

The Beginning Of History

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We may be witnessing not just the end of the Cold War, or the passing of a particular period of post-war history, but the end of history as such, that is, the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.

Francis Fukuyama, a well-known neo-conservative thinker and then a deputy director of the State Department's policy planning staff, wrote those words ten years ago in 1989. He was taken aback by the apparent demise of Marxism as a driver of governmental policy in Russia. He was overwhelmed that the end of the Cold War had come.

Now I am not here today to waste your time arguing whether Communism really fell, whether the Cold War really ended, or for that matter whether it really existed. That is neither here nor there. But, as you will see, Francis Fukuyama's statements, his comments, broach what is to us a much more important question.

And that question is just this: Will we suffer loss, will we perhaps even suffer death, because we have fallen for one of Satan's most subtle and yet at the same time, one of his most prevalent lies?

The lie is just this: progress, growth, advancement, change for the better (We will call it whatever you want to. I will be using the word *progress* for the most part here.), is inevitable and it is automatic, that it *will* happen, that we can *expect* it to happen without any special action on anyone's part. It will just happen. We do not need to do anything to bring it about, and these thinkers, of course, do not think that God is there to make it come about.

Is this not one of the underlying fallacies of evolution? Namely that progress in the form of the development from a simple form of life to a more

advanced one is built into the very fabric of the universe and therefore it happens mindlessly, and indeed it happens of necessity.

Now Satan furthers the lie by teaching us that we are evolution's highest achievement, that human beings are that, and as such we can advance human nature, that we can advance government, culture, society, ourselves. We can advance anything we want to by the practiced application of our intellect.

Now in my view, Satan's motives for perpetrating these lies is to get us to "take it easy," to live our lives without energy and without intensity, without commitment, complacently believing that everything will be okay over time. We will eventually get there. Everything will work out. We have nothing to fear but fear itself. The lie is so widespread that we have developed a large number of idioms to express it, to communicate it.

And the lie's prevalence makes it all the more dangerous for us because, brethren, the belief that everything is inevitably evolving—is naturally progressing—is deeply, deeply embedded in the mindset of the people among whom you and I move every day. Contagious, it can all too easily become part and parcel with the way that God's people think and the way that they act.

So let us spend a few minutes today looking at the lie, looking at its dangerous consequences for us in the room and for us in this time.

Now Fukuyama's comment that I quoted at the beginning, the striking comment, is a good example of Satan's deception. There are many others in many, many different fields, economics for example, just a large number of fields. But let us dissect Fukuyama's statement for a few seconds just to give us a frame of reference into the kind of thinking that these people have.

Fukuyama refers to Western liberal democracy (and by that he does not mean a position on a political spectrum, right versus left, liberal versus conservative). When he speaks rather of this term, the Western liberal democracy, he is referring to the ideas of liberty and democracy that are current in the United States and that are enshrined in our Constitutional system. Now this liberalism manifests itself in American's respect for the rule of law over the rule of man. It shows itself in our universal suffrage, in

our freedom of religion, freedom together, as well as in our open and free economic markets.

Well Fukuyama says that America's political and economic institutions represent the end point of the evolution of human government, the zenith, and is therefore the final form of human government. He believes that mankind has advanced his government over the years by applying his intellect to his experiences, that we started out with certain authoritarian forms of government, various monarchies, and we went to oligarchies, and finally we reached today's American democracy, and it is to him the ultimate form of government developed by man.

Secondly, Fukuyama refers to the end of history. Fukuyama uses the word *history* as the 19th century German rationalist philosopher Hegel defined it. (And by the way, it is Hegel who gives us the word *zeitgeist*.) Well Hegel saw history as "the progressive evolution of human political and economic institutions." To him (that is Hegel) history's end would come when that evolution reached the form of government that we call democracy today in America. That is its final goal, the endpoint of government evolution. And so it is that Fukuyama elsewhere in his writing says, "the triumph of the West, of the Western idea [which] is evident first of all in the total exhaustion of systematic viable alternatives to Western liberalism."

You see, as a form of government, Fukuyama sees nothing beyond democracy at all. He believes that democracy is inevitably destined to overspread the globe, becoming universal, as he puts it, "the universalization" of Western democracy.

Francis Fukuyama is an endist. Francis Fukuyama subscribes to the doctrine that is called endism. Endism is not what we in the church would think it is at first blush. We would probably think it refers to the end of the world, to the cataclysm and the catastrophe at the end of the world. Well, this is not at all what it means. In fact it means just the opposite. To the thinkers, endism refers to "that all bad things are going to come to an end." They are progressing now and becoming better and better and will end. So they call that idea "endism."

Now we too believe that all bad things are going to come to an end. In the World Tomorrow things will get better and better. God will begin to build soil, and so on. But we recognize that the bad things are not progressively coming to an end now in this age. We understand that God alone is the Source, the sole driver of progress, rightly understood. We will talk about that in a few minutes.

The endist finds the driver of progress in the natural order of the universe and in the human intellect. You see the endist driver of progress is totally devoid of God. So the endist is at heart optimistic. He is always cheerful. He is ever hopeful. He is the ultimate utopian. And he is also, brethren, a dyed-in-the-wool evolutionist, because, for him, not only the natural order that is our species, but also the human order, all that humans have built, must progress, because of the very nature of the universe, to ever higher levels.

Now this is not a new idea. An Italian patriarch of the last century, his name was Giuseppe Mazzini, wrote, "The moral law of the universe is that of progress." Christian Bovee, an American author and an editor of the last century, wrote, "The grandest of all laws is the law of progressive development. Under it, in the wide sweep of things, men grow wiser as they grow older, and societies grow better."

Now he understood because of that term, "the wide sweep of things," that you are set back every once in a while, that there are wars, that there are depressions, and so forth, economic slumps, but he says in the long haul, in the long run, society gets better.

An American author (he was actually a contemporary of Bovee) William Simms, writes, "The true law of the race is of progress and development." And Albert Pike in his book, *Morals and Dogma*, expresses Freemasonry's approach to this subject by asserting that, "The normal condition of man is that of progress." It is normal for us to progress, to get better and better.

So Fukuyama is not the odd man out at all, is he? Many people have no trouble at all in this country accepting the idea that we have evolved the ultimate form of government in this nation. Fukuyama is not the odd man out.

Now the ordinary American citizen tends to be an endist as much as the scholastic (the scholar). How easily do both types of individuals buy the Edisonian statement, "Living better through electricity." You see, that statement is emblematic of Americans' idea, their commonplace belief that all of us will live better and better and better as we progress, as we implement more and more technology.

For example, how many people on the street out there, if you were to ask them, would almost take it for granted that given time, we will conquer all disease, that there will be no more disease. That is a common idea that is taught. Indeed, here is what the endist Fukuyama writes about the glowing future that is offered by genetic engineering. If you did not know this, you will get a kick out of this one.

There is already a growing body of criminological research, a lot of it coming from twin studies in behavioral genetics, that suggest that propensities for crime can be inherited and possibly, in the future, located in specific genes by specific individuals. [Eventually,] we will be in possession of a technology that will allow us to breed less violent people, a people cured of their propensity for criminal behavior.

Fukuyama thinks that one day we will be a society largely free of criminals due to technology, due to the fruit of men's minds.

In sum, endism's clarion call is just this: History is progress. We are not really here talking about abstract political philosophies at all. For the adults in this room, every single one of you face the dogma that mankind is socially evolving to a higher state every single time you turn on the television, every time you read the newspaper, every time you surf the Internet, every time you are involved with the media at all. I want you to understand, brethren, that your sons and your daughters, every one of them are taught that in the schools every day. They are taught that man is getting better. And that is not rhetorical hyperbole! They learn that in Math. They learn it in English. They learn it in History. I do not have time to prove it to you right now. Ask me afterwards. They learn it in PE.

If there is any one single defining element of the American *zeitgeist*; if there is any one single element of the Western *zeitgeist* in total, it is the belief that history is progress, that mankind is on an inevitable course of advancement, not just as species *homo sapiens*, but his nature and his government. *Human nature is getting better*, bottom line. That is what they are teaching us and there are so many manifestations of it. Mankind will perforce make human nature better through education, through social constructivism, ideas like social programs like integration, they will make it better through medicine, and through, as I indicated, genetic engineering. Mankind cannot help but ultimately make himself better for that is a law of the universe. That is a law of nature.

Let us consider, just in passing, an example of how man goes about changing human nature. We will consider his technique to calm the restive boy. Now boys, whether in the classroom or whether they are in this room, are that way, you know—restive, they are high-spirited. They have a lot of energy. That is just the way it is. Now that is not an excuse for thoughtless misbehavior, do not mistake me here. We understand that. But that is the way it is with youngsters.

What did we used to do in the old days? Well, we used to send such a lad out and have him chop some wood and that would tire him out. I had a grandmother (I remember her very well) with a certain degree of cynicism. She used to say something like, "The only good boy is a tired boy."

What do we do now with children? What do we do with the restive child now? Well, parents and adults seeking convenience, seeking the easy way out, pop the kid a Ritalin. If you do not know what Ritalin is, it is a drug. All arguments to the contrary aside, what these people are doing is they are attempting to change the nature of the child. Never mind the clear documentation about Ritalin, and I quote, "The effects on the brain are similar to that of a number of illegal amphetamines and, indeed, to cocaine." And Prozac is even worse, brethren, far worse. Ritalin is powerful stuff, and by that token is as dangerous as any of the psychedelics.

We seek to solve the problems that human nature presents to us, that human nature offers us, by our intellect, in this case by just developing a pill,

building a pill which works on the mind in a very dangerous way. Ritalin is now used by three million children in the United States today. School nurses dispensing daily Ritalin doses have become a common feature in many schools.

You see, this is not unusual in our society. People acting on the belief that they are able to improve human nature and wreaking havoc as they do so, are not a long ways away. They are no further than the neighborhood school. They are very well-intentioned, you understand. They are very well-intentioned.

So I am not talking about scholastic gobbledy-gook. I am talking about the real world where you and your children work and where you play every day, outside of the protective confines of God's truth, outside of Sarah's womb, as we will see in just a few minutes.

History is progress. Human nature and everything else is getting better and can only get better. Mankind is inescapably walking down the yellow brick road to Oz, to Utopia. That is what the endists tell us endlessly.

Let us talk about endism's counterpart. It does have a counterpart. It is called *declinism*, and you can understand the word *decline* there in declinism. It is not a common word, but one that scholars refer to quite common nowadays.

Declinism stresses decay more than growth. Many people in God's church, I think, feel much more at home with the idea of declinism because they find a certain degree of realism in it, the idea that things are ever in a state of decline. Now declinism is obviously informed by natural law, for instance by the Second Law of Thermodynamics, where entropy prevails obviously over progress.

Matthew 24 radically (and by the word *radically* I mean *at its very root*) informs our understanding of history in the church. Matthew 24:21-22 tell us how bad things are really going to get. We have already referred to this during the Feast.

Matthew 24:21-22 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no,

nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

Now in this particular passage Christ is not saying that our civilization is getting better and better. He is saying, though, that He drives history and that we cannot look to mankind through his reason to bring about Utopia. It is not going to work. With this background I think that it is very certain, I hope, that though the world call them sundowners, or the world calls them pessimists, preaching gloom and doom, that those with understanding in God's church will remain adamantly committed to viewing historical movement in this age as a movement of decline, as going downhill from Eden, very good to bad to worse.

We, of course, in God's church, recognize the possibility, we recognize the potential (if we can use that word) of progress. But we recognize in that progress, not blind change, not automatic change, not inevitability, but rather we use another word—we call it growth, growth that is channeled by the purposeful input of energy and effort. So we feel at home speaking more of growth than of progress.

To state the matter at a raw physical level, if I can just state it that way as an example, we can say that the declinist in us recognizes that hot water will eventually cool, but that we can overcome this entropy, we can warm the water up again, by the steady input of energy.

I think I can speak for all of us when I move this to a spiritual level. We recognize the potential of progress (but again we prefer to call it growth) that is channeled by God's will and that is energized by His Spirit. But such growth is not automatic. It is certainly not inevitable. And thus we are empowered to overcome Satan and human nature to grow as it were (progress if you want to use that word) even to the point where we come to "a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13). Paul wrote those words.

And brethren that is real, real progress. It is about as much progress as you could ever have, to mature to that point you see. We understand that with a whole lot of God's impetus we can mature, if I can use this growth metaphor,

into the image of God, and it is our knowledge of this potential as well as our faith that God will make it happen that impels us to (and again I will quote Paul), "press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14).

The declinist in us understands that left to our own devices, left to our own intellect, lacking God's grace, His revelation, His Spirit, what is inevitable is only entropy and death, not progress to Utopia.

What is the bottom line difference between endism, this idea that all bad things are going to end, and declinism? What is the bottom-line difference? It is an important difference. One writer cogently documents it. He writes this way:

Declinism [he says] performs a useful function. It provides a warning and it provides a goad to action in order to head off and reverse the decline that it sees is taking place. Endism, in contrast, provides not a warning of danger, but an illusion of well-being. It invites not corrective action, but relaxed complacency.

I ran across that quote in not some religious tract but in a journal on international affairs, constantly contributed to by people like Thatcher, Henry Kissinger, people like that. Interesting place to find that scripture, brethren. Declinism among an encouraged people, a people with spirit, fosters passion, it instills an intensity of commitment. "Let's work to arrest the decline."

Conversely, endism's invariable consequence is a mindset of complacency, apathy, indifference. Why should we do anything? It is going to get better anyway.

Margaret Thatcher recognized that, by the way, when she criticized Fukuyama's end-of-history theory on the grounds, "that it would make people complacent because they would believe that it was inevitable." In fact a number of people in the world do recognize endism's dangers, and here is what I consider to be the most salient analysis to that danger. This writer writes this way:

[Endism] tends to ignore the weakness and the irrationality of human nature. Endist arguments tend to assume that because it would be rational for human beings to focus on their economic well-being, that they will act that way, and therefore they will not engage in wars that do not meet the test of cost-benefit analysis or in ideological conflicts that have much ado about nothing. Human beings are at times rational, generous, creative, and wise, but they are often also stupid, selfish, cruel and sinful.

Brethren, this author is not a religious person, as you will see in a minute. His audience, by the way, is not a few thousand people who listen to short-wave radio at 2:00 AM Eastern Standard Time. He continues:

The struggle began with the eating of the forbidden fruit and is rooted in human nature.

This author is also not the teacher or professor of ethics or of religion at "Podunk Christian College" in western Nebraska. He continues:

To hope for [this good end of history, to hope for] this benign end of history [through its inevitable progress] is human. [He admits that it is human.] To expect it to happen in unrealistic. To plan on it happening is disastrous.

Samuel Huntington, Professor of Science of Government, Harvard University, has got it right.

To build our life on the premise that bad things are now just inevitably coming to an end is to walk the road of disaster. And that is so because progressivism, teaching as it does this inevitable advancement, naturally leads one to just take it easy. It leads us to relaxed complacency. The idea that the world's social and political ethos is naturally evolving to some higher state, toward some new and better order is a danger for any child of God. We must not buy that way of thinking! It invites a nonchalance, an apathy, that can only lead to disaster.

Now much to the credit of God's people, to the people in this room that I talk to all the time, I detect a whole lot of declinism when you speak. I hear it in

sermonettes. I hear it in conversations before and after services. We express it in all kinds of ways, idiosyncratic versions because we all express it slightly differently. But here is our version of declinist thought in quotes. This is kind of a composite. "Look at the world's condition today. Look at prophecy. It's clear that things are bad and it's clear that things are getting worse. We need to make sure that we are ready, to prepare for God's purposes. We can't put it off any longer."

You see that is this warning, it is this goading effect of declinism at work in us. And what it does is it wars against relaxation, comfort, and ease. Again, to our credit, we do not countenance endism, you know this idea that all bad things are coming to an end right now to progressive endings. In fact, we would deny that idea passionately. For example, who among us buys the idea of "eternal security"? "We've got it made. Salvation is certain. God has promised that He will save us. We don't need to take any special action. It's just in the bag." I do not think there is anyone here who would vocally adhere to that doctrine.

But, brethren, the question is, and it is to me a crucial question: While denying endism with our words, do we practice it through our lack of works? That is to say do we deny endism as a belief, as a creed, while putting it into practice through our complacency, through our lack of commitment. You see, that is how endism shows up, does it not? This is how it manifests itself in our works. It manifests itself in relaxation, in postponement, in deferment of action.

For example, have some of us gradually come to put God on a back-burner, assuming a "Why bother?" stance for one of our most important tasks of building a relationship with Him. Or again we could ask, "Why seek to overcome when everything, everyone in human nature itself must by the very process of nature get better and better? Why worry about my desperately wicked heart? It's getting less desperate with every beat."

Now I understand that stating the issue in those terms may appear overly simplistic to some, overblown to others, but, brethren, we must never, never, I believe absolutely never underestimate the power of the evolutionary, the progressivist, the endist mindset in our culture. It is deeply entrenched in business, in technology, in education. It is ubiquitous, and that pervasive

consciousness can gradually turn our zeal into nonchalance. Ever so gradually it can change our top priorities away from God.

I think it was the English poet (maybe Dr. Maas afterwards will tell me if I'm wrong) William Wordsworth wrote, *The World is Too Much With Us*, and indeed it can be that way. You know John has been speaking about "the voice" and the world has a voice too brethren. It has its siren call and it can fill our consciousness. It can overwhelm us just like Mr. Boyer's trumpet fills this room. And that is the same thing that the world can do with its voice. It is loud. It is subtle. And it is everywhere. And we pretty soon could come to fall for the common lie and say, "Take it easy. Enjoy life. Spend the time and the bucks to get the big cars, to buy the big homes, to enjoy the nightlife, to eat, drink, and be merry. Why not? Everything is fine. Everything is getting better."

All day long we hear Madison Avenue, that is we hear the advertising establishment, broadcast that type of thinking to us in subtle ways and ways that are not so subtle. Shall we call it "easy credit"? Today's vastly rich and stupendously successful American civilization seems to give credence to the lie. I am sure that civilization abates every once in awhile. The stock market has been falling. There are times when it goes down. There are wars. There are depressions.

But in our memory (if I can put it that way), does not the economy bounce back with astounding vigor, just very quickly, very quickly, and so we see years and years and years of growth upon growth until we wonder will it ever stop? And we can fall into that. We can fall into that trap. Onward and upward. Just the way it is going to be. That is the way the people out there think in all too many cases.

We must not think that way, brethren. We must not think that it is the inevitable course of things. But, profoundly aware of the threat of progressivist thinking to us as God's people, a people who simply cannot afford to be complacent about God, a people who should be intensely committed to preparing for Christ's return, we must shun the progressivist lie with all that is in us, never believing it, never living it.

Turn please to Isaiah 51. We will close there today. We were in Isaiah 55 earlier. God is speaking to those who follow after righteousness, who seek the Eternal. So He is speaking to us because we do follow after righteousness. We do seek God. In seeking God, to whom should we look? God answers as He speaks:

Isaiah 51:1-2 Look to the rock from where you are hewn, and to the hole of the pit from which you are dug. Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah who bore you. For I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.

The hope of the future lies not in mankind's misdirected attempts to revamp his own human nature, but rather the hope of the future lies in the old promises of blessings, the blessings that He gave to those pioneers, to Abraham, to Isaac. The hope resides in the covenant that God made with Abraham and resides as well in the womb of Sarah who bore Isaac in whom God's people are called. Isaac teaches us that the promises are to the sons, not just to Abraham, for of Isaac and of us, the apostle Paul writes, he testifies that we, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. That is found in Galatians 4:28. You know the passage well.

We can be sure that God in His time will bring us forth, just as God in His time, and not before, was faithful to bring forth Isaac, the son of promise from Sarah.

Skipping down to verse 6 (In verse 4 we understand that God is still speaking to His people.), He speaks in the imperative. He says:

Isaiah 51:6 Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look on the earth beneath. [You see they appear so fixed. They appear so firm. They appear so fast.] For the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth will grow old like a garment, and those who dwell in it will die in like manner; but My salvation will be forever, and My righteousness will not be abolished.

God is clear. The cosmos, all of the present evil world that we now experience, will perish and with it the miasmal *zeitgeist* of godless

progressivism which you and your children inhale every single day. The cosmos is not in a state of inevitable evolution. It will not progress to utopia ending up there because of either the work of blind genetics or man's intelligence. That is not going to happen.

God will bring utopia. He has chosen to bring it. He will do it, but He will do it in His time. He will do it in His way, on His terms, and without mankind's leave, and without mankind's help. Really. In this sense it is God alone who drives progress when we rightly understand what progress means.

What remains is just this. It does not matter what we *say*. It matters what we *do* and how we live. If we practice our life by the belief that all bad things are certainly going to end through natural agencies, through natural cause and effect mechanisms, whether those mechanisms are genetic or intelligent, that is to say, if we believe that bad things will end through natural agency rather than through the purposeful direction of God's energy through His own Spirit, if we believe that way, we will die and vanish away like smoke.

William Inge died in 1954. He made an interesting statement. Now he was an English cleric. He was the Dean of Westminster. He said, "There is no law of progress." That is, there is nothing that says that progress must take place, that it has to take place. He continues, "Our future is in our own hand to make or to mar. It will be an uphill fight to the end. Let no one suppose that evolution will ever exempt us from struggles."

You see, that is what so many people think in the world and what we can kind of come to think as well, that progress is so inevitable that we do not need to struggle to overcome. If we are patient we will win the battle by default. How wrong that thought is.

There is an afterward to all this if I can spend just a few seconds. (It appears that my watch up here, my clock has stopped. I do not know whether people know that. Either that or I have been speaking awfully fast.)

I spent a little time this morning debunking Francis Fukuyama's thoughts about the end of history. But in all fairness to him, he has written some

wonderful documents. He produced an article on the role of women in today's politics and he made some very cogent statements. I think that many of us in this room would agree with what he said.

In 1995, I think it was, he wrote a book called *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*. And in that particular book, he called trust "social capital" and he argued that this trust, —this intangible stuff that has to do with relationships between people—was more important in building wealth, in building the prosperity of a nation (or of individuals, for that matter) than was the physical capital of money. Very insightful as he understands the importance of the relationship between people in every day life and in history.

Fukuyama does have some understanding after all. In other areas he misses the point. And Samuel Huntington, whom I cited above as having such noteworthy perception about human nature, he is not always right either. True, he is no social evolutionist. He is not some happy-go-lucky progressivist, but I want you to notice two short sentences of his. These were in some of the quotes that I quoted earlier, but I left them out on purpose. I am going to give them to you now. See if you can agree with this. The same person who wrote so perceptively about the end of history and the danger of declinism, he says:

In history there is not final solutions. So long as human beings exist, there is no exit from their traumas of history.

I do not think that we can agree with that, brethren. Mr. Huntington has some real understanding at times, but lacking as he does God's revelation, the full counsel of God, he does not see any end to our troubles. He does not recognize in God the power to end history's traumas. You see, he does not know God's plan for history, and so he is as wrong in asserting that history cannot end as is his sparring partner, a former student of his, Francis Fukuyama, who claims in a sense that it is already ended. They are both dead wrong.

We in this room, and in God's church in general (you understand what I am saying) are the world's only "know-it-all's." And by that I am not saying that we know everything about prophecy. Please do not misunderstand me. I

think you know what I am trying to say. But we know some very important truths. We know and we know that we know some essential truths.

For instance, we know that we are the firstfruits. We know what that means. We know that we shall be the first to administer God's government, His give way of life. No, it is not going to be Western liberal democracy. But we as kings will administer His way of life in a civilization that will become the world's greatest civilization, the civilization that will be greater than anything that has ever been formed on this planet, the millennial civilization. That will be universalized, not Western liberal democracy, and it will be God who does it.

We all know that that government in its spiritual sense is going to be never-ending. It is not going to end. And using a more conventional definition of history as a sequence of events, we know that we as God's firstfruits stand at the threshold, at the beginning, not at the end of history, not at all.

God has given us *precious truth* that the people of this world lacking God's Spirit are incapable of understanding and part of that truth is that God is changing our human nature into His holy nature. Now that is the mother of all progress if you stop to think about it. It is not automatic. It is not mindless. It is not inevitable. The change consists of a 100 percent turnabout in us because we are at total enmity, innately and intrinsically hostile to God, and therefore we need to be 100 percent committed to collaborating with God as He builds His character in us.

Satan has counterfeited the truth that we can grow, or that we can progress, empowered by God's Spirit. That is a true thing. But Satan, you see, has counterfeited that idea of a God-organized, God-energized growth. He has counterfeited it with a lie that progress is automatic, is inevitable, is sure and certain as tomorrow's sunrise.

Satan, is the founder of the false doctrines of evolutionism, progressivism, and endism. He tells us to have no fear, to take it easy. We will eventually get there no matter how we conduct our lives. We will get there. It is inevitable.

Living that way destroys the energy. It destroys the intensity. It destroys the zeal. It destroys the fervor. It destroys the passion and it destroys the commitment—all of these things that we must have toward God and toward God's way of life as we serve and work with Him in partnership to grow. Replacing complacency with an active, with a doing faith, a faith in God, will ensure that we will work with Him as partners as He energizes us through His Spirit to grow into His image.