

What is a "Christ"?

Mark 13:21 Then if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'Look, there he is!' do not believe it. **22** For false Christs and false prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders, to lead astray, if possible, even the elect. **23** But be on your guard; I have told you everything ahead of time. First, God makes chosen servants and anoints them for special service, to be leaders in something over His people. A good servant of God produces good results in the eyes of God. False prophets see their fame and power and want the same for themselves without producing the spiritual fruit that earns God's approval. They seek power (over the people) and personal fame. The faithful "follow" the leader or God's anointed one. So the false prophets first want the people to notice them, to see themselves as special, and therefore proclaim, "Look at me."

The simple person will be deceived by a false prophet who will make signs of God's blessing and power over them and their ministries. They will perform miraculous acts to impress, and this is our current problem. Instead of focusing on morality as in the attributes of God, they are focusing on miracles, comfort and pleasure, even good health, and material things. This is a deception. The work of God is founded on moral transformation, not miracles or superpowers.

He comes preaching

Exodus 4:12 Now therefore, go, and I will be with your mouth, and teach thee what thou shall speak. **A minister of God** is someone who speaks in God's name with God's message. But this is more than just repeating words. Feigned words don't change lives; only God's words, which are alive in the minister's life, change lives. **Matthew 23:3** "All therefore thatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not." Through their own life and ministry, these ministers did not demonstrate the reality of the principles in their own lives. The messenger of God, the preacher, is someone who has grasped God's message in his own life and is a living example of that message. These words have spiritual power. The false preacher is a hypocrite, and his ministry is disapproved of by God and has no spiritual power.

2 Corinthians 11:4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received,

or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him. **Paul** rebuked the **Corinthian church** because they readily accepted changes to the concept of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the gospel. This means they abandoned the concepts declared in Scripture for other ideas, ideas that are not biblical, not what God proposes. **Paul** rebuked God's people because they are foolish spectators who cannot discern good from evil. In the name of fun, entertainment, and enjoying the spectacle, they accept and tolerate error.

It is very important to see that the point of reference returns to Jesus Christ, our Savior. Because a minister who is not morally like Him should not be acceptable or tolerable to us. Likewise, the gospel by which we are saved (based on repentance, that is, moral change) must remain in the life of the Christian, or it is another gospel that is disapproved.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. 14 And no marvel, for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 15 Therefore it is no great thing, if his servants also be transformed as ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works. Satan's servants disguise themselves as servants of God, but they act differently. They are false prophets, or false preachers. **Matthew 7:15-16** Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thorns, or figs of thistles? False ministers of God are distinguished from true ones by their fruit. what they produce in their own lives, in God's work, and with God's people. Spiritual fruit is produced by acting under the Holy Spirit, by acting godly. Many ministries push their people ("Do as I say, not as I do") and their leaders don't provide themselves as personal examples. **Acts 20:29** says, "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you not sparing the flock." Furthermore, fraudulent ministers can be distinguished by their methods. They lack God's moral characteristics such as mercy and forgiveness. They are cruel, competitive, full of anger and resentment toward others, and they despise God's people.

The False and Fraudulent Ministers

2 Peter 2:1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who will privily shall bring in damnable

heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bringing upon themselves swift destruction. While the false prophet wants to take the place of Jesus Christ (the Pope declares that he personally is the Vicar of God, or the person left on earth in place of Christ), the false prophet has spiritual poison, not spiritual life. His personal life is a spiritual disaster, and he is not an example of Jesus Christ.

False Prophets Want to Take the Place of Christ

The false prophet wants his disciples to see him as if he were Christ. He wants the attention of the people (**Mark 13:21-23** "look") instead of God's people looking to Jesus Christ, to God. Part of Jesus' work is to give relief from the burdens of life, from sin, and comfort in times of trouble.

The Pope thinks he is morally "like Christ" because he wears splendid clothes and because of the adoration and praise he receives from others. Jesus was humble and meek, not glorifying his own magnificence. **Matthew 11:29** Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye will find rest for your souls. The actions and ministry of the false prophets do not produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), but they produce the fruit of death, the fruit of Satan. **Matthew 7:16** By their fruits you will recognize them...

But it's important to note that the false prophet uses "damnable (destructive) heresies" as the foundation of his ministry. A heresy is a doctrine or practice that divides people. Unity is possible only through God's will. Satan wants to divide us. While God wants us to unite in the same belief and practice under God's will, what God commands us to have, what Satan promotes does not cause unity in obedience to God's will, but rather disobedience to that will, and divisions and competition among people so that they do not get along with one another.

The method of operation for Satan and his ministers is to "privily bring in" false doctrine and practice. They do not acknowledge who they are or what they teach. But invariably, their ministry is effective in achieving its purpose of causing the evil fruit of Satan.

"Denying the Lord" It is very important to remember that Jesus had much before He came, and He sacrificed Himself to provide for our good. The false prophet is the opposite, very selfish, and he steals, taking illicitly from others. But if we evaluate a minister based on their doctrine and how they demonstrate those

spiritual principles in their own life and ministry, then enriching themselves by stealing from the brothers and sisters, by making merchandise of them, is wrong and reveals the truth about false prophets. (2 Peter 2:3-5 *through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you*)

What does "Christ" mean?

Exodus 29:7 *Then shalt thou take the anointing oil, pour it upon his head, and anoint him.* The word "Christ" comes from the Hebrew concept of anointing a servant for service. **God anoints His servants whom He calls for His special purposes and ministries.**

The process is that God knows the abilities of His servants, and according to His will and wisdom, God chooses one for a mission. God gives this person the authority and mission to fulfill. Before beginning this ministry, **God publicly identifies the individual by anointing them with oil on their head.** Although the servant meets the **requirements**, they must carry out their mission according to the requirements and **instructions given by God.** (Jesus received the Holy Spirit at His baptism, and this was His official anointing.) **The good and faithful servant is very careful to know, understand, and fulfill these instructions.** **1 Peter 4:11** *If any man speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God...*

Changing God's Message

Revelation 22:18-19 *For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book: If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. 19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.* **Proverbs 30:5-6** *Every word of God is pure; He is a shield unto them that put their trust in Him. 6 Add not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.* Therefore, **anyone who changes, adds to, or takes away from God's message is not a faithful minister of God.** John describes such a person as receiving God's condemnation, not enjoying heaven, not receiving salvation. (**Galatians 1:8; Deuteronomy 4:2**)

Jeremiah 14:14 *Then the Lord said to me, "The prophets **prophecy lies in my name. I have not sent them, neither have I commanded them, neither spoken to them; They prophecy unto you a false vision and divination, a thing of nought, and the deceit of their own hearts.**"*

Jeremiah 23:16 *Thus says the Lord of hosts: Harken not to the words of the prophets who prophesy unto you; **they make you vain; they speak a vision from their own heart, not from the mouth of the Lord.** So, the false prophets in Jeremiah's day **invented their message from their own hearts, not what God had said.***

False prophets offer comfort without repentance.

Zechariah 10:2 *For the idols have spoken **vanity**, and the diviners **have seen a lie, and have told false dreams**, and **they comfort in vain**; therefore they went their way as a flock, they were troubled, because there was no shepherd. Romans 16:17-18* *Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them.** 18 For they that such **serving not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and smooth speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.** There is **a process to receiving a blessing.** For example, in obtaining salvation, it begins with admitting that one has done wrong, repenting of this wrong or sin (which is more than lamenting, it is actual change), and having faith in Jesus Christ. But God's blessings do not come outside of this process.*

But the false prophet can be detected by his method of flattering people. Flattery can be defined as... *To show someone affection or appreciation through words or actions that might please them. To flatter or say things to someone with ulterior motives that will please them.*

They said nothing bad would happen even though they disobeyed God's will. For the false prophet, good in this life has nothing to do with faithfully fulfilling the will of God. Instead of urging them to turn from their unfaithfulness and sin, **they flattered the people.** This advice **is futile and will not be of any benefit in eternity.** Likewise, their method of dealing with the people's fickle lives is to offer only praise and gentle exhortations when addressing their sin.

Do Not Accept Other Christs



By David Cox

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Mark 13:21 *And then **if any man shall say to you, Lo, here is Christ; or, lo, he is there; believe him not.** 22 For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect. 23 But take ye heed: behold, I have foretold you all things.* **A "christ" is a person whom someone follows and worships.** He is their "savior," in a way. But in what way? When **Jesus Christ** came to earth, **He did not start a physical kingdom** like a country, having an army, government, etc. His kingdom is spiritual, which means that it is alive in the lives of those who belong to His kingdom.

The Prophet's Ministry

Matthew 3:1 *In those days John the Baptist came **preaching** in the wilderness of Judea, 2 and saying, **"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."** Prophets are individuals sent to preach God's message. Sometimes these messages were God's threats if the people did not change, and they became prophecies of future punishment. But we must understand **the concept of a prophet as that of a preacher. Their ministry is to effect moral change in others through their own efforts.** Acts 3:22 *For Moses said to the fathers, "The Lord your **God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your brothers; you shall listen to him in everything he tells you.**"* Jesus is such a prophet. What does this mean?*