

# How to Spot a False Teacher Anchored to Christ The Fundamentals Matthew 24:24

As the end of the physical world approaches, so does earth's darkest spiritual hour.

Satan knows that God has plans to save "*a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands...*" (Revelation 7:9).

So to try to thwart God's harvest of precious souls and to prevent the world from coming to Christ, Satan has deployed legions of liars. False sign posts—all pointing people away from Christ. This is not new to our generation. False teachers have been a part of the landscape from the start.

Things were so bad one hundred years ago, that the greatest Bible teachers of that generation banded together to put up the flag of truth. What those men did is now a common form of mockery in the world. They sat down and declared what were the nonnegotiables of the faith.

But as we open to Matthew 24 again, we are opening to what I consider one of the saddest doctrines in the Bible--the teaching in God's Word about the antichrist, and Satan's all out, final assault upon the Gospel.

**When Christ Returns there is a powerful, pervasive, and universal leader who speaks eternally damnable lies--backed by the most believable signs and wonders ever witnessed on planet earth.**

Please open with me to the next section of Matthew 24.

*Matthew 24: 15 "Therefore **when you see the 'abomination of desolation,'** spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand),*

*Matthew 24: 24 For false christs [pseudo-christs] and false prophets [pseudo-prophets] **will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.***

At the end of days, Satan sends to earth the expression of all of mankind's desires in the person of the antichrist. In a very short time **almost all of the earth** will follow him! That is the saddest commentary on the fallen heart of humanity there could ever be. Wanting always the wrong choice.

The antichrist like Satan—comes to kill, steal, and destroy. Christ, on the other hand came to offer an abundant life. If you have never trusted Christ as your Savior, I would urge you to receive him today. When you call upon Christ to save you from your sins, God delivers you from the power of darkness and their eternally damnable lies--and brings you into the wonderful kingdom of His Son.

Today, just as during the Tribulation years, there will be only two types of people on the planet—truth lovers and truth haters. Open now to 2 Thessalonians 2, and stand with me to see that dark hour.

*2 Thessalonians 2: 1-12 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. 3 **Let no one deceive you** by any means; for that Day will not come unless **the falling away** comes first, and **the man of sin** is revealed, the son of perdition, 4 who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. 5 Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? 6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. 7 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. 8 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. 9 The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and **lying wonders**, 10 and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, **because they did not receive the love of the truth**, that they might be saved. 11 And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that **they should believe the lie**, 12 that they all may be condemned who **did not believe the truth** but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

Pray

## The Fundamentals of the Faith

At the end of days, truth is under attack and lies will abound.

That is why Jesus said watch out for false teachers and counterfeit religion. When faced with a similar situation at the turn of the century, evangelicals produced a work called the FUNDAMENTALS in 1909-1915. The writers read like a Who's Who of Christianity of the day: R.A. Torrey [of Biola], B.B. Warfield [of Westminster Seminary], J.C. Ryle

[devotional writer], G. Campbell Morgan [an expositor pastor], C.I. Scofield [of the study Bible], James M. Gray [MBI], A.T. Pierson [devotional writer] and so on.

These men distilled down the fundamental beliefs that distinguish a true believer from a false or counterfeit one. They boiled down all theology into seven essentials. They then presented and explained these seven doctrines in a multi-volume set of books called "**The Fundamentals**". Here is their list of the seven essentials.

1. INSPIRATION: The Inspiration and Reliable Historicity of the Bible.
2. CREATION: The error of Evolutionism and Darwinism.
3. DOCTRINE: The naming of the cults errors [Jehovah Witness, Mormonism, Christian Science, Spiritism].
4. DEPRAVITY: The reality of sin.
5. SUBSTITUTION: Biblical salvation by faith through the grace of God.
6. IMPUTATION: The errors of Roman Catholicism.
7. CHRISTOLOGY: The Deity, the work, and the personal visible Return of Christ.

## How to Spot a False Teacher

These men were making a "most wanted" poster for believers—showing who the enemy was of the truth. So how do we spot these false teachers? What do these signposts pointing people in the wrong direction believe and teach? What is the message promoted by Satan's legion of liars?

Often it is not what they say—but what they don't say that identifies them! What do false teachers deny? How do you spot a false teacher? There are clear signs of an apostate or false teacher:

1. THEY DENY CHRIST IS THE ONLY WAY. 1 Timothy 4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some **will depart from the faith**, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons,
2. THEY DENY OUR LIBERTY IN CHRIST. 1 Timothy 4:3 **forbidding to** marry, and **commanding to abstain** from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.
3. THEY DENY DIVINE POWER. 2 Timothy 3:4-5 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness **but denying its power**. And from such people turn away!
4. THEY DENY BIBLICAL TRUTH. 2 Timothy 3:8 Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also **resist the truth**: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith;
5. THEY DENY THE NECESSITY OF SOUND DOCTRINE. 2 Timothy 4:3-4 For the time will come when **they will not endure sound doctrine**, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.
6. THEY DENY THE DEITY OF CHRIST. 2 Peter 2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will

*secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them -- bringing swift destruction on themselves. (NIV)*

7. THEY DENY THE REALITY OF CHRIST COMING AGAIN. *2 Peter 3:3-4 knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "**Where is the promise of His coming?** For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."*
8. THEY DENY THE NECESSITY OF PERSONAL HOLINESS. *Jude 18 how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time **who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.***
9. THEY DENY THE NECESSITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. *Jude 19 These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, **not having the Spirit.***

## The World Detached from Truth--Shipwrecks

Love of the truth as we saw earlier in 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 2, is the proof of salvation. Lost ones never receive a love of the truth so they never seek out and find Christ's offer of salvation.

To not love the truth leads to "ship wreck"; it meant that the ship you trusted to take you across the dangerous waters had failed you and you were not going to make it. If you lose your ship in the midst of the sea there is usually no hope, no place to go—and certain death.

*Think of the implications of being in a doomed boat. Not believing the truth about God means that all who count on a lie to get them safely to the other shore—are lost forever!*

Remember that Paul uses this word to describe those who thrust away sound doctrine and try to sail on their own and without Christ's way, truth and life.

1 Timothy 1:19-20 having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, **concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck**, 20 of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom **I delivered to Satan** that they may learn not to blaspheme.

What can cause a soul to be shipwrecked? False teachers and belief in a false Christ. That was one of Christ's constant warnings.

The most dangerous shipwreck is not the one that merely endangers your body. Jesus warns that false teaching can sink your soul as well.

So how do we stay safe as these dark days cast their shadow across society, media, culture, and every other realm of daily life? Only one way—check the anchor of your soul.

When the *world darkens, culture crumbles, and truth dies—you know the end of the world is near.*

It is then that Jesus warned that the church would fill up with fruitless counterfeits.

When that happens it is time for believers to brace for the storm that we know is coming. The waves will only increase. Spiritual darkness will only deepen as deceptions grow.

These are days when we who know and love the Lord Jesus should reach into our hearts and grab onto our anchor line and feel it strongly holding us securely—tugging us homeward.

## Jesus is our Anchor

*Hebrews 6: 11-12, 18-20 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance (plerophoreo – to overflowing) of hope until the end, 12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. 18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have **fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope** set before us. 19 This **hope we have as an anchor of the soul**, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, 20 where **the forerunner has entered for us**, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek. NKJV*