

# Simply Christ

Gospel Newsletter

*Sharing the simplicity that is in Christ*

February 19, 2021

## Spiritual Deception

None of us want to be deceived, especially when it concerns the eternal destiny of our soul. Yet, spiritual deception is one of the foremost things Jesus and the early apostles warned us against. There is a simple and obvious truth which we tend to lose sight of. **“We are rarely deceived by those whom we believe are sent by Satan. Deception almost always comes through someone we believe has been sent by God.”**

The Bible tells us before the return of Jesus Christ, *“that man of sin”* will be revealed *“sitting in the Temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”* II Thessalonians 2:3-4. Some believe this speaks of a person called “The Antichrist” who will sit in a rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem. Yet, the Apostle Paul, who wrote these things, was adamant that the church is *“the temple of God.”* I Corinthians 3:17. This being the case, Paul must have been speaking of something in the church which was not of God, but presented itself to be God! Jesus personally warned us these things would happen before his return. He said, *“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if **it were** possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”* Matthew 24:24. In the phrase *“if **it were** possible,”* the words *“it were”* were added by

Bible editors. What Jesus actually said is *"...if possible, they shall deceive the very elect."* We all must understand this one thing. **"It is not impossible for you, or I, to be deceived!"**

Paul said this *"man of sin"* who would be revealed sitting in the Temple of God, would do according to *"the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness..."* II Thessalonians 2:9-10. In other words, this *"man of sin"* would use signs, lying wonders, and every trick of Satan to deceive the people of God who also gathered in the house of God. It is certain this great deception which Paul warned of would happen in the midst of those who believed they were following Christ.

The apostle gave one primary reason this *"man of sin"* is able to deceive the people and cause them to perish. He said, *"...because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."* II Thessalonians 2:10. These are those whom God sought to reach, sought to warn, and sought to reveal the truth to, but they did not want to hear it. They seemed to love the deception. It told them things they wanted to hear. II Timothy 4:3. The truth did not matter. They loved the word of their favorite "messenger" more than they loved the word of God. So finally, the apostle said, *"...for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."* II Thess 2:11-12.

There is, however, another people spoken of in the scripture. These are those who *"love the*

*truth.*” The truth matters more to these than personality, signs, or great phenomenon. These are like those in Berea who did not judge the gospel based upon their traditions or personal beliefs, but “...received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” Acts 17:11.

They are like the Apostle Paul, who weighed the record God gave in the scripture against the many voices who denied it, and wrote, “let God be true, but every man a liar...” Romans 3:4.

Sometimes the truth of God comes to us as the great treasure for which we have always searched, but sometimes it hits us like a freight train when it comes. Regardless of how it comes, “*the truth*” is the truth. The truth may not be what we presently want to hear, but it is always what we need to hear. It may seem difficult to “love” when it first comes to us. Yet, for those who love the truth because it is “the truth,” it will deliver them from every work of darkness and certainly save their souls.