

THOUGHTS

By Douglas W. Schroeder

SPEAKER ON THE WORD TODAY

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YOU CAN CHOOSE TO SIN, BUT YOU CANNOT CHOOSE THE CONSEQUENCES!

Do not willfully disobey God, or the government which he has placed over us. Deliberate sin can bring consequences more profound than expected. A good example is in an article on msn.com about a Utah man who illegally hunted a mule deer. An antler spread of 24" or more makes it a trophy, and killing one that size is a felony-level offence. Perhaps the hunter eyeballed the deer; he was off by .5"; were the deer's antlers only 24" or less the fine would have been \$400. But, because of the extra size the fine jumped to a minimum of \$8,000! This is a great example of why it is foolish to willfully violate the law.

INFORMATION SUFFOCATION

I have coined the phrase "information suffocation" to describe the negative effects not only of excess information, but the poor quality and management of it. Some people seem unable to control their curiosity, work demands, or social connections such that they bury themselves in information. The term decades ago was "information overload", but that was seen as a temporary condition. Now, the rise of trash information – most of it peripheral and/or of dubious value – prevalent everywhere threatens to overwhelm a significant portion of the population.

What gets suffocated? Free time, social intercourse, motivation to pursue recreational and hobby activities, family togetherness, and social institutions such as churches and clubs. The quality of information, the caliber of what is called "newsworthy" or important, has fallen to the level of informational trash. Most news is now ignorable. Ads, including "informational" videos, popping up on phones and computers insult with the drudgery of screen clutter. Screens on gas pump dispensers have added to the impulse to ignore. With the Coronavirus people who are holed up are buying apps and immersing themselves more deeply in the digital world. VR (virtual reality) may someday replace most social contact.

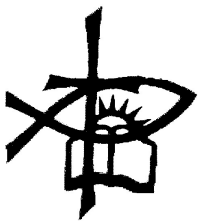
Screens – are *unhealthy* for the human spirit. Content of most programming is caustic to faith, and the social agenda promoted in schools through e-learning is ethics neutral, that is, Antichristian. The Christian must *control information contact* with culture, or else we will be dumbed down and turned into informational zombies, like those who are spiritually undiscerning.

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TAKING A STAND

Ephesians 6 is the "Armor of God" Key Chapter of the Bible; it is loved for the imagery of the armament that protects the believer, and the double edged sword of the Word of God, the only offensive weapon (unless prayer is included) available to the soldier of Christ. The admonition is given repeatedly to "stand" against our spiritual enemies.

Thoughts
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*The Bible is God's Word . . . Jesus is God's "Word" made flesh . . .
His death and resurrection, the message needed Today.*

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The nature of the word "stand" in the original language carries the sense of a defensive stand, pushing back against forces opposed to us. I am reminded of Joshua, who was told on the eve of entering Canaan to fight its inhabitants in order to possess it, "Be strong and courageous (1:6, 7, 9)!" Believers in Christ are to oppose all that is contrary to Christ, with weapons of righteousness (2 Corinthians 6:7)," and, "The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds (10:4-5)." We tear down arguments and pretension that sets itself up against the Gospel.

I recall the saying, "If you do not stand for something, you'll fall for anything." Taking a firm position in faith in Christ is beneficial not only for ourselves, but for our family, community and country!

WRONG NUMBER!

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"Marty, I can't get the door open on the washing machine. Is there some kind of code? I'll be home; where else?" That was the errant message sent to my cell phone, not Marty's. Thankfully, it was not a "real" crisis, such as an auto accident, or medication mishap. I suspect our friend will be able to figure out how to get the laundry started.

This stray call reminds me that we had better call out to the true God when in trouble. Idols can do nothing. Allah, the god of the Mormons, and other false deities are powerless to save. In this "inclusive" world that is not a popular sentiment. I have been told my insistence on discussing the law of God, or eliminating other religions, makes me seem closed to some people.

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I recommend anyone with that perception begin reading the Gospels, where Jesus calls himself the Way, and where he insists on a person being born again, leaving their life of sin. Jesus didn't go to the cross so that he could be one of many saviors, and he isn't asking for convenient commitment.

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"Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you will glorify me (Psalm 50:15)." How much more reassuring to call upon God in the name of Jesus, the one who died on our behalf so that we can approach God's throne of grace with confidence!

Ignorance is Hell. People *need to call on Jesus* for salvation. The Word Today is a powerful vehicle to meet that need, and remember, 100% of gifts are used for broadcasting the Gospel! Encourage others to support this life and death mission!

Blessings!
Douglas W. Schroeder

THE WORD TODAY reaching the world with GOD'S WORD