



9/11 - Most Americans were deeply impacted by the tragedy that struck our nation on September 11, 2001. Nearly all of us experienced a deep sense of shock, bewilderment, and grief as we absorbed the horrific events of that day – *even live on national television*. Now, as we approach the 5th year anniversary of that event, many will once again pause and remember the wickedness that begat this dark memory, as well as the nearly 3,000 souls who perished in the calamity that is now referenced as just - 9/11.

Now I ask you – Will you take time to pause and reflect too?

I hope you will, *but with a proper focus* - and this is what I mean. While I am deeply repulsed by the thought of men who celebrate the murder of women, children - or any civilian they can kill in the name of their “god,” I also recognize that such calamities as these afford us with an important opportunity to learn the important lessons of history – if even from recent history. Now some would say that the most important lesson to learn from 9/11 is that we need to revitalize our war on terror. Others would say that 9/11 should re-energize our efforts to protect our nation’s borders, or to increase our technology for homeland security. I would absolutely agree that, as a nation, these are important reflections since government is a minister of God to bring “*wrath on the one who practices evil*” (Romans 13:1-4) – and 9/11 was certainly a day when men practiced *great evil*. But I would suggest to you that there is a much more significant meditation that should govern our thinking with respect to 9/11 and it has to do with a form of evil that is far greater, and more carefully hidden, than any terrorist organization on earth: *Ephesians 6:12: “...our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”* This text ought to remind us that the *true realm of terrorism* in this world is the spiritual evil that is ultimately governed by Satan himself, being supported by a world of men who march in lockstep with the Devil (Eph. 2:1-3). I am concerned that modern day terrorism is actually Satan’s

sucker punch designed to distract us from the right hook of the mankind's universal wickedness. You see, not only are religious murderers the cobelligerents of the Devil, but anyone who stands against the true knowledge of God in Christ Jesus is counted as the co-laborer of the world forces of darkness (2 Corinthians 10:5, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Ephesians 5:3-6, Romans 3:9-18). Satan's tactics must not be ignored here. He delights in distracting the masses away from the real front lines of spiritual battle by diverting our attention in any way he can. But do not be deceived – the Devil's terror cells saturate every corner of the globe and can be found wherever the truth of Christ is undermined in any way (Galatians 1:6-9). Thus, where the doctrine of salvation *alone* by grace *alone* in Christ *alone* through a knowledge of the Scriptures *alone*, is under attack – there you will find the Devil's terrorists. Where you find the denigration of God's Word, the exaltation of lawlessness or the praise of mankind's works-righteousness over the perfect righteousness of Christ Himself – there you will find Satan's *covert operators* laboring tirelessly (2 Corinthians 11:12-15). And such spiritual terrorism as this is infinitely more lethal, since *physical* terrorism can only threaten a person's *physical* life; but Satan's terrorism against the truth can forever lay claim on any soul who is willing to follow his murderous lies (John 8:44). Yes, many jihadists may escape justice in this life, however none of Satan's cobelligerents will escape the justice of Almighty God. Theirs is a fiery *grave that will burn without end*.

Let no-one think that I wish to make light of the horrific crimes committed by those murderers who made 9/11 a grievous household expression – may it never be! But what I am emphasizing here is this simple truth – the *whole world* is filled with wickedness, and *all men* have sinned and fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23); therefore mankind has only one hope and that is to believe in the only One who has the power to wipe away our every sin and offer forgiveness for our every manifestation of evil in this world - and that *One* is the *Lord Jesus Christ*. I do encourage you to pause on Monday and remember the events of 9/11, but only to the end that you remember that in this world of perpetual violence and bloodshed, there is only One who can bring about everlasting peace to the heart of man – that One is the Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus Christ (Isaiah 9:6). Pilgrim Bible Church, Pastor M. J. Beasley