



[2 Timothy 3:1](#)

(1) But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:

[1 John 2:14-16](#)

(14) I have written to you, fathers, Because you have known Him *who is* from the beginning.

I have written to you, young men, Because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, And you have overcome the wicked one. (15) Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (16) For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.

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Sufficient pressure comes from [the world](#), so that, if we are lackadaisical in carrying out our Christian responsibilities, we can easily allow ourselves to follow Satan's arrangement of things, as shown in the world. There is much out there that is attractive to human nature and to true Christians, and we can see, despite two thousand years of preaching by the church, the overwhelming majority is still following the broad way.

The world makes it seem as though Christianity is an abject failure—an altruistic experience that has gone awry. The world gives every impression that [God](#) has either gone far off, and that His whole creation is nothing more than a kind of cosmic joke. Some believe God never really did care, and the creation is a mere plaything of His with no positive, beneficial purpose in mind.

Thus, with that kind of approach, if we are lackadaisical, the world can be very persuasive. When viewing the expanse of Christian history, it is not difficult for a carnal person to reach the conclusion that God has good intentions, but that He is frequently disappointed because Satan outwits Him or man thwarts Him. God, then, is frustrated in everything that He tries to do. It is as if He says that He wants to bless men, but they will

not let Him.

Who with that perspective could take God seriously? It makes it easy to think—and thus to live—as though God really is not sovereign in His creation. We must take these thoughts and questions seriously, yet considering them directly, as we are doing now, we are likely to say that we do not think that way.

We think that God is in complete and total control, ruling His creation. We hope and believe that is true. Even so, experience shows that, though we confess this, we sometimes—perhaps often—live and talk as the world does. Who will not think or live that way? Those who really *live* by faith.

What does "walk by [faith](#)" mean? It means that we are allowing our thoughts to be formed, and therefore our conduct guided, by God's Word, because faith comes by hearing, and hearing by means of the word of God ([Romans 10:17](#)). The most frequently repeated command, charge, or exhortation of [Jesus Christ](#) during His ministry can be reduced to one word: "listen"! What did He mean? "Listen to the message!"—because this is the very thing that mankind has not done. Faith comes by hearing.

Faith comes by means of listening to the Word of God. How much faith is being displayed on earth today? Not very much! There is so little, that Jesus wondered, "When the Son of man comes, will He find any faith on earth?" He will not find much because not very many people think God is the Sovereign Ruler of His creation. It is that simple! They may think they believe it, but their lives do not show it. If their lives showed it, it would prove that they really were listening to the Word of God.

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:

[The Sovereignty of God \(Part 1\)](#)

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