

The Prophetic Answer to Today's Intense Satanic Opposition

Every day, apps update on my phone. I have mixed feelings about them.

On one hand, it's satisfying to watch the app click its way into color as I anticipate new features that could smooth my life. On the other hand, I feel like these apps are too needy. *Coffee app, why do you demand to be updated just when I'm in line to pay? Don't do this now, Marco Polo, I was just getting the hang of you. More bugs, Viber? iTunes, is changing my terms of service going to be a monthly ritual?*

And, of course, I can't open my laptop without a prompt that something needs to be changed *right now*. *More change in less time*: it's the technology revolution.

The speed at which information and ideas now travel has made an even greater revolution possible: the social revolution. Within 20 minutes of browsing Periscope for the first time, I had joined a group of Italian twenty-somethings hanging out under the Eiffel Tower. I was greeted by high school students in Kyrgyzstan when I joined their lecture. I watched an American clarinet teacher in South Korea teach jazz to his students, and I was welcomed by socialites in Saudi.

Closing the app felt like I was jumping out of my phone back into my bedroom. *Did that really happen?* I was distressed. *Where's this leading? What will society become? What have we already become?* The sands of society are being restyled by the waves of change.

While change has created many new landscapes, not all are pretty to look at. For instance, radical feminism washed in

and weakened the solid terrain of traditional gender roles. Sixty-three genders washed in and muddied our common sense.

School violence washed in and eroded the innocence of going to school. As the scenery changes as fast as real time, do we have a crag of constancy somewhere? Is there a mountain we can stand upon that won't be taken by the sea, no matter how hard the thundering rollers of revolution beat upon it? Or will the sand keep giving way when the surf says so?

Revelation 1:4 gives us the answer.

Addressing Churches in Every Age

Here, we find a community of believers, seven churches in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey), facing opposition from Satan. By addressing *seven* churches, God's Word addresses society's problems that all local churches, in every age, could potentially face. It's a message for the church in general.

Although 2,000 years have passed between their society and ours, we face similar satanic opposition as they did, problems of all shapes and sizes. That means that the questions we have about today's society are answered right here. God's Word is our rigid rock that the waves can't break apart and drag out to sea. His will, His ways and His laws stand forever. And this is what John tells us when he describes God as "*him who is and who was and who is to come*" (*ho ōn kai ho ēn kai ho erchomenos*).

What's interesting about this phrase is that, in the Greek, it's bad grammar. Did he need writing school? No, actually, John did this on purpose; he *intentionally* made a grammatical error.

John was quoting from Exodus 3:14, which says, "*I am who I am*" or "*ho ōn*." In order to make it fit word-perfect into his writing, he had to break with the rules of grammar. While it may not be the best Greek, his readers would recognize that he

was referring to the God of the Old Testament. By this, they would understand that the God of the Old Testament is their God, too.

The incorrect grammar John uses captures the allusion to Exodus 3:14 and makes a *big* statement: the God of the New Testament is the God of the Old Testament. He hasn't changed!

How could He? He is perfect in all of His ways. Therefore, he will remain the same, all the way into the 21st century—and beyond.

Just because society is evolving doesn't mean God's will and ways change. They don't. When society comes up with something new to say about sexuality, gender roles, family structure, human relationships, good and evil ... you can trust that God's Word hasn't bent. God is still holy and He still invites us to be holy, just like Him (see 1 Peter 1:16).

This week, remember that Jesus said if you build your house on His Word, you are building your life on a rock. (See Matt. 7:24–27.) Your life will be more resolute and purposeful if you build your life on what God's Word says rather than on the ever-changing fads in ideology and opinion. Don't buy into what "the experts" say. You know the expert: the unchanging God of the Bible. {eoa}

The Rev. Chris Palmer is the founder and pastor of Light of Today Church in Novi, Michigan, and founder of Chris Palmer Ministries. He is host of the popular podcast, "Greek for the Week," seen on several internet platforms. Chris earned a B.A. in pastoral studies from North Central University and an M.A. in exegetical theology, magna cum laude, from Moody Theological Seminary. He is a sought-after Greek scholar for his ability to make God's Word come alive from the Greek in a unique way. Chris is working on his Ph.D. at the University of Wales, Bangor, in the area of Johannine literature, particularly the book of Revelation. Visit:

This article was excerpted from Letters from Jesus: Studies from the Seven Churches of Revelation, © 2019 by Chris Palmer, published by Whitaker House. Used with permission.