

The Counterfeit Christian

There are many good people in the world today who will readily state their belief in Jesus Christ. They may even come knocking on your door. They are kind, considerate of others in need, regularly attend church on Sunday, and are always a good example in their community. Some are even preachers, strong in their faith, who genuinely serve their flocks, but when it comes to the return of Christ they will be shocked to find themselves unrecognised by Christ. Why? Matthew 7:21-23, **"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"** NIV.

Actually, most modern translations more correctly translate that last verse: **'And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'** The answer is then - because of their belief that we don't really need to keep God's Commandments, God's Laws, or, if we do, certainly not the *fourth* Command about the Sabbath day. Somehow these Christians manage to ignore such clear verses as Acts 5:32, **'And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.'**

Somehow they become convinced that love is all they need, but what they fail to understand is that the Bible is the instruction book that God gave us along with His product, humanity. If we follow its instructions, our lives work well; ignore them and problems ensue. The Bible tells us exactly what love is: **'For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.'** (1 John 5:3) So, the first four commandments tell us exactly how to love God.

The last six tell us how to love our fellow men: Romans 13:9, **'For the commandments say, "You must not commit adultery. You must not murder. You must not steal. You must not covet." These—and other such commandments—are summed up in this one commandment: "Love your neighbour as yourself."**

Sadly, I have found that some, hearing or reading this, become resentful, feeling that they are being admonished. They are, but only out of love and concern for their future, and the One who is admonishing is Jesus Christ, the One they *say* they serve.

Long ago, when I lived on a farm, high on the moors of Yorkshire, I learned of a group of 'ringers' in that area during the 18th century, who clipped the gold coins of the day and then re-milled the edges. They then forged counterfeit coins with the no longer pure gold melted clippings, and people learned to test the coins by striking them to see if they rang. The counterfeit coins looked right but were only dead ringers for the real thing. Counterfeit Christians can even seem more "Christian" than the real article because sometimes they are more into display, waving their arms, and praying publicly, like the Pharisees of Christ's day, but they are counterfeit, for Satan is the most successful deceiver, and has even become the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:3-4) and if you are deceived, diverted from the words of the Bible, into what you *feel* is a spiritual path of love, you don't know it, do you?

Some of these counterfeit Christians may not think this scripture applies to them, because they *do* believe in keeping those Commandments. They already know that Satan has deceived the whole world, and that almost all Christians now follow a counterfeit, lawless, Christianity. Revelation 12:9, **'And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were**

thrown down with him.’ They fully understand the danger of breaking God’s Commandments, Isaiah 59:2, ‘It’s your sins that have **cut you off** from God. Because of your sins, he has turned away and will not listen anymore.’ New Living Translation.

Counterfeit Christian ministers can even be found teaching, ‘Whoever says “I know him” but **does not keep his commandments** is a liar, and the truth is not in him,’ 1 John 2:4. They *know* that to truly love God and our fellow men is more than some etherial generalisation, it will be revealed by our fruits, 1 John 5:2, ‘By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and obey his commandments’. Only then can we receive His Holy Spirit, ‘And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him,’ Acts 5:32.

They know that this world’s Christianity stems from ancient Babylon and that during the first few centuries after Christ, many false and pagan doctrines were deliberately mixed into the teaching of the Roman Church to bring in the pagan masses who were loth to give up their pagan traditions such as their feast of Saturnalia (which became ‘Christmas’) and their worship of the Sun God, which is why Sunday replaced the 7th day Sabbath, which was actually made illegal by the Roman Catholic Church.

All of this can easily and quickly be proved on the internet, but the Bible sums it up in Revelation 17:1-6, ‘And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the **woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour**, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and **filthiness of her fornication**: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.’ KJV.

I think most people will recognise the great false church from which the Protestants broke away, but *retained* most of those pagan traditions, such as idolatry, the false sabbath and pagan holy days. The Church of England in turn, only came about because King Henry the Eighth wanted to divorce his first wife, Catherine of Aragon, but the Pope refused his request, so he declared himself the head of the breakaway Church of England.

Only in the high Alps and in small islands off the North West of the UK did the remnants of the persecuted True Church survive, after the Roman Catholic Inquisition slaughtered millions. Those faithful gentile Christians still worshipped on the *seventh day Sabbath*, as did the British Celtic Church as persecution drove it to the edges of civilisation. They still kept the Passover, 1 Corinthians 11:23-24, ‘For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, “This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”’ And Pentecost, and the other Holy days of Leviticus 23, which, together, reveal the Plan of God for ALL mankind. Actually I was lucky enough to meet a very old Scottish lady in Melbourne who had been a member of one of those churches in the Scottish isles, which, in her youth still observed those Holy Days, kept, as we read in the early New Testament Churches, by even the gentile Churches of God!

Yes, we have to reject the pagan traditions and lawlessness of false Christianity, and that is no easy thing to do, and demands courage, conviction and determination, for it will mark you as different from the “Christians” of this age. As Jesus Christ said, “**Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is**

the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the way that leads to life, and only a few find it.” Have you got the courage and dedication that will be necessary to study God’s word, come to understand what is required of you and then put it into practice?

It is never easy to recognise our sins. Only if the Father draws us are we able to come to repentance. John 6:44, ‘No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.’ It takes effort on our part to be diligent in studying God’s word. Jude 3, ‘Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to **contend for the faith** that was once for all delivered to the saints.’

But why is it that some Christians who keep God’s Laws, taught so by their ministers, can *still be counterfeit*? Because of Matthew 20: 25-27, ‘But Jesus called them aside and said, “You know that the rulers of the gentiles **lord it over them**, and their superiors exercise authority over them. **It shall not be this way among you**. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave— just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

These Christians allow their ministers to lord it over them. 1 Peter 5:2-3, ‘Be shepherds of **God's flock** that is under your care, watching over them--not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; **not lording it over those entrusted to you**, but being examples to the flock.’ NIV.

In effect, they allow their minister to come between themselves and Jesus Christ. They fall under dominion, against the instructions of Christ, with the evil result of accepting that they must obey whatever the minister teaches. They are taught, Hebrews 13:17, ‘Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.’

As Vines says about this word “obey”: “PEITHO, to persuade. The obedience suggested is **not by submission to authority**, but resulting from persuasion”. A more correct translation of the Greek would be, ‘Assent to the evidence of those that guide you...’

The evidence, of course, is the word of God, by which we should “**prove all things**”, by our diligent study, 1 Thessalonians 5:21, ‘**Prove all things; hold fast that which is good**’. The result of looking to a man, rather than obeying the word of God and Jesus Christ’s example, is false doctrine and idolatry, for any thing we bow down to and serve, placing it between ourselves and God, breaks the 1st & 2nd Commandment.

It is not easy to avoid dominion and hierarchy in the churches, for always men have loved power and control, going right back to the time of Nimrod and Babylon. Many churches have lovely people, impressive magazines, buildings, and media, and it is not until you fellowship that the dominion becomes apparent. The fellowship may be fine, but the cost of staying as a counterfeit Christian will be high. There is a verse in Revelation 14:4, which pictures these false churches as women and the faithful Christians as virgins who are in the Resurrection because they look directly to Christ and His word, not to an intermediary who rules over them. ‘**It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb.**’

In the Greek, 'These have been redeemed from mankind...' actually reads, 'These were bought from the men...' showing that through Christ they escaped the idolatry which would have defiled them and prevented their resurrection (verses 1-3).

So, being good people who *feel* they are on a spiritual path, who *believe* that they have the Holy Spirit does not fulfil the words we have read, and on Christ's return very many will be disappointed. The solution is found in Revelation 22:15, 'Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. **Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and the sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.**'

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