



# “Tuesdays” with Pastor Jake

**Where Theology Touches Life**

**Tuesday, July 8<sup>th</sup>,  
in the year of our Lord, 2025**



**Summer 2025 Edition**

## ‘Jim Phelps’ on my Favorite Passage

“Your mission Jim, should you choose to accept it...” were the opening lines addressed to the team leader of the old TV series, “Mission Impossible.” I think most people associate Tom Cruise, alias “Ethan Hunt” as the real leader of the Mission Impossible team, but I prefer the original old TV series.

You know the basic plot: there is destruction of the free world. The Mission *behind the scenes* to foil the dastardly “should you or a member of your disavow any knowledge of your actions.”

The greatest thing about their work villain’s plans without the villain even thought he was in control of things, not him. And if that isn’t enough, once the silently walks into the sunset, without leaving a calling card. Deception at its best!



some sinister person up to no good, bent on the Impossible team is commissioned to work plan. You know the recordings’ final words: *team...be caught or killed, the Secretary will*

was the fact they caused the demise of the knowing what was happening to him! He understanding the unseen forces arrayed against plot’s been foiled, the Mission Impossible crew

I’m sure you’ve heard the song, “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands.” The song highlights the great truth that God is the real Sovereign power that ultimately ordains the destiny of the world and its inhabitants. Yet St. John highlights a subordinate truth. In his epistle (letter) we find these words:

*“We know that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.”* I John 5:19

It is as though St. John is peeling back the curtain so that we might see the behind the scenes spiritual forces that are at work in our world in general, and in the hearts and lives of people in particular. This is the emphasis in the second part of the verse we touched on last week. St. Paul writes:

*“You were dead in your transgressions and sins in which you once lived following the age of this world, following the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the disobedient. All of us one lived among them in the desires of our flesh, following the wishes of the flesh and the impulses, and...”*

It may not be fashionable to talk about the devil and his host of fallen angels. However, in his classic book, The Screwtape Letters, C.S. Lewis wrote: *“There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them. They themselves are equally pleased by both errors and hail a materialist or a magician with the same delight”* Paul will remind the believers in Ephesus that they “do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic power over this present darkness, against spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.”

No doubt you’ve heard the phrase, *‘to be forewarned is to be forearmed.’* The struggle the world and its inhabitants face is a real war with real consequences. And just like the MI team worked behind the scenes manipulating and influencing, unaware, their targets so that they willingly do their bidding, so too, is the devil at work in the hearts of people today manipulating and influencing, unaware, so that they willingly do his bidding – which is just as destructive and bewildering in their lives.

But hear the Good News of the Gospel: St. John wrote, “The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.” Jesus declared in Matthew 12 that He had bound the ‘strong man’ (i.e., Satan) and has been blundering his kingdom ever since. St. Paul wrote to the believers in Galatia, “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins *to deliver us from the present evil age*, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen.” Writing to the believers in Colossae, Paul wrote a note praising God who had delivered them “from the domain of darkness and transferred them to the kingdom of His beloved Son. In whom we have redemption the forgiveness of sins.” Believers have Someone greater in them than he that is in the world! Hence, our only hope is the merciful, rescuing work of Christ.

## In Other Words...

Some further thoughts on our deception by Paul Tripp

When you take a close look at the creation of Adam and Eve, one thing is clear. Adam and Eve are far from independent. Notice what God immediately does after creating them. He talks to them. Here they are, perfect people, living in a perfect world and in a perfect relationship with God, yet they have no clue who they are and how they are meant to live.

In loving care, God begins to download his wisdom to them. Embedded in his wise counsel are meaning and purpose, structure for their relationship with one another, the nature of their relationship with him, a moral structure for their living, and a description of the daily work they are to give themselves to. Adam and Eve are utterly dependent on profound and practical wisdom outside of themselves in order to live life.

Our need for the theological, structural, and practical content of God's truth isn't the result of sin but is the product of being human! Adam and Eve were created with a need for God and for things that only God would be able to supply. Their continued ability to live as they were designed to live would be determined by their willingness to remain in a dependent relationship with their Creator.

Adam and Eve were also designed to live in dependent community with one another. When God said that it was not good for Adam to live alone, his statement was not a response to Adam's complaint that he was lonely. Rather, God's statement revealed his understanding of the person he had created. He hadn't made a man who was designed to live independently, supplying within himself everything that he needed. No, he would be fully completed and fully functional only when he lived in community with another image bearer. Adam and Eve were created to live in interdependent community with one another. Outside of that community, Adam and Eve would not be able to be what they were designed to be and would not do well what they were commissioned to do.

Genesis 1 and 2 contain the seeds of the two Great Commands. These life-shaping commands were not newly created by Jesus in Palestine but were woven into the very fabric of humanity in the Garden of Eden. People were made to live in a vertical and a horizontal community of love. Love God, love neighbor—it's how God's prized creatures are designed to live.

In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve attempted to have their own Independence Day revolution, and humanity has been suffering the disastrous consequences ever since. It happened on that world-changing day when man and woman had that fateful conversation with the serpent.

Do you see the bait the serpent holds out before Adam and Eve? "You will be like God," and "the tree was desired to make one wise." Embedded in the serpent's seduction are two lies that everyone tends to believe at some time, in some place, and in some way. These two lies still seduce us today: autonomy and self-sufficiency.

*"And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome, correcting his opponents with gentleness, that God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been captured by him to do his will."*

II Timothy 3:24-26

## A Mighty Fortress is Our God (hear it again!)

1. A mighty fortress is our God a bulwark never failing;  
our helper he amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.  
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe; his  
craft and power are great and armed with cruel hate,  
on earth is not his equal.

3. And though this world with devils filled, should  
threaten to undo us, we will not fear, for God hath willed  
His truth to triumph through us, the prince of darkness  
grim, we tremble not for him; his rage we can endure,  
for lo! his doom is sure; one little word shall fell him.

2. Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would  
be losing; were not the right man on our side, the man of  
God's own choosing. Dost ask who that may be? Christ  
Jesus it is he, Lord Sabaoth his name, from age to age the  
same, and he must win the battle.

4. That Word above all earthly pow'rs, no thanks to them,  
abideth; the Spirit and the gifts are ours through him who  
with us sideth. Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life  
also; the body they may kill; God's truth abideth still; His  
kingdom is forever.