

Beware of False Prophets, False Teachers, False Christs

How can one recognize a false Christ? Jesus warned that in the last days counterfeit Christs would arise who would masquerade or deception or pretense or cover-up as the Messiah and claim to be the savior of the world. *"Jesus answered and said to them: 'Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will deceive many'"*(MAT24:4-5) In New Testament, Greek word for Christ is Christos. The Hebrew word in Old Testament is Mashiach, meaning "Messiah." The literal translation of both words is "the anointed one." It is the title and identity which Jesus assumed during His ministry on Earth. *"The woman said to Him, 'I know that Messiah is coming' (who is called Christ). 'When He comes, He will tell us all things.' Jesus said to her, 'I who speak to you am He'"*(JOH4:25-26)

Do not be deceived: Shortly before His crucifixion, Jesus preached His great prophetic discourse regarding profound events that would occur at the end of the age just prior to His Second Coming. Among those events, He said, would be false prophets and false Christs. He warned, *"Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There!' do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect."*(MAT24:23-26) Jesus emphasized that these false Christs will perform great signs and miracles and deceive many. Many Christians think that as long as they believe in Jesus, they will be shielded from the deceptions of the last days. However, these will not be simple deceptions that will be easy to identify. Jesus says that the deceptions of these false Christs are so carefully planned and so skillfully carried out, that even God's chosen ones would be deceived—if that were possible. And only reason it is not possible is if we keep our focus on the True and faithful Jesus through study of His Word, through prayer, discern spirit. Those who are deceived in the last days by false Christs will be genuine believers. There are false prophets and false teachers arising; and if we are not careful, even elect will fall victim to their deception. Unfortunately, many will be deceived into following the wrong Jesus. The apostle Paul wrote, *"I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, ..you put up with it easily enough"*(2CO11:3-4) Apostle warns them concerning false apostles who were preaching about a Jesus who is not the real Jesus of the Bible—a fictitious Jesus, a fabrication of the corrupt imaginations and erroneous doctrine of those who want to deceive God's people. The gospel associated with false Christ is a different gospel; it is not the gospel recorded in the Bible and preached by true apostles. Further, false gospel is accompanied by a counterfeit spirit—demonic-deceitful spirit.

The books of Apocrypha (12 books of OT "non-canonical") should not be considered as Holy Scripture. The Jews rejected Apocrypha as being part of God's Word.(1Macc.9:27) Christian church do not add these to the Bible.(LUK24:44) Only 66 books are authoritative. Apocrypha contains doctrines/practices that contradict what has revealed in Scripture. We find Book of Baruch 3:4 teaching that God hears the prayers of those who have died. Doctrine of justification by human works and not faith alone.(Tobit12:9) 2Macc.12.39-46, pointed to in promoting view praying for the dead. Doctrine of purgatory - a place of purging between heaven-hell. Book of 1Macc. has historical references but not divinely inspired Scripture.

1John 2:18-22 speaks of the Antichrist: "Dear children, this is the last hour[the end of this age]; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. Who is the liar? It is he who denies that Jesus is the Christ. He is the antichrist—who denies and refuses to acknowledge the Father and the Son. Every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world."(1JOH 4:2,3) So, who is this Antichrist refers to? Antichrist denies the Father and the Son, does not acknowledge Jesus, denies that Jesus came in the flesh.(2JO1:7) Antichrist will come before the end of this age. In Rev.6, seen white horse carries a rider who conquers the earth. The rider is the Antichrist who will promise the world false peace. He is a great deceiver, dictator, and living devil. He is man of lawlessness, wicked will counterfeit Christ. The Antichrist was the perfectly evil human being because he was completely opposite to the perfectly good human being, Jesus Christ.

Who is behind these false Christs? It is none other than Satan himself. Paul wrote, *"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light."*(2CO11:13-15) Paul was concerned that cunning way that Satan twisted the truth of God's word in the garden of Eden and spread his deceptive lies to Eve. He compares deceit to misinterpret of Scripture resulting in corrupted teaching of Biblical doctrines. Deceiving spirit in the false teachers is trying to seduce church away from Jesus. These false teachers disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, anointed by their master, Satan, transforms himself as an angel of light. Satan dragging many people away from Christ's headship/Lordship and turn to idolatry, thereby fallen from grace, ends up souls to the woman at Babylon/Hell. Beware of lies and false signs, miracles. Satan can appear in different forms, and places [even as Mary] and deceive [last Eve], Christ's bride, the Church. The weapon of the enemy is deception. Victory in battle is decided by a believer's choice to believe God and maintain pure and devotion to Christ.

Bible says just before Jesus returns "a man of lawlessness" will appear on Earth.(2TH2:3-4) He is known as the Antichrist. He shall confirm the covenant with many [includes foolish virgins, fallen from grace church] The false prophet makes all inhabitants of earth to worship him. They worship the beast/his image, receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand. Those who takes mark has effectively denied Jesus as his exclusive ways to salvation and will be eternally lost.(REV14:9-12)

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world. By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God.(1JO4:1-3) The [Holy] Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons.(1TI4:1) The “doctrines of demons,” then, are things that demons teach. Satan knows how to manipulate men, that is why seducing spirits are so effective. It leads many people away from a genuine faith relationship with Christ. Apostle fears Christians be led away from sincere and pure devotion to Christ by deceit of the serpent's cunning deception of Eve.(2CO11:3-6) We can identify doctrines of demons by immersing ourselves in the truth. Any deviation from bible teachings practices lawlessness. Traditions are only valid if they are built on firm foundation of scripture, in full agreement with whole counsel of God and keep devotion to Christ. Any religious books other than Bible is to be filtered and discerned.(ACT17:11)

It is important to understand the doctrine “Jesus Christ has come in the flesh,” Bible affirms that Jesus is both fully God and truly man. Today, there are many who deny the full deity of Christ—and identifies them as deceivers and antichrists.

1) First John 2:22 says, “Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist—he denies the Father and the Son.” 2) Does this teacher preach the gospel? The gospel is defined as the good news concerning Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection.(1CO15:1-4) Paul warns in Galatians 1:7,8 Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. No one, not even a great preacher, has the right to change the message that God gave us. If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be eternally accursed. 3) Does this teacher exhibit character qualities that glorify the Lord? Speaking of false teachers, Jude 11 says, “They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam’s error; they have been destroyed in Korah’s rebellion” In other words, a false teacher can be known by his pride (Cain’s rejection of God’s plan), greed (Balaam’s prophesying for money), rebellion/arrogance of power(Korah’s promotion of himself over Moses).(MAT 7:15-20)

In Genesis 3:15, God said that the “seed” of the woman would bruise the head of Satan. This passage points to the promise. In Luke 1:32, He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest. It is not the woman who conquers but her seed. Being virgin-born, Jesus is the seed of woman.(MAT1:25; GAL4:4; ISA7:14) Jesus came as full of grace, immaculate to do battle with sin, death, Satan once for all the victory of Jesus.(COL2:13–15) Jesus did Crush the Serpent’s Head on cross of calvary. To leaders/people of that time. *You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires.*(JOH8:44) These false christs twist and distort the Word of God to promote their own agenda or appeal to thinking of the world. Blind leaders lead others away from God. Beyond drifting away from God, because of their blindness (hypocrites way)

We children of God must be diligent is putting on the Armor of God each day, since the devil’s main mission is to steal and destroy God’s people. Every day we are in a battlefield, fighting against wiles(trickery, deceit)of satan and his demons. The best way to guard yourself against falsehood and false teachers is to know the truth. To spot a counterfeit, who makes a careful study of the Bible can identify false doctrine. For example, a believer who has read activities of God and judge all teaching by what Scripture says (MAT3:16-17) will immediately question any doctrine that denies the Trinity. Jesus said a tree is recognized by its fruit”(MAT12:33) When looking for “fruit,” here are tests to apply to determine the accuracy of teaching. Jesus asks, “Who do you say I am?” Peter answers, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God,” and for this answer Peter is called “blessed.” In 2 John 9, Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. Jesus Christ and His work of redemption is of importance; beware of anyone who denies that Jesus is equal with God, who downplays Jesus’ sacrificial death.

Jesus emphasized that it is not enough to simply profess the name of the Lord in order to enter into heaven. Besides taking the name of Jesus, we need to follow Him. We need to do the Father’s will. We need to look to Jesus, God’s Son.(MAT7:21) But by serving a false Christ. “Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’”(MAT7:22-23) To those people, Christ will simply say He never knew them, dismiss their supposedly great deeds as works of lawlessness, and command them to depart, you evildoers.

Let us remember that it is our duty to be faithful to the truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Satan, the adversary of truth, does not want us to feel or exhibit right kind of faith. He encourages disobedience, planting defiance in the hearts of the unwary. If he is successful, they will turn away from the light into the darkness of the world. Adam fails to watch and guard the garden and Eve when Satan enter in. God holds Adam accountable for this failure. And the church is like an “enclosed” garden; for distinction, being separated by the grace of God, in election, redemption, effectual calling. We must learn to diligently hide God’s Word in our hearts, to be watchful in prayer, and watch in the protection of the church.

“And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.”(2TH2:8-10) The followers of counterfeit christ are deceived because they refuse to love God’s truth as revealed in his word. But at His coming, Jesus Christ will destroy the man of lawlessness. Hallelu-Yah!