

Two Gospels

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Date: 06 April 2008

[0:00] The last days, we're ever closer. 2 Timothy 3, verse 1. 3 Timothy 3, verse 1.

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1 Timothy 4, verse 1. There's the real and the phony. There's the fair dinkum or the fraud. There's two alternatives, two options.

and we know that in our world today there's counterfeits. There's counterfeit notes. There's money that you can get.

It looks like the real thing, but when they check it out at the bank, they'll pick up that it's a phony, it's a fraud, a fake. And there is the counterfeit and the true.

[1:39] And it's learning the difference between the two. Who will you follow? The real or the fake, the pretend? The false.

The Bible talks about deception a lot. The Lord Jesus talks about it. The Bible tells us of deception some 93 times in the Word, often relating to doctrine, to teaching.

Deception. It means that something's not right. It's got the appearance of being right and real, but it's not right. It's not true. And today in our world that we live, there's a huge deception going on, a mass deception on a massive scale.

A huge deception of New Age religion. You know the song used to be, Give me that old time religion. Now it's give me that New Age religion. Give me the New Age religion.

It's everywhere you look. It's intrinsic. It's in everything you see. I heard apparently on Oprah that she's preaching a Jesus, but it's a different one. No, it's another gospel.

[2:41] It's another, it's the New Age. It's humanism. A New Age religion. And the Lord Jesus was asked by his disciples, by his followers, what is going to be the sign of your coming again?

What are these signs that we can look for, that we can take notice of? And we see that, if you'd like to turn to Matthew 24, you can see some of these signs. We see it recorded there.

The signs of the end of the world. The end of the age. Religious deception. Major religious deception is going to be one of the evident signs of this time of the last of the age.

The worst the world has ever seen of a religious deception. And it warns us of this, of these spiritual counterfeits we see. For example, in Matthew 24, and verse 5, we see it says, For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ, and shall deceive many.

People are going to say, I am Christ. People are going to say, yeah, we're Christian. And they're going to deceive many. There's going to be false messiahs. There's going to be false movements. False religions. False Christians.

[3:49] There's going to be counterfeit prophets. The Lord Jesus talked in Matthew 7 about them. And he says, Beware of false prophets. False prophets. And look like they're prophets, false preachers, who come to you in cheap clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

It talks in the word of God about counterfeit miracles. We see in Exodus 7, when Moses was there in front of Pharaoh, there was a number of miracles.

And then the magicians came along. The Pharaoh's band of magicians. And they worked the same kind of miracles too. Counterfeit miracles. There's going to be another thing to look out for.

Counterfeit angels. There's a lot of talk about angels today. And people have stickers on their cars and things talking about angels. But the Bible talks about two kinds of angels. There's God's kind of angels and there's the enemy's, the devil's kind of angels.

Fallen angels. Demons. You know, we know that you've got to be careful. The Bible itself tells us about the devil himself who will appear like an angel of light. A beautiful, glowing, glorious and shining angel.

[4:58] Counterfeit angels. There's going to be counterfeit gods. There's many religions in our world. Many paths that people take. And some people think, Oh, there's many paths to heaven. There's many paths to God.

You know, you believe in what you like. You're all going to end up in the same place. But that's not so. There's only one way. The Lord Jesus says, I am the way. The way. There's no other.

No man comes to the Father but by me. Counterfeit good works is another one. In Matthew chapter 7, the Lord says, Of many that they're going to come and they're going to say, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name?

And in thy name have cast out devils. And in thy name done many wonderful works. Wonderful works. Wonderful works. How could anyone question someone who does wonderful works?

If they don't know their Saviour, they're lost. If they don't know Christ as Saviour, they're lost. No matter how good and commended they might be in the world today. You know, there's folk.

[6:00] Mother Teresa, for example, she had all kinds of funny, wacky ideas. A wonderful lady. Wonderful works. But if she wasn't following the Saviour as her one and only, she's lost.

As lost as lost can be. And burning in hell right now. Friends, there's good works that are counterfeit good works. It says, Have we not done many wonderful works? Haven't we prophesied in thy name?

Haven't we done this and done that? Friends, if they don't know the Saviour, if Christ is not their one and only Saviour, then they're lost. And we need to get that very clear. There's counterfeits of work today.

2 Timothy 3 verse 5, this one that we read, talks about a counterfeit godliness. They've got a form of godliness. They've got the fashion of it, the look of it. They might blab the right words and put on all the right performance.

But it's a form of godliness. They're denying the power thereof. Counterfeit converts. Counterfeit spirits. It says in the word, Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God.

[7:03] Because many false prophets have gone out into the world. That's 1 John 4. Counterfeit doctrine. In 1 Timothy 4 it tells us, Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils and counterfeit gospels.

There's counterfeit gospels today. There's some lovely people who knock on your door with a suit and tie and offer you another testament of Jesus Christ. You know, it sounds very plausible and well, it's totally implausible really, the ridiculous story they tell.

But you know, they put on the right looks and appearance, but they're lost as lost can be. They're not following the saviour of the Bible, the one and only Christ who came and died at Calvary and paid the one payment for sin for man for all time.

Counterfeit gospels. And we're looking today just in a bit of a contrast here about this clash of world views, this conflicting story that the world would tell us, this conflicting gospel, so-called gospel.

It's a false gospel, a different gospel. the good news, so to speak, of humanism, of humanism, of the new age. And really, it's a clash of cultures, a clash of philosophies.

[8:28] It's a totally different choice between Christ and humanism. Actually, I've got a little booklet that I meant to, I've got some numbers of those, and I'll give them out later on today.

You can take one. It talks about humanism, and it describes it for you. The choice is Christ or humanism. What does humanism mean?

Let me tell you a bit about humanism. The false gospel of humanism. It's man. Man is in the centre. Humanism. It's really, the new age is really the old lie.

The new age, so-called, this new world religion, this blending and mishmash of all kinds of philosophies and ideas that it takes, you know, as many paths to God.

It's the new age. It's really the old lie. It's like the devil came in Genesis and said, half God said. The devil came and said, oh, you're all going to be as gods.

[9:28] The new age, it puts man at the centre. Man is his own God. Believe in yourself. Believe in yourself. Follow your heart.

Everything is relative. There are no absolutes. And yet the Bible says, don't follow your heart. The heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked.

Who can know it? The new age says, the gospel is unnecessary. You don't need a saviour. You can be your own saviour. The new age says, if it feels good, do it.

There's no question about morals and values, about black and white, about the clear cut word of God and what it actually says.

Just do what you feel to do. Anything goes. Really, humanism is a polite word for atheism.

Humanism is a philosophy based on human interest.

[10:27] It's a revolt against God and his word. It denies moral absolutes and values and teaches that there's no right or wrong. This is what our world is teaching us.

We're getting it pumped into our homes, through the airwaves, through the media, through the teachings of universities and schools of today.

Do your own thing. Anything goes. You've got no one to answer to. You can just be a, do what you please. Someone said, humanism does not have Sunday schools as we know them.

It has affected Monday through Friday schools. The public school system is indoctrinating children in these values that are countered the word of God.

They're against God and what God would have us to be and to do. And really, the battle lines have been drawn in our world today. Our Lord foretold that sound doctrine would be despised.

[11:31] In Luke 18, verse 8, he says, when he comes, is there going to be any faith on the earth? It's going to be that bad. It's going to be that drastic and that blatant and so clear that there's going to scarcely be any left that follow him.

It's pretty much how you could interpret that. Will he find faith when he comes on the earth? He says in Matthew 24, take heed that no man deceive you.

Be very careful and cautious and clear about what does the word of God say and let that be your guide. Not what man says, not what the preachers on the airway say.

We've got to be sure some of them are okay. But by and large, we've got to check everything as the word of God says. Check what is said and measure it up. Measure it up. Line it up.

Does it measure up? The Lord Jesus characterised the last days of the planet that we're living on as a time of religious deception. A great religious deception.

[12:37] A great falling away in religion. Such things as false messiahs. We might like to turn to Matthew 24, verse 24 and see these things in this verse here.

False messiahs. There's many that are saying, there's some that talk about a Maitreya or a New Age Christ. And if you go down the New Age bookstores or look in some of the bookshops, you see these various Aquarian Gospels and all kinds of weird and wacky teachings and books and writings of people that are supposedly Christ writing some more stories, some more books, adding to the Bible.

And while you can go down churches and they're virtually adding to the Word of God by supposed prophecies that they're giving. Friends, we've got to be very careful and cautious that we're not following another Gospel.

And it says that the Lord Jesus talks about false messiahs, false prophets, false miracles and false doctrines. He says that these four are going to be part of paving the way for the Antichrist.

We see that in Matthew 24 and verse 24 it says, For there shall arise false Christ and false prophets and shall show great signs and wonders insomuch that if it were possible they shall deceive the very elect.

[14:04] Signs and wonders. Great signs and wonders. There's going to be a massive outpouring of signs and wonders in the false church of the end days.

Of false supposed miracles. Great signs and wonders. Friends, we've got to be very careful. Now that's not to say that our Lord is somehow confined and limited from doing wonderful works amongst us and for people to be wonderfully touched by His hand as we might have need of healing.

And believing prayer can save the sick as we know that it can. But this is a total wrong emphasis that is going to be evident of great signs and wonders.

We see many amongst the world churches today that are saying that they've got signs and wonders and there's all kinds of razzmatazz and hoo-ha and goings-on and we know that it's the total wrong emphasis.

The emphasis is salvation. It's the blood of Christ. It's the cross. It's the message of salvation. It's not on healings or signs as such. And so we're seeing really it's a preoccupation with these things. [15:18] It's unhealthy. It's unscriptural. Well, there's a preoccupation with self as well. And this is evident too in the Christian bookstores and you see in the popular books and what the Christian stores are selling.

It's all about self and about self-esteem. And yet the Bible talks about humility. The Bible says that we should humble ourselves under the hand of God and He's going to exalt us in due time.

In the Bible it talks about denying yourself, about self-control, about self-worth and condemning self-worship. And yet we know as we read before that some are going to be lovers of themselves, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.

and there's a really great danger there. We're not to love ourselves but to love our Saviour. We're not to be self-assertive in the sense of having self-love or self-worship or self-esteem but instead to turn our hearts to Christ to come under His mighty hand and He will exalt us.

He will lift us up. He will give us that confidence that comes from knowing our salvation, from knowing our Saviour. And really God is not so much primarily concerned with our happiness as our holiness.

[16:36] This is the danger that there's the emphasis being turned manward and like the humanism of our day and we've lost that sense of holiness. Friends, it's getting right with God that matters.

And once our heart is right with Him then we'll grow and we'll learn and we'll thrive in the Christian life. The movement as I say that apparent today is a movement where they're lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.

We see that our ties promoted in churchdom today is a gospel of self-esteem, of success and it's taken the place of sound doctrine.

When the Lord Jesus says that He's come to call sinners to repentance, He's come to call us out of our sin, out of living for ourselves, out of our selfish ways and our sinful ways to repent.

Not some kind of feel-good philosophy and theology that all things are positive. When Christ was talking about sin, it says that they forsook Him and fled.

[17:43] Many turned their backs. As the teaching got too sensitive, it started to challenge where they were at in their spiritual lives. But in churches today, at times we can be too self-oriented that everything revolves around ourselves.

And that's a dangerous thing. It's not what I want in life, it's what does He want for my life. What does He want for your life? Not that you come and church some bless me club that you just come here to get a spiritual high and it's all about blessing you.

It's about learning. What does God want for my life? It's about being challenged. Where do I stand? Where do I need some correction? Humanism says people can do as they please.

God's Word says this is how to live. This is what to do. This is who to follow. These are the answers. These are the directions for life. Our accountability is to God.

It's not to please ourselves, to enjoy ourselves. Because really the biggest problem, problem, is that when we rationalise sin, we rationalise sin so much that there is nothing that is wrong anymore.

[19:00] And sin is really the biggest problem that we need to address. As Christians, we are living in a very secular world. Humanism is everywhere we look.

Go up the universities, they're conditioning the next round of people that are going to come through to be leaders and teachers and professional people of our world today.

There's a humanism, there's a critical thinking that's going on that is against God, is counter the gospel. And humanism is affecting the home. It's going to affect your home, my home, our children, our grandchildren, as they grow up with a disrespect for authority.

Everything is open for challenging. There's no father, no mother to be submitting to. There's a decline in discipline in the home and at the school.

Question what the teacher says. You know, don't, this is what is being ingrained in our world.

Question what the policeman says, what the law says.

[20:06] There's a decline in everything that is right and true. And sinful behaviour is abounding. As we know, immorality is just running havoc.

As a, just go down and have an abortion. You know, just do what you like and, you know, there's no consequences to sin. No consequences to these things.

And it's, it's conditioning us constantly. We're barraged with it constantly. And I was looking at some figures for the number of live births in South Australia and the number of abortions.

And, you know, it's a colossal proportion of, I think it's just about a quarter. It's about a quarter of, or about one-fifth of the, of what could have been the total number of births or the number of abortions.

It's, it's horrendous. What's going on? And, you know, sometimes these, you know, mistakes happen and so on. But, but we know by and large it's an evident reflection of the society we're living in where there's, there's no regard for, for morality and for, for human life in that, in that little child that has been conceived.

[21:20] So the choice is yours. There's two choices. As we say, there's two things that, you know, at times they might look very plausible. The new age gospel, the new age religion, you know, there's many that would propagate this.

It's very intrinsic in our world today. The movie stars, the, the, the media promote this kind of view that anything goes.

There's no absolutes. There's no right and wrong anymore. Contrast that with the word of God. It says, something's a clear cut. Thou shalt and thou shalt not.

It says, repent of your sin. Receive forgiveness. There is a saviour. There is a hope. There's a wonderful blessing that can come as we follow Christ.

Or will we just go in those muddy waters of the new age movement, of humanistic thinking. And as churches, we can fall foul of this too.

[22:19] For example, it can affect churches. And for example, the music. Does it bring glory to God or the performer? In education, are we using materials that are based on the word of God to train the young people in the Sunday school?

Teaching biblical concepts and things that are going to help them to build their lives upon? Or is it just airy fairy stories that have no content, no substance?

What about our worship? Is it all centered on making us feel good? Or is it centered on God and glorifying Him with words of praise, words that are scriptural, words that are based on the word of God?

There's many things we could say. What about our youth program? As we say, are we teaching the Bible, grounding these young people in how to live in the Bible study program?

Is it Bible? Is it biblical? Or is it just some kind of off-the-shelf new fad idea or kind of the latest wave of fads that are sweeping through the church?

[23:28] Discipline in the church too. Is it properly administered? It's a delicate area, but sometimes there's need for me as the shepherd and for the fellowship to take a stand.

Our parents sin. People need challenging. We're not here to condone sin. We're here to help the sinner get right with God.

We're here to restore the fallen, to restore them to Christ, to challenge where people are going astray. And I'm there challenging too, and I appreciate it when people are frank with me.

I think it's a healthy thing that we can challenge in scriptural ways and point people to the word of God. We all need that, myself included.

It's not to say it's others other than me. We all need to honour the Lord and to be challenged, to be convicted, to be corrected. And sometimes we can, even in the church world, we can dishonour our Lord.

[24:27] There's a flippancy in many church circles. You know, there's folk that we know, they just flippantly refer to Jesus. Jesus, Jesus.

You know. But it's the Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus. The Lord Jesus Christ. Our wonderful Saviour and Redeemer from sin and hell. The one who's come as man, as God, pure and holy in flesh for us to die in our place for us.

The Lord Jesus, glorious and holy. The Holy One. Our Saviour and Master. He's not on our level. He's not just Don or Dennis or Jesus or Ralph.

He is the Lord Jesus. He is high and above us. He is great and glorious and should be esteemed and made in that holy place that he is deserving.

So friends, beware of the messages that you're being told of the public school system that's ingraining it in our kids as they grow up. In the media that abounds and pumps the pollution into the home through the TV channels.

[25:35] All of sin, really and truly all of sin is tied to satisfying yourself. It's the devil's religion. It's the God of this world.

Name him as the God of humanism. As the God of the New Age religion. That's who he is. That's the one who's guiding all of this counterfeit movement that's astray from God's word.

And let's in contrast choose the real gospel. The real message. The real Saviour. The one and only one. And as we think about why did he come?

Why did he come and why did he bear that cross? Why did he carry our sin, yours and mine, in his own body, on the tree?

Because of his great love. Because he is not willing that any should perish. But that all should come to repentance. That is his will. That is his desire for man, for mankind.

[26:33] And friends, we'll look around as we come to the Lord's table. Think about where do you stand this morning? 1 Corinthians chapter 10 talks about the table of the Lord and it also tells us of the table of devils.

There's two tables in 1 Corinthians 10, verse 21. You can't have it both ways. You can't have it both ways. No matter how hard you kind of try to justify it, you can't eat from the devil's table and eat from the Lord's table.

You've got to make a choice where you're at and where you stand. It's a heaven or hell decision. And I trust, I pray that people here this morning consider where you're at today.

I want it to be something we don't take lightly or flippantly. It's vital that we must not. As it tells us that, woe to us if we eat or drink carelessly and not heeding, not discerning the Lord's body that who the Lord is and what he is about.

And this time of communion is an earnest time of personal time as we prayerfully consider our Lord Jesus and what he has done for us. And it tells us 1 Corinthians 10, verse 21, you cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of devils.

[27:59] You cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and of the table of devils. Are you going to serve the devil, the God of this world, the prince of this world, the one who is the God of the new age, of the new age religion, of the humanism of our world, who says man is the centre of his own universe and if it feels good, do it.

Please yourself. There's no consequences to sin. If you want to eat at his table, just go right ahead. But don't come here thinking you can partake of the Lord's table and your destiny will be hellfire for eternity.

Friends, we don't want anyone to go there. The Bible says God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. You can make a decision right here and now to stop eating off the devil's table and sin and choose instead to give your life to Christ, to give your heart to him and to eat from the Lord's table, to say, I'm going to drink of the cup of the Lord.

I'm going to remember that Christ died for my sin. I'm going to receive, not trying to make anything off the symbols themselves, but this is a very serious, the symbol represents the reality and it represents the spiritual thing today.

As we receive those physical things, we could consider, have we received the spiritual, the real? Do you know Christ as Savior and Master, as Lord?

[29:30] I urge you, I pray, I'm stressing this because it's essential that every one of us consider where we're standing and the Bible says to consider, let a man examine himself and so let him eat and drink.

Examine yourselves whether you've been in the faith. You know, there's folk, I don't know who's a Christian and who's not. Some could pull a wool over my eyes and some, some might be Christians that I'm not even sure about.

But God knows them that are His today and if you're His, please join and please take part. If you're not His, today, this very moment, this very instant can be the time you say, I'm going to make today the day.

I'm going to make this moment the moment that I trust Him. You know, the farm day that we went on, there was a Bible verse and it said, Behold, now is the day of salvation.

Today is the accepted time. Now is the day of salvation and we can make it in this moment, in the now, in that instant of trusting, of following Him, of receiving Him.

[30:41] of ending Him.