



2TIMOTHY 3:5

” Having a form of godliness,
but denying the power thereof”

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Jesus warned against deception when He was on the earth.

He cautioned His disciples even then to be aware of deception by those claiming to speak for God. (Mat. 7:15) Deception reared its ugly head in force when truth’s source was revealed.

Jesus also warned that deception will become so great during the last of the last days that even the strongest of Christians will feel great pressure to enter into deception. (Matt. 24:24)

According to our Scripture in 2 Timothy 3:5, deception will be so great in the last days that the many, if not the majority, who claim the name of Christ will not know Him. They will have “a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof” ... that power is the Holy Spirit. The last days will be filled with church going, Bible quoting, Lord, Lord proclaiming, good works kind of people who are not Christian because the Holy Spirit is not active within them. It was the Apostle Paul in Romans 8:9 who made it clear that without the Holy Spirit a person is not a Christian: “Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”

Take a close look at this Scripture written by the Apostle in 2 Thessalonians 2:3:

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;”

This Scripture is clear that if we recognize that we are living in the last days in anticipation of Christ’s coming, then we must also acknowledge that there is a great falling away from the Holy Spirit—deception is everywhere among the church. The great falling away reaches its highest in the last days prior to the return of Christ; these are the days we are now living in.

When we recognize the greatness of deception, we must also recognize that a person is not deceived knowing they are deceived and we must examine ourselves to make sure we are truly Christian. (2 Cor 13:5) Christians are deceived thinking “all is well with my soul” when they are actually far removed from Christ. **Because of the times we are living in, we must see ourselves as guilty until we examine our selves to prove our innocence.**

THERE IS A GOOD CHANCE THAT YOU WHO READ THIS HAVE ONLY AN IMAGE OF BEING A CHRISTIAN, WITHOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT TO ACTUALLY BE CHRISTIAN.

On the next page, we will look at what a deceived Christian looks like.

CONFESSION, WITHOUT CONFORMING

Matthew 7:21-22

“Not every one that says unto me, **Lord, Lord**, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of my Father which is in heaven.”

Jesus warned in His sermon on the mount that not everyone who say they are Christian, who testifies, who teaches, who preaches, who brings the gospel to others, and who are always raising up the name of Jesus by calling Him Lord are actually Christian. Matthew 7:22 is clear that this is not just a few who will have the image of being a Christian without the Holy Spirit, but the “many.”

This verse indicates that many claiming to be Christian are only lip service Christians: claiming Christ with their words, but not with His Spirit. Examine your Christianity according to Galatians 5:16-25 to see if you are truly Christian.

SET APART, BUT FAR FROM GOD

Matthew 25:1-13

“Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.”

Virgins are those who have set themselves apart for one particular man, the one they are to marry. These virgins have set themselves apart for their bridegroom, Jesus Christ. Notice that each of the ten virgins sat themselves apart, heard the cry to meet Christ at His coming, and all rose up to prepare to meet Him (25:6, 7).

However, five of the ten were not ready and were called foolish. Why? Not because they did not set themselves apart for Christ. Not because they did not hear when He returned. Not because they did not prepare to meet Him. They were foolish because their oil had went out. The oil represents the Holy Spirit. They sat themselves apart in works without the Holy Spirit. They had the image of being a Christian without the Holy Spirit to be Christian. Those without the Holy Spirit alive within them entered into hell.

Our Scripture indicates that one half of all who claim to be Christian may not be Christian at all.

GIFTED, BUT UNPROFITABLE

Matthew 25:14-30

“For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.”

The man traveling into a far country is Jesus who entered into heaven. The servants are His people. The goods are the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

When the Holy Spirit is given, so are the gifts of the Spirit also given. How many spiritual gifts are given is determined by the persons ability to develop the gifts. (25:15) Everyone who is a Christian and receives the Holy Spirit is expected to develop the Holy Spirit ... this is not an option and has eternal consequences.

Notice that one servant was given five, another two, and another one gift. The one with the five and two gifts developed the Holy Spirit; the one with the one gift hid His gift and the Holy Spirit was not able to develop. (25:16-18) When Christ returns, He will ask each of His servants to give an account of how the Holy Spirit developed. (25:19)

Those who allowed the Holy Spirit to develop within them were rewarded by Christ. Those who didn't have the Holy Spirit active within them had the Holy Spirit taken completely from them and they were cast into hell. (25:24-30)

This parable indicates that one third (one in three) of those who claim to be Christian do not use the gift(s) God has given.

CORRECT DOCTRINES & GOOD WORKS DO NOT STOP DECEPTION Revelation 2&3

Revelation 2 and 3 gives a picture of what a Christian in name without the Holy Spirit looks like. What we find is that each of the seven churches outlined all have noteworthy characteristics that any Christian would want to emulate. They were hard workers for Christ, patient, untiring, defenders of correct doctrine, charitable, faithful, and appearing to be devout Christians. However, five of the seven churches were condemned because they were also living after the way of the world. They did not have the power of God, were Christians for monetary gain, or tolerated sin, or were involved with immorality, or involved with the occult, or allowed teachers to teach false doctrines, or lived on their reputations, or would not take an all-out stand either for or against Christ, preferring to compromise.

The lesson of the five condemned churches is that correct doctrine and good works do not hold back deception. It is the power of the Holy Spirit that keeps us Christian. The five condemned churches had the image of being a Christian, without the power of the Holy Spirit to be Christian.

As the seven churches were encouraged, we also need to ask, "Do I hear the voice of the Holy Spirit calling me to repent?" Deception is deception because we think we are okay when we are actually far from Christ. The majority who read this will think they are okay, when in reality they may be far from Christ. Because of the days we are living in, we must see ourselves as guilty until proven innocent.

The five deceived churches were in danger of having their candlestick removed if they did not repent and return to relationship with God through the Holy Spirit. Losing their candlestick reserves their place in hell.

These seven churches indicate that five out of seven people claiming the name of Christ have conformed their Christianity through love of the world, toleration, indifference, lack of passion for Christ, and lack of empowerment by the Holy Spirit.

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