Trigger Warning’ on the Bible,’ Harbingers Daily, November 08, 2025; <https://harbingersdaily.com/university-places-trigger-warning-on-the-bible-claiming-account-of-jesus-crucifixion-contains-sexual-violence/> & ‘Absurd’: Talia Wise, ‘University Slaps ‘Sexual Violence’ Warning on Biblical Account of Jesus,’ CBN; <https://cbn.com/news/world/absurd-university-slaps-sexual-violence-warning-biblical-account-jesus>

- 2) *The Daily Mail* newspaper reported that “Christians and historians ... said the warnings were ... incompatible with discussions about morality,” noting that experts were “at a complete loss to explain the inclusion of 'sexual violence' in the warnings.”⁴

Andrea Williams, the head of *Christian Concern*, said ...

“Applying trigger warnings to salvation narratives that have shaped our civilization is not only misguided, but absurd ... To suggest that the crucifixion story involves 'sexual violence' is not just inaccurate, it's a profound misreading of the text. The account of Jesus's death is not a tale of trauma, it is the ultimate expression of love, sacrifice, and redemption, central to the Christian faith.”

The university defended its actions, calling the warning a “standard academic tool” and insisting it is simply “preparing students who might find such graphic details difficult.”

- 3) This trend of universities vigorously pushing students toward an anti-Biblical worldview is not new, but it’s certainly been effective!

Answers in Genesis Founder and CEO, Ken Ham, recently highlighted studies that show that “70-88%” of college students who grew up in an evangelical home no longer consider themselves Christians after they graduate – partly because of the overtly atheistic agenda permeating schools.

The End-Time’s Predominate Trend: Deception

- 1) Now, I can see why the devil – inspiring these woke administrators to steer young people away from the Bible – would want to do so.

In fact, *none* of the things we’ve been talking about lately should surprise any careful reader of the Bible.

The truth is certainly becoming more and more obfuscated in our day, and God told us that this is precisely what would happen.

⁴Hastings, Chris, ‘God help us! Students given trigger warning about the Bible's death and violence - including Christ's crucifixion,’ *Daily Mail*, 25 October 2025.

We call this branch of Bible study, *Prophecy*.

I always try to view the world around me through the eyes of the Bible, as I think all followers of Jesus should.

When it was written, approximately 30% of the entire Bible was unfulfilled prophecy.⁵

⁵ S. Michael Houdman's article on prophetic Scripture is succinct and very helpful: "Prophecy accounts for a major portion of the entire canon of Scripture. Numerous books in the Old Testament contain prophecy—some include short statements about the future, and others feature entire prophetic visions. In the New Testament, almost every book contains some prophecy, with Revelation being wholly devoted to a prophetic vision. By one count, about 27 percent of the Bible is predictive (Payne, J. B., *The Encyclopedia of Biblical Prophecy*, Baker Pub. Group, 1980, p. 675). This means that, when written, over one fourth of the Bible—more than one in four verses—was prophetic. Professor and theologian J. Barton Payne lists 1,817 prophecies in the Bible (ibid., p. 674). The consistent relation of prophecy in the Bible is staggering; on top of that is the amazing accuracy of those detailed prophecies. At least one half of all biblical predictions have already been fulfilled precisely as God had declared. Because of God's faithfulness in fulfilling these prophecies, we can be assured that He will fulfill the rest of the prophecies in Scripture without fault (see Numbers 23:19). Prophecy in the Bible can be divided into two broad groups: fulfilled and not yet fulfilled. Some examples from these generalized groups include the following: *Fulfilled Prophecies*: • The first coming of Christ (e.g., Deuteronomy 18:15–19; Numbers 24:17; Daniel 9:25–26; Micah 5:2). • Jesus as the Savior of mankind (e.g., Genesis 3:15; Isaiah 53:4–5). • Prophecies regarding individual people, such as the doom of Jezebel (2 Kings 9:10). • Prophecies regarding Israel, such as in the case of Israel's exile to Babylon (2 Kings 20:18; Jeremiah 34:3). • The destruction of the temple, which occurred in AD 70 (Matthew 24:1–2). • Daniel's prophecies about the rise and fall of many kingdoms (Daniel 7:2–6, 16). *Prophecies Still to Be Fulfilled*: • The second coming of Christ (Zechariah 14:3–4; Matthew 24:44; Acts 1:10–11; Revelation 1:7). • The rapture of the church (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17). • The tribulation (Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15–22). • The resurrections of the saved and the unsaved (Daniel 12:1–3; 1 Corinthians 15:20–23; Revelation 20:11–15). • The millennial reign of Christ (Psalm 72:7–11; Zechariah 2:10–11; Revelation 20:4). • The restoration of Israel (Jeremiah 31:31–37; Romans 11:26–27). • The new heavens and new earth (Isaiah 65:17; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1). Some prophecies have a double fulfillment, one nearer to the time of the prophet and one further in the future. We see this in Isaiah 7:14, for example. The birth of a child served as a sign for King Ahaz, but the prophecy also pointed forward to the virgin birth of Jesus (Matthew 1:22–23). Some interpret Jesus' explanation of the signs of the end times as having been fulfilled in some sense in AD 70 yet also signaling a future, more complete fulfillment during the end times tribulation. Other prophecies have been fulfilled partially and are awaiting complete fulfillment. An example of this is found in Jesus' quotation of Isaiah 61:1–2, in which He declares the fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy. In the synagogue, Jesus read from the scroll: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4:18–19). He then proclaimed Himself as the fulfillment of that prophecy. But He had stopped reading in the middle of Isaiah 61:2. The reason is simple: the first part of that verse was fulfilled by Christ in His first advent, but the second half, concerning "the day of vengeance of our God," was not. The Day of the Lord is still to be fulfilled in the future. The amount of prophecy in the Bible is one of the things that make it unique among religious books. There is absolutely no emphasis on predictive prophecy in the Qu'ran or the Hindu Vedas, for example. In contrast, the Bible repeatedly points to fulfilled prophecy as direct proof that it is God who speaks (see Deuteronomy 18:22; 1 Kings 22:28; Jeremiah 28:9). Given God's omniscience, it should come as no surprise that the Bible contains so many clear predictions or that those predictions are literally fulfilled: "I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done" (Isaiah 46:9–10, ESV). (Houdmann, S. Michael, 'How much of the Bible is Prophecy?', <https://www.gotquestions.org/Bible-prophecy.html>.)

According to Dr. Hugh Ross, out of the approximately 2,500 prophecies that appear in the pages of the Bible, about 2,000 have been fulfilled to the letter with no errors.⁶

The remaining 500 or so reach into the future and will unfold in the last days.

Much of what was once prophecy is now history, and all of this is now a part of the ‘mystery age’ in which we're living.⁷

Prophecy – History – and the Mystery.

This current Church Age is called *a Mystery* by Paul in **Ephesians 3:3-6**.

It's an age that no Prophet mentioned.

And friends, I believe we're *at the very end* of the age.

And so, just as our Lord instructed us, we need to step into 2026 with our eyes wide open and watching.

Jesus said, ‘You look at the sky and can figure out what the weather’s going to be like tomorrow, but how is it that you cannot discern the signs of the times’ (**Matthew 16:2-3**).

Seneca wants stood before the Roman Senate and said, ‘Gentlemen, the time will come when men will wonder how we could have been so ignorant of things so obvious.’

Indeed! And in 2026, we're going to need to cling to the Word of Truth like never before.

To insist that it's accurately presented. To keep our eyes away from things that will make us slaves.

There is an enemy of the people of God – he is real, he is malicious, and he is always working.

⁶ Ross, Hugh, ‘Fulfilled Prophecy: Evidence for the Reliability of the Bible,’ *Reasons to Believe*, August 22, 2003; <https://reasons.org/explore/publications/articles/fulfilled-prophecy-evidence-for-the-reliability-of-the-bible>.

⁷ The Church Age, or the Mystery Age, is described in Ephesians 3:3–6, where Paul states that God revealed to him the “mystery” that Gentiles are to be fellow heirs and partakers of the promise in Christ through the gospel.

He wants to destroy our testimony and he wants to destroy our lives! That much is obvious from the first two chapters of Job. Look at what he did to that man who was godly and blameless in his generation! Do you think he likes *you* better than he liked Job?

We have to keep ourselves free by submitting more completely than ever to the One who set us free and keeps us free – and refuse to submit again to a yoke of slavery. May God help us as we do.

2) Now the Bible describes what the end times will be like in numerous passages.

In **2 Timothy 3:1-5**, Paul famously warned:

“Understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty. ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, ³ heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, ⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, ⁵ having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.”

I call the things Paul listed here, *end-time spirit trends*.

Each of these are important.

But if I were to ask, ‘What do you think, according to God’s Word, is the #1 spirit trend that will be operative in the Last Days,’ what would you answer?

I think the answer to that question is: *deception*.

I think *deception* will be the most prominent spirit trend of the Last Days – and I was delighted to hear the great John Lennox say as much recently.

3) The Bible, it turns out, has *a lot* to say about deception.

There are different degrees of deception, and there’s one *great* deception coming that the Bible talks about.

One of the most troubling results of AI has been that truth is becoming harder and harder to discover.

Jesus said, “I am the way the truth and the life” (**John 14:6**).

But what happens when the truth gets so blurred that you can't tell up from down anymore?

What happens when people are influenced by statements or pictures or videos that *seem* to be true but are not.

What happens when truth has become so ambiguous that it's really difficult to discern?

I'll tell you exactly what happens, *people get deceived*.

And *deception* is the very air that people will breathe in the very Last Days.

As I said, the Bible has a lot to say about *deception*.

It warns of being deceived by others:

✠ God complained in the days of Jeremiah (**9:5**) that “everyone deceives his neighbor, and no one speaks the truth; they have taught their tongue to speak lies; they weary themselves committing iniquity.”

✠ **Proverbs 24:28** warns us never to ‘deceive with our lips.’

Scripture warns of *self*-deception, which each of us are vulnerable to:

✠ **1 Corinthians 3:18**: “Let no one *deceive himself*.”

✠ In **James 1:22**, those who hear the Word but do not do the Word, are *deceiving themselves*.

✠ **1 John 1:8**: “If we say we have no sin, we *deceive ourselves*, and the truth is not in us.”

✠ **Obadiah 3** says we can be deceived by the pride of our heart.

✠ **Galatians 6:3**: “If anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he *deceives himself*.”

The Bible has a lot to say about the many deceptions of Satan:

- ✠ **2 Corinthians 11:3**: “I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.”
- ✠ **In Revelation 12:9**, he is called “the great dragon ... that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, *the deceiver of the whole world ...*”
- ✠ **In Revelation 20:10**, “the devil *who had deceived them*” is “thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet” will already be.

That won't be the end of him though!

Revelation 20:3 says that he'll be incarcerated until the end of the 1000-year reign of Christ on the earth.

But, at the end of it, he “must be released for a little while.”

And will all that time in prison reform him? *No, no Nanette!*

Revelation 20:8: He “will *come out to deceive the nations* that are at the four corners of the earth ... their number is like the sand of the sea.”

And so, deception will shift into in turbo-drive in the last days:

- ✠ **2 Thessalonians 2:3** warns of deception regarding the emergence of the Antichrist and when he will appear.
- ✠ **2 Timothy 3:13** warns that “evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.”
- ✠ Even in John's day, the beloved Apostle warned that “many deceivers have gone out into the world” (**2 John 7**).⁸

⁸ In Revelation 13:14, the False Prophet will be permitted to work signs that will deceive “those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast [the Antichrist] that was wounded by the sword and yet lived.” Then, in Revelation 19:20, the Antichrist and the False Prophet will be captured – the one who “had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image.” They will both be thrown into the lake of fire.

- 4) Considering these things, it should be obvious to us that the Last Days will be absolutely awash in deception.

In fact, God will use delusion as a judgement against those who have said ‘NO!’ to the salvation which comes only through Jesus (**Acts 4:12**).

This is stunningly remarkable! **2 Thessalonians 2:9-12**:

“The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, ¹⁰and with all wicked deception [*ἀπάτη - deceptiveness*] for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. ¹¹Therefore God [*ὁ θεός*] sends [present *active* indicative of *πέμπω*] them a strong delusion [*ἐνέργειαν πλάνης*], so that they may believe what is false [NO! *τῷ ψεύδει*, THE lie!], ¹² in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

God will ‘lock in’ their rejection of Christ with this terrible judgment!

This is God turning the tables on the mockers who, Paul promised, “will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived” (**2 Timothy 3:13**).

Those who “do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and [who] by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naïve” will be swallowed up in deception (**Romans 16:18**).

Deception will be the most ubiquitous weapon in the Spiritual Warfare of the end times – and we are watching the technology through which it will certainly flow emerge right before our very eyes.

And the stage for the emergence of the Antichrist will be set by the counterfeit Christianity we’re seeing run rampant through the Churches – churches that call people *to assemble*, but never *to a cross*.

These are the “many” who will come to Jesus in the day of judgment calling Him ‘Lord’ and touting their religious credentials.

Those to whom the Lord will say, “Away from ME!”

- 5) And – DON'T MISS THIS – the terrible period which will be inaugurated by the rise of the Antichrist [The Tribulation] will be preceded by another product of satanic deception: *the great falling away of the Church*.

Before the great deceiver emerges, the Church – or *what claims* to be the Church – will be deceived away from Christ.

Paul wrote:

“Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers, ² not to be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word, or a letter seeming to be from us, to the effect that the day of the Lord has come.

³ Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, ⁴ who opposes and exalts himself against every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, proclaiming himself to be God. ⁵ Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?

⁶ And you know what is restraining him now so that he may be revealed in his time. ⁷ For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. ⁸ And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming” (**2 Thessalonians 2:1-8**).

Notice: even in the Apostolic Era deception was at work within the Church.

Deceptions were circulating in various ways in Paul's day: through spirits, through people speaking false words, and even through letters claiming to be from the Apostles!

Paul went on to tell them, “Let no one deceive you in any way” (**2 Thessalonians 2:3**).

Why? Because the threats were many, the stakes were high, and the potential for being misled was great!

That was in the 1st century! We're now in the 21st, and closer than ever to the end of things.

Furthermore, they were in danger of being deceived about things which *they'd been taught over and over again!*

He wrote: “Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things?” (**2 Thessalonians 2:5**)

He warned against those who teach that immorality is permissible, writing:

✠ **1 Corinthians 6:9-10**: “Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor the greedy, [etc.] ... will inherit the kingdom of God.”

✠ So: “*Do not* be deceived” (**1 Corinthians 15:33**).

But Paul was clear that *a great falling away* would sweep through the professing Church in the Last Days!⁹

✠ **Ephesians 5:6**: “Let no one deceive you with empty words [*κενοῖς λόγοις* – *vacuous words*], for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.”

Paul warned against mocking God by denying the consequences of our actions:

✠ **Galatians 6:7**: “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.”

John also warned believers in the early Church that “many deceivers have gone out into the world” (**2 John 7**). And so, you have so-called ‘pastors’ today saying things like this ...

- 6) Now, there have always been attacks on the purity of the Church – both morally and doctrinally – but those attacks will have a deeper effect in the Last Days.

Many will defect from the faith. In fact, the Church of the Last Days will barely resemble the Church our Lord founded. The true Church of Jesus will be largely

⁹ The Apostle John chimed in too! 1 John 2:26: “I write these things to you about those who are trying to deceive you.” 1 John 3:7: “Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as he is righteous.” James warned the Church as well, saying “Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers” (James 1:16).

eclipsed by the counterfeit Church led by “evil people and impostors” who “go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:13).

God’s Word clearly predicts a departure from the true faith characterized by deceptive teachings. It will be a time of widespread falsehood disguised as truth – and it will profoundly mislead humanity. Who could argue that its already arrived?

Welcome, New Church!

1) And so, the state of the Church in 2026.

Some Churches, desiring to be more inclusive, have replaced the traditional, historic creeds – like the *Apostle’s Creed* or the *Nicaean Creed* – with a new creed in their liturgy.¹⁰

It’s called, *The Sparkle Creed*.¹¹

The *Sparkle Creed* is a progressive adaptation of the traditional *Apostles’ Creed*, written by Rev. Rachel Small Stokes, a pastor with the United Church of Christ.¹²

It emphasizes that God is non-binary and that Christianity must be reinterpreted through an inclusive, LGBTQ+-affirming lens.¹³

The *Apostles’ Creed* is all about biblical truth.¹⁴

¹⁰ From ‘Drag Clowns and Terrorist Apologies,’ by Prophecy News Watch Staff, August 16 2025; https://www.prophecynewswatch.com/article.cfm?recent_news_id=8651

¹¹ Mattingly, Terry, ‘A New Interpretation of Faith: The Story Behind the LGBTQ+-Inclusive Sparkle Creed’, Religion Unplugged, July 20, 2023; <https://religionunplugged.com/news/2023/7/20/a-new-interpretation-of-faith-the-story-behind-the-lgbtq-inclusive-sparkle-creed>

¹² The author of *The Sparkle Creed*, Rev. Rachel Small Stokes, was raised United Methodist, served as a missionary in that denomination, but switched to the United Church of Christ which began ordaining gay ministers in 1972, before being ordained in 2009 and marrying her lesbian partner in 2012.

¹³ The Sparkle Creed: “I believe in the nonbinary God, whose pronouns are plural. I believe in Jesus Christ, their child, who wore a fabulous tunic, and had two dads and saw everyone as a sibling child of God,” the church recited. “I believe in the rainbow spirit who shatters our image of one white light and refracts it into a rainbow of gorgeous diversity. I believe in the church of everyday saints, as numerous, creative and resilient as patches on the ... quilt. Whose feet are grounded in mud and whose eyes gaze at the stars in wonder. I believe in the calling to each of us that love is love is love, so beloved let us love. I believe, glorious God, help my unbelief, Amen.”

¹⁴ *The Apostles’ Creed*:

This is a video of Anna Helgen, pastor at Edina Community Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, Minnesota, leading the congregation in the “Sparkle Creed.”

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a mainline Protestant, flock now ordains LGBTQ+ pastors living in committed relationships.

And remember, this is a Lutheran Church – a denomination named for Martin Luther, the great Reformer.

Now this is very interesting: Rev. Rachel explained on Facebook that this creed began with a computer glitch.

“I was voice-to-texting ‘the Apostle’s creed’ to a colleague, and it translated as ‘The Sparkle Creed’ ... [and] I decided that’s exactly what we need for Pride Month. So, here’s my first jab at it. Feel free to share if it moves you.”

One reader commented: “I hate creeds across the board. Even the good ones make my skin crawl. This is the first one that resonates with my soul.”

- 2) Now such distortions of truth today are not one-off curiosities; they are *warnings*. They show what happens when the Church trades its holiness for cultural approval.

I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting.
Amen.

Paul warned that “the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths” (2 Timothy 4:3-4).

I’m afraid to say, that time has arrived.

Pulpits have become platforms where sin is affirmed and sinners don’t need redemption – they’re beautiful just the way they are, thank you!

- 3) A recent sermon (*The Disobedient Daughters of Eve*, January 26, 2025) by the Rev. Dr. Rebecca Todd Peters, perfectly demonstrates the new hermeneutic through which the Bible is now being interpreted.¹⁵

I’m going to show you a few segments from that church service.

This is instructive.

Note the lyrical content of the hymns, note the way Scripture is ‘apologized for,’ and note how the meaning of the passage is completely re-imagined by the Rev. Peters.

In this segment:

- ✠ The first hymn, which the congregation was told to *sing to themselves*, tells them that they are “beautiful” and “nothing less than whole.”
- ✠ The reader *made fun of* and *apologized for* Paul’s words in **1 Timothy 2:11-15**. He also apologized for **Genesis 3:1-7**.
- ✠ The preacher claimed that **1 Timothy 2:11-15** is Timothy’s opinion of Eve’s action (even though Paul, *not Timothy* wrote it). She says, “There is no unmediated Scripture – all Scripture is interpreted.” But God’s Word says just the opposite: “[N]o prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:20-21).

¹⁵ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MK9WKj4NNug>

✠ She said, “Bible verses don’t hold meaning outside of time and culture.” But Scripture is clear that God’s Word is both eternal and unchanging. It will not bend or shift to fit in with an ever-changing culture. It is for all people, at all times.

✠ According to her, in **Genesis 3**, GOD lied to EVE! This despite the fact that Scripture affirms over and over again that it is impossible for God to lie (**Hebrews 6:18**). That God is not a man that He should lie (**Numbers 23:19**). And that according to the Lord Jesus Himself, *Satan* is the liar:

“You are of your father the devil,” He told the Pharisees, “... He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies” (**John 8:44**).

But, be that as it may, in Rev. Peters re-imagining of the story, *the serpent* was the one telling the truth, because, after eating, the first couple DID become wise knowing good and evil, and they DID NOT die. “The serpent,” the preacher says, “revealed the truth.”

✠ Eve, according to Rev. Peters, is “the bringer of wisdom and moral agency to the human community.” She [Eve] is not, as Paul claimed, the one who was deceived (**1 Timothy 2:14**). Peters says, “Eve acts on behalf of all of humanity ... [choosing to] use her own moral agency [she’s referring to Eve’s rebellion against God] to define “what it means to be human – that knowledge that makes us moral creatures.”

In other words, it was rebelling against God’s command that gave us the knowledge which makes us moral! And then she says, remarkably, “The story of Eve is the story of how humanity is able to distinguish between right and wrong. And it marks this moral agency – this knowledge – as part of what it means to be like God.” She says, our *disregard* of God’s commandment made us more “like God.”

✠ The service closed with the hymn, “We are a Gentle, Angry People.”

Again, Paul warned, “the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths” (**2 Timothy 4:3-4**).

- 4) Can I be very clear with you, Church? *The people leading these churches are not saved people!* A quote often attributed to Charles Spurgeon is very relevant to our day: “A time will come when instead of shepherds feeding the sheep, the church will have clowns entertaining the goats.”¹⁶ I believe the ‘great falling away’ predicted by Paul *is taking place right now.*

Conclusion

- 1) And so, the apostasy of the Church is the great prerequisite Paul gave for the emergence of the Antichrist. We’ll see next time how the technology necessary for him to come and do what the Book of Revelation says he’ll do is already here and growing in efficiency.

But while these things might seem *discouraging*, *we* should find encouragement here!

They show that God indeed knew the end from the beginning. And that everything He promised *would* happen *is* happening with real prophetic specificity.

And for us, that means the Rapture is near – perhaps nearer than we think!

In **Revelation 3:10**: “Because you have kept my word about patient endurance, I will keep you from the hour of trial that is coming on the whole world, to try those who dwell on the earth.” I believe Jesus is telling the truth!

- 2) The coming of Jesus for His Church is the believer’s great hope!

And our response to that hope should be obvious.

John writes:

“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us

¹⁶ The quote “A time will come when instead of shepherds feeding the sheep, the church will have clowns entertaining the goats” is attributed to Charles Spurgeon in multiple sources. However, a critical examination by *Lifeway Research* indicates that no verifiable record exists of Spurgeon uttering or writing this exact phrase. The quote appears in various articles and sermons posthumously, but its origin remains unconfirmed in Spurgeon’s known works. Therefore, while widely cited, the statement cannot be definitively traced to Spurgeon’s original writings or sermons.

is that it did not know him. ² Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. ³ And everyone who thus hopes in him purifies himself as he is pure" (1 John 3:1-3).

And what better way to do that than by celebrating our Lord's Table.

Amen?