

GOD'S FINAL MESSENGER

Introduction

1. There are many warnings throughout the New Testament to beware of false Christs, false apostles, false prophets, and false teachers, and yet they continue to appear and men continue to believe in them and follow their destructive heresies (**Matthew 7:15; 24:24; Acts. 20:28-30; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; 2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 4:1; cp. 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 2:16-18; 3:1-9**).
2. In the first century these warnings were especially needed because:
 - a. Jesus was expected to return in judgment against Jerusalem. The fact the Jesus' disciples expected Him to return made them vulnerable to the claims of false Christs.
 - b. As well as the apostles of Christ, there were other men falsely claiming to be apostles. It was essential, then, to be able to know the difference.
 - c. There were genuinely inspired prophets and also many charlatans passing themselves off as prophets. This is why John exhorts his readers to "test the spirits" (**1 John 4:1**). Indeed, one of the gifts of the Spirit was that of "discerning of spirits" (**1 Corinthians 12:10**). "This was a gift enabling its possessor to identify and expose false teachers. Presumably this gift was held by all of the apostles and prophets of the new dispensation as well as by other persons not so generally known" (Coffman).
3. We have the same problem in the twenty-first century –false Christs, false apostles, false prophets, and false teachers: David Koresh, John Miller, Sergey Anatolyevitch Torop, Jim Jones, Jose Luis de Jesus Miranda, Sun Myung Moon, Joseph Smith, Mary Baker Eddy, Benny Hinn, Creflo Dollar, etc. It is essential to be **grounded in the truth** to avoid being deceived by these evil workers and delusional men.



The church at Ephesus exposed false apostles: "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars" (**Revelation 2:2**).

The church at Thyatira tolerated a false prophetess: "Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols" (**Revelation 2:20**).

I. JESUS IS GOD'S FINAL MESSENGER

There are no messengers today.

- A. Moses spoke of Jesus: The Lord, through Moses, forbade His people to consult witches, soothsayers, sorcerers, or one who interprets omens (**Deuteronomy 18:9-14**). Instead, they were to rely on the Lord to speak to them and make known His will, and this would be achieved through the prophets whom He would send in His name: "I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him" (**Deuteronomy 18:18-19**). As the following verses make clear, Moses speaks of a prophetic order or line of prophets that would culminate in one eminent individual – The Messiah.
 1. Peter healed a lame man in the name of Jesus and a crowd quickly gathered, and so Peter took the opportunity to preach Jesus; it is this Jesus, says Peter, of whom Moses spoke, and he quotes directly from Deuteronomy 18:18-19 (**Acts 3:1-23**). This no doubt, was the passage to which Jesus alluded when He said, "For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me" (**John 5:46**).
 2. In his address to the Sanhedrim in Jerusalem, Stephen also confirmed that Jesus is the prophet of whom Moses spoke, saying, "This is that Moses who said to the children of Israel, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear'" (**Acts 7:37**).

"Then those men, when they had seen the sign that Jesus did, said, 'This is truly **the Prophet** who is to come into the world'" (**John 6:14**).

B. Jesus is the final prophet:

1. Jesus presented a parable that we title, "The Parable Of The Wicked Vinedressers". God sent a series of prophets to reap the fruits of true religion, but they murdered those prophets. Finally, God sent, not just another prophet, but His only Son, but they murdered Him, too (Mark 12:1-11). Jesus is the final prophet.
2. The Hebrew writer says, "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds" (Hebrews 1:1-2).

"But Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life" (John 6:68).

"Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).

"Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

"Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25).

II. JESUS DELIVERED GOD'S FINAL MESSAGE

There is no more revelation today

A. Speaking through Moses, God said of the Prophet whom He would raise up, "And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him" (Deuteronomy 18:19).

1. As we have demonstrated, Jesus was the prophet of whom Moses spoke; he was the prophet of whom God said we must hear because He would speak in God's name. Jesus said He had come in His Father's name (John 5:43) and that all the words He spoke were of the Father (John 12:49-50; 14:24; 15:15).
2. At one time, Jesus went up to a mountain and took with him Peter, James, and John, and Jesus was transfigured before them and Moses and Elijah also appeared with Him. "While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. **Hear Him!** And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. But Jesus came and touched them and said, Arise, and do not be afraid. When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but **Jesus only**" (Matthew 17:5-8). God had said through Moses that we must hear Him and He says here, too, that we must hear Him and hear Him only.

B. The Hebrew writer says, "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has [note the past tense] in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds" (Hebrews 1:1-2).

1. Jesus had spoken directly to His disciples and yet there were many more things He had to say, but they could not bear them at that time (John 16:12). So He promised to send the Holy Spirit to reveal all the truth (John 16:13-14).
2. The apostles were immersed in the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, and from that point forward revealed the will of God both verbally and through written works (2 Thessalonians 2:15; 1 Corinthians 2:12-13; 14:37).
3. By the time Jude wrote his epistle (A.D. 60 – A.D. 80) **the faith** had been delivered to the saints (Jude 1:3). The Hebrew writer says it in this way (and please note the past tenses): "Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him" (Hebrews 2:1-3).



Christians are exhorted to:

contend earnestly for
the faith which was
once for all delivered
to the saints

Jude 1:3

III. JESUS' MESSAGE WAS CONFIRMED

The are no miracles today

A. Jesus is that prophet of God of whom Moses spoke who delivered God's final message to mankind, but how do we know it really was God's message?

1. The Jews were in Jesus' identity and do You keep us in the Christ, tell us 10:24), and Jesus "I told you, and The works that I do name, they bear

**“The works that I do
in My Father's name,
they bear witness of Me”**

doubt regarding asked, “How long doubt? If You are plainly” (John answered, saying, you do not believe. in My Father's witness of Me”

(John 10:25). The “works” to which He refers are the miracles of healing, etc., which they had witnessed. As Nicodemus said, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him” (John 3:2). Likewise, there was a blind man that Jesus healed and the Pharisees kept questioning him and said they did not know where Jesus was from. The blind man answered, saying, “Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes!” (John 9:30). The miracles that Jesus did confirmed the truth of His identity and from whence He came.

2. Jesus said He had come in His Father's name (John 5:43) and that all the words He spoke were of the Father (John 12:49-50; 14:24; 15:15). We can know this for certain because, as Peter said, “Jesus of Nazareth, a Man attested by God to you by miracles, wonders, and signs which God did through Him...” (Acts 2:22). Jesus, too, linked the truth of His teaching with the works He did: “Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own authority; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves” (John 14:10-11).

3. In raising Him from the dead, the Father declared Him to be His Son and, thereby, confirmed the truthfulness of all that He said and taught.

“Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and **declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead**” (Romans 1:1-4 NKJV).

B. Jesus continued to reveal God's will through the apostles, and their teaching, too, was confirmed by the Father in the same way. Before Jesus ascended into heaven, He commissioned the apostles to go into all the world and preach the gospel (Mark 16:15).

1. Now notice what Mark says: “So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and **confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen**” (Mark 16:19-20).

2. The Hebrew writer says, “How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and *was* confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?” (Hebrews 2:3-4). Did you notice the past tense: “was” confirmed?

Conclusion

1. In this lesson we have presented three great truths:

- I. JESUS IS GOD'S FINAL MESSENGER**
II. JESUS DELIVERED GOD'S FINAL MESSAGE
III. JESUS' MESSAGE WAS CONFIRMED

2. These great truths form a firm foundation and will prevent one from being deceived and led away into error:

- a. Jesus is God's final messenger and so we must reject all those that come after Him claiming to be the Christ or a prophet of God.
- b. Jesus delivered God's final message or revelation and so we must reject all those claiming to have further revelations from God.
- c. Jesus' message was once for all delivered and confirmed by various miracles, signs, and wonders and so we must reject the miracles, signs, and wonders that exist in our day as nothing more than counterfeit (cp. 2 **Thessalonians 2:7-12**).

3. Dealing with claims and contradictions:

- a. Whenever someone appears and claims to be the Christ or a prophet, claims to have further revelations, or claims to be able heal the sick, raise the dead, or speak in tongues, then let us prevent ourselves from being deceived by calling to mind these three truths: (i) Jesus is God's final messenger, (ii) Jesus delivered God's final message, (iii) Jesus' message was confirmed.
- b. If we come across a scripture that appears to contradict one of these foundational truths, then it is our interpretation that is wrong and we need to spend some time in deeper study.

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