

## “...TAKE HEED THAT NO MAN DECEIVES YOU”

By Keith Greer

*“And Jesus answered and said to them: Take heed that no one deceives you. For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.” {Matthew 24:4,5}* Jesus warned about the false prophets who would claim to be Jesus Himself! His instructions were concerning the destruction of Jerusalem that would take place about thirty-seven years later. Still, we need to be on guard unless some “deceive” us. How can we keep ourselves from being deceived?

**Realizing that deception is real.** *“For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself...Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap.” {Galatians 6:3,7}* Yes, people will try to deceive us! God gives us warning so we can protect ourselves from their lies! Too many times people “fall asleep” to the real danger of apostasy. False teachers do not wear badges and announce their intentions to destroy you spiritually! Nobody is above being deceived – absolutely nobody. Elders, preachers, deacons, members of the church all their lives, Bible class teachers and especially those who are babes in Christ! This danger is real and all of us must prepare ourselves for the onslaught of Satan!

**Knowing truth from error.** *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” {2 Timothy 2:15}* Please understand that over and over in the Scriptures we are commanded to be adding knowledge to our faith, *2 Peter 1:5,6*. The prophet Hosea told God’s people they were destroyed *“for lack of knowledge,” Hosea 4:6*. Each of us must have a good knowledge of God’s truth so we can expose the error when it’s presented. Only knowing what is right can we be certain to know what is wrong! Truth will always expose error and error cannot withstand a rugged examination with the truth!

**Keeping in love with truth.** *“And with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” {2 Thessalonians 2:10-12}* One who truly loves God’s truth will never fall for the “strong delusion!” The love of truth surrounds us with confidence and full knowledge that it will always lead us in the right direction. Yet, one must always use this truth in love and not as a bully club, *Ephesians 4:15* in exposing the errors of men.

**Not being gullible.** *“These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.” {Acts 17:11}* Don’t just trust your favorite preacher or any preacher for that matter – check it out! So many times people are led astray because they placed their trust in men instead of putting it in God. Blind allegiance is not what God desires – he tells us to put the word to the test, *1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 John 4:1* – truth has nothing to fear from an open examination!

**Granting no fellowship with error.** *“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are*

*done by them in secret.” {Ephesians 5:11,12} Give no quarter to the false teacher. God’s people must expose them for what they are – a danger to the souls of men. When one begins to teach things contrary to God’s will they have ceased to be our friend, 2 John 9-11; Romans 16:17.*

Sadly, we live in a world that is more concerned with what pleases them than being true and faithful to God and His word. All one needs to do is take an honest view of today’s religious landscape to see the hypocrisy at every level. God’s blueprint and pattern can easily be checked if one was inclined to do so. Deception can be tragic but it also can be avoided! Wake up now! \*\*\*