

CITY OF THE LIVING GOD

DECEIT: A SIGN OF THE
END TIMES

47

SERIES

In dedication to all the soul-winners that need a Bible study on signs of the end times.

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City of the Living God



“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.” (Matt. 24:23-24).

Deception has been the strategy of Satan since the beginning of creation. The serpent’s first attack was on deceiving Eve into eating the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. His device of deceit stems from his character. Jesus said, *“When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it”* (John 8:44). As the advent of the Antichrist approaches, we will see deception heighten to levels we have not seen ever in the history of mankind. We can see it all around us. There is so much negative noise of information and misinformation in our world, and it becomes more difficult to discern what is truthful and what is false. Jesus’ prophetic statement about the deception of the antichrist is clearly seen in his statement that “if it were possible” the the antichrist would even deceive the Christian believers.

DECEIT FROM THE BEGINNING

Deception is defined as the act or practice of intentionally misleading, lying, or hiding the truth to cause someone to believe a falsehood. It includes deceiving people to believe something false as being true. Deceit has been with mankind since the beginning. After the creation of man and woman, the devil questioned God's commandment to Adam and Eve. The serpent spoke a portion of truth and put a question mark at the end of it.

Genesis 3:1

"Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?"

Deception and lying had its beginnings with the devil. He is not only referred to as a "liar," but he is called the "father of liars."

John 8:44

"You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it."

There are other Scriptures that show Satan's character is one of deceit.

Revelation 12:9

"So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."

2 Corinthians 4:4

"...whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them."

HIS ATTACK ON THIS GENERATION

We have seen an increase of deceit on a scale that has not been heard of since the beginning of mankind. There has been an attack upon truth since creation, but now it's so widespread that almost no one questions this statement. In the past few decades, there were secular teachings that believed that "truth" was not a real concept. That it was just a construct or an idea. They taught that there were no absolutes and truth was relative. One can see how this teaching led people to believe that we had no purpose in life. Because if there were no truths or absolutes, then there was no Creator, and we are just the result of the big bang of gases.

We see now the results of that teaching. Whether people believed in this teaching whole heartedly or not, it still has led to a generation that does not see much purpose in their lives. No wonder there is a lack of initiative, an avoidance of career planning, no work ethic, and just going with the flow of life without any real commitment. Not everyone is like that, but it fits our generation. That was not an accident that this has happened. It is a result of the attack of Satan upon this world. We live a world where there is no vision of their future, and the Bible describes the end result of it.

Proverbs 29:18

"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."

Without a purpose in life, people become destructive to others and to themselves. It depicts the characteristics of our world. It's a godless society where truth does not exist, and people become lawless. Notice that the above verse says that the people that love truth and keep his laws are ones that have a happy life.

Also there has been a direct attack on truths in ways that have never been possible up to this era. There is so much fraud, lies, deception, and

fabrications, that this has led to the beliefs in so many conspiracies. People no longer trust news networks, government agencies, medical journals, doctors, and educational systems. We have already seen so much evidence that has given us ample proofs that we have been lied to by people and agencies that used to have so much trust. The deceit has come to levels that have become destructive to much of society.

Proverbs 11:3

“The integrity of the upright will guide them, but the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them.”

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)

The invention of AI has further complicated the discerning of what is truth and what is false. It already has been used to slander, confuse, and deceive the viewers and readers of our generation. Videos that seem so authentic and documents that seem to show genuineness are so beguiling. Elon Musk stated, “AI is more dangerous than nuclear warheads.” He is so right about the dangers that AI poses for discerning truths and fallacies. Technology will try to produce means to distinguish AI from the real. It already exists, but as fast as they come up with the methods, AI reconfigures itself to fix this so as to not be able to distinguish the real from the fake. This has already produced so many conspiracies and will continue to be the norm. It’s only going to get worse. Never in the history of mankind has there been such an attack on truths! No doubt this is part of the fulfillment of the deceit that will come to this earth during the Great Tribulation.

Revelation 13:14-15

“And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. He was granted power to give breath to the image

of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.”

Is it possible that AI will be part of the empowerment of the beast? No one can be for sure. However, there is no doubt in my mind, that AI will be used in those days to further the deceiving of the nations into believing that the antichrist is the messiah. Is it connected to the mark of the beast? In my opinion it will be, but no one can be completely sure.

DECEIT – A SIGN OF THE END TIMES

We have already read in the Gospel of Matthew that the deceit of the Antichrist in the last days will be so enticing that even the believers will have a difficult time not believing (24:24). So, as we approach the end times, we will see deceit increase at astronomical levels like never before. Without a doubt this is one of the signs of the end times. When we think, how can it get worst? It does. Surely the Lord’s coming is soon. The one thing that is holding back the antichrist is the Church. The Church is preventing him from revealing himself.

2 Thessalonians 2:7-8

“For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way. 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.”

Lawlessness is the reaction when people do not care about truths or laws. It is the natural reaction of those that do not believe or care about truth. It is what is happening in our society right now. There is no coincidence that the one who is doing the most deception (antichrist) is referred to as the “lawless one.”

The Apostle Paul further states how that this lawlessness is directly connected to the power of deceit that he uses to beguile the world.

2 Thessalonians 2:9-10

“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.”

Notice that one of the signs of the antichrist (lawless one) is the “lying wonders” and brings with it deception. He targets those that do not love truth since they are ripe for believing in falsehoods.

AVOIDING DECEPTION

So how do believers avoid being deceived by the devil? The Bible gives us three manners in which we can avoid deception:

1. The Spirit of Truth, which is God’s Spirit living within the believer, is the greatest protection against the evil one. When we have the Spirit of God within us, he will give us discernment if we walk in the Spirit. We can still be deceived if we are not listening to him when he speaks to us.
2. The Word of God is our guide, that’s why it is referred to as the Word of Truth. *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”* (2 Tim. 2:15). We won’t be ashamed at Judgment Day if we follow the Word of Truth. It is our guide to truth and eternal life.
3. The man of God is one of God’s gifts to the Church to guide us and nourish the believer into making good decisions. *“Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls...”* (Heb. 13:7).

Jesus also gives us some very important concepts that help us identify that which is false.

Matthew 7:15-20

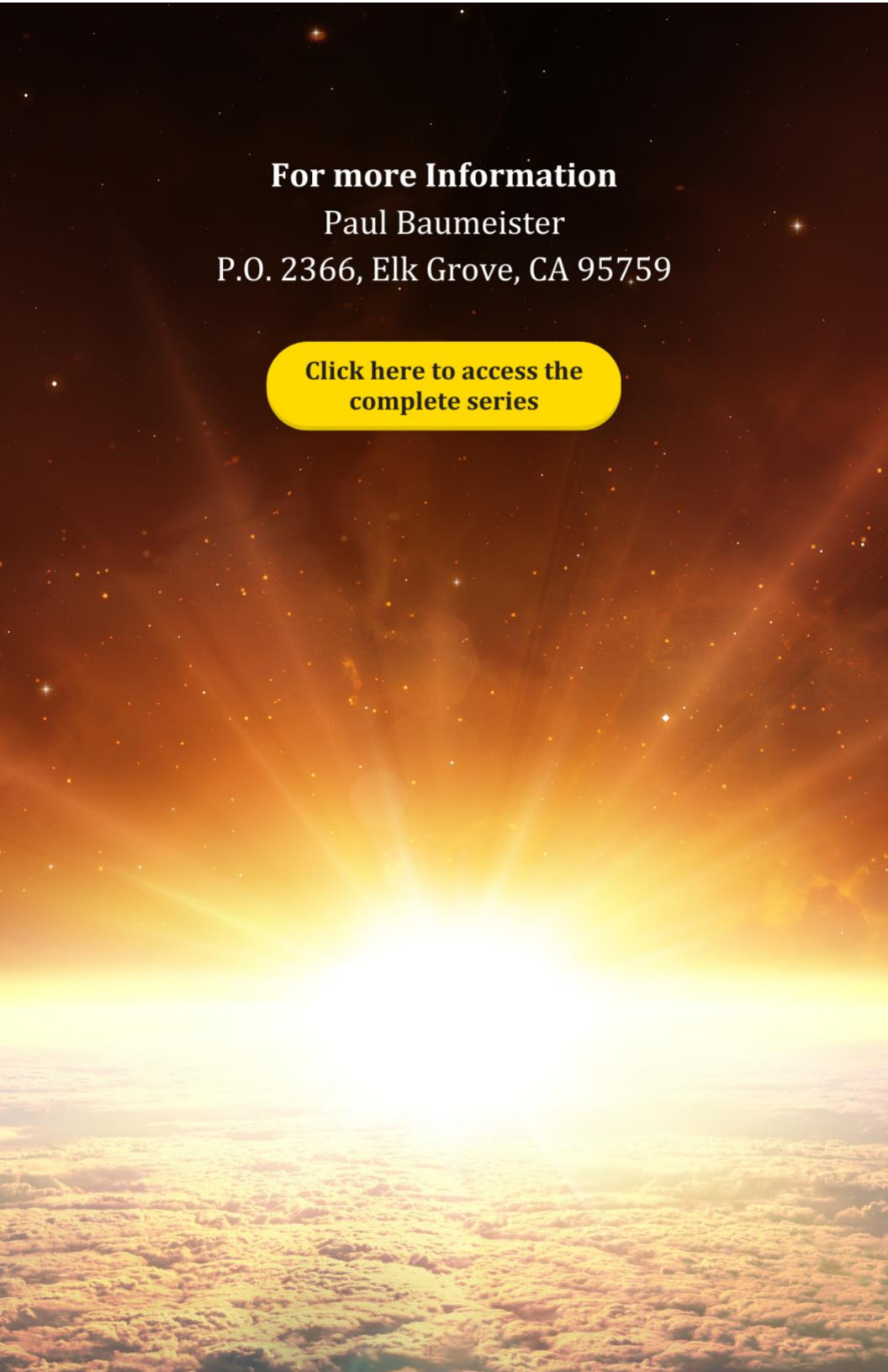
“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them”

The way to recognize a false teacher from a good teacher is by their fruit. A false teacher will have bad fruit. It is one of the ways we use to figure out if someone is speaking truth. We call this idea: *Consider the Source*. Christians should be adept in using this concept. Oftentimes we listen to people, videos, and other media and fail to use this method. We need to question who are the people or organization that is proposing to speak truth. Are they just knowledgeable in what they believe or are they experts in that area of teaching? Are they considered authorities on the subject? What is their character like? What are their intentions? Are they just repeating things they heard? What kind of reputation do they have?

So, before you believe a conspiracy or a strange teaching, use the methods that God has provided us with to determine its accuracy. Pray about it. Does it contradict the Bible? What does your pastor say about it? Who is the promoting that teaching? What’s that person’s background? Last of all, never let anyone convince you of leaving the Bible’s principles and teachings. Hold on to those biblical truths.

Philippians 2:14-16

*“Do all things without complaining and disputing, that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, **holding fast the word of life**, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain.”*



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