



# SHIELD OF FAITH

"Take Up the Shield of Faith" - Paul

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Friday, January 3, 2019

*Of making many books there is no end, and much study wears the body... here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil. — Ecclesiastes*

## Salvation by Information

<https://michaelheath.org/shield-of-faith-column/salvation-by-information>

We all know this is the information age. That doesn't mean that previous eras in mankind's history were information free. Solomon wrote a few hundred years before Christ. He wrote, "Of making many books there is no end." We need to update that for our day. Were he alive today he'd write, "Of making many tweets there is no end."

Twitter's ubiquitous 144 character invention called a tweet took the science of distraction to a whole new level. For the first time in human history the infinite ideological explosive energy of a sentence-long-idea could be weaponized by marketers, politicians and ... well ... everyone. It is fascinating that a billionaire television reality star entertainer has mastered this weapon. It also makes sense.

Who better than a highly intelligent master of the five to ten minute attention span to figure out how to build a powerbase using 144 characters. Television moguls figured out how to monetize the five to ten minute attention span. Trump figured out how to convert 144 character tweets into the Presidency of the United States.

We are not living in the information age. We are living in the Age-of-the-Shortened-Attention-Span. Information — especially emotionally charged images, videos and ideas — is the material. And the most powerful information is hidden. At least that's what we're led to believe by all the privacy settings that are now being baked into everything that uses the internet. The former CEO of Google famously observed a few years ago, "We know where you are. We know where you've been. We can more or less know what you're thinking about." He also, thankfully, remarked, "There clearly are cases where evil people exist, but you don't have to violate the privacy of every single citizen of America to find them."

The most obvious evil power that Tolkien gave his Ring of Power is invisibility. The ring bearer faded from view in the created world of good, solid and familiar things when he slipped it on. At the same time he became more visible to the world of darkness and brooding evil.

The greatest temptation of our age for every internet connected individual and institution is fearing man instead of God. If we go on fearing man then the internet will continue as nothing more than satan's latest abuse of technology that converts our pride into ugliness and death. Our healing begins when we turn from our knowledge addiction.

*Continued on the back*

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Knowing it instantly isn't going to save us anymore than knowing it in ten minutes saved us. Knowledge is not the source of peace, contentment and human flourishing. Our addiction to the scientific method, politics and technology has opened a chasm between our minds and our hearts.

Listen with your heart to what Solomon observed, "Of making many books there is no end, and much study wearies the body. Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind. For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil."

As we steep in our shortened-attention-span-instant-knowledge-utopianism our minds tell us that we've achieved the judgment free Age of Aquarius. Our hearts, however, tell us there are still rules. Our hearts know there's a God we must fear. Deep down we feel the reality of accountability and personal responsibility. The internet does not make us invisible. Like the Ring of Power it is a cross when we bear it in accordance with our mission and purpose. And it is sin when we put it on.

In this year of perfect vision let's dedicate ourselves to viewing knowledge from a proper perspective. That means all knowledge, but especially personal, emotional and "hidden" knowledge about our neighbor and ourselves. Let's conquer the evil of our age, and fashion the internet into the tool God created it to be.

Jesus Christ stands ready to help. The Father sent the Holy Spirit for that purpose. Pray.

Selah.