

Pleasant to the Eyes

“But of the tree of **the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it:** for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Gen 2:17). In the beginning, God commanded the man then left him and his wife alone to test if they would keep what He said. And according to Paul, this first event foretold of how it is now, “For they that are such **serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly;** and by **good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.** For your obedience is come abroad unto all *men*. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you **wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil.** And the God of peace shall **bruise Satan under your feet** shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ *be* with you. Amen.” (Rom 16:18-20).

Jesus Christ commanded us and taught us the truth, then left to test if we would keep His words in this world ruled by the devil’s deceptions. Are we going to stay faithful to what He said or succumb to the pressures of what this world is saying?

The woman had already been given the knowledge of good and evil—she knew God said it was good to eat from every tree in the garden and evil to eat from that one tree. But as the devil does with everyone, “But every man is tempted, when he is **drawn away of his own lust, and enticed**” (Jas 1:14), he played on her own selfish desires to lure her away from what God said and redefine good and evil for herself, “And when the woman saw that **the tree was good for food,** and that it *was pleasant to the eyes,* and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise” (Gen 3:6).

Protestant Trinitarianism is an extremely subtle and shrewd deception. It’s “pleasant to the eyes” through an enticing context in which it’s comfortable and convenient to redefine good and evil for ourselves—to eat the fruit of a Trinitarian view of God in opposition to Christ’s teaching of “the only true God” (Jhn 17:3). Trinitarianism appeals to our desire for: belonging to a majority; fellowshipping with likeminded people; being led by educated and respected ministers; singing pleasant praise music; hearing relevant and witty messages; having fun children and youth programs; enjoying nice facilities; serving the community. It’s all packaged as a very appealing fruit but from a very deadly tree.

There are approximately 2 billion Trinitarians world-wide—a little more than half are Roman Catholic while the rest Protestant. That’s about a fourth of the world population. And it’s difficult to not allow the weight of such a staggering number of people influence us. After all, as it has been argued, that that many people can’t all be wrong about God. However, there are also almost 2 billion Muslims in the world that are all wrong about God. Ultimately, it doesn’t matter what billions of people say but only what one person said. What Jesus Christ taught about His Father God and about Himself is the truth.

When the Son of God Himself was tempted and enticed, He appealed to what God had said in the Scriptures, “It is written” (Mat 4:4, 7, 10). Likewise, we must stay true to what the Son of God said in the Scriptures regardless of how attractive and appealing other things are presented. Will we disregard what the Son of God said, disagree with what the Son of God said, and eat fruit that is “pleasant to the eyes”?

Paul taught that false ministers “**by good words and fair speeches** deceive the hearts of the simple.” They’re educated, eloquent, and engaging. They’re learned and accomplished in many subjects of the Bible, the original languages of the text, church history, other religions, and counseling. The messages they deliver from the pulpit and write in books are scholarly, relevant to current events, helpful for daily living, convincing, witty, and even humorous. Although all of this is “pleasant to the eyes,” it always comes down to the underlying issue—they disagree with what the Son of God declared about His Father God. Are we going to eat their fruit or be faithful to what the Son of God said?

If we eat from the forbidden tree we absolutely will die, “But of **the tree** of the knowledge of good and evil, **thou shalt not eat of it:** for in the day that thou eatest thereof **thou shalt surely die**” (Gen 2:17), “And death and hell [*the grave*] were cast into the lake of fire. This is **the second death.**” (Rev 20:14). But if we overcome the deceptions of the devil, we’ll not die a second time and be annihilated in the lake of fire, but restored access to the tree of life to live forever with Jesus Christ, “To him that overcometh will I **give to eat of the tree of life,** which is in the midst of the paradise of God” (Rev 2:7), “He that overcometh shall not be hurt of **the second death**” (Rev 2:11).