

Deceivers Among Us

1-7

Paul Tackett

Deceivers Among Us: Exposing False Lights with the True Light of Scripture

Introduction

“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.”

—2 Corinthians 11:13–14 (KJV)

Welcome to **VerseQuest’s boldest series yet**—a 7-part exposé that tears back the veil on spiritual deception infiltrating the modern church.

We live in a generation where:

- Wolves are celebrated as shepherds 🐺
- Jezebel prophecies from pulpits 👑
- Firstfruits are monetized as superstition 🎰
- And Christians are told not to question anything “anointed” 🙄

But the Bible doesn’t suggest silence—it commands discernment.

This series is a trumpet blast to the remnant, a clarion call to test spirits, unmask wolves, and return to the **simplicity and purity of the gospel**.

What This Series Will Cover:

1. **False Christs and Prophets in the Last Days**
2. **New Age Spirituality vs. Biblical Truth**
3. **The Serpent’s Strategy – Deception from Eden to the End**
4. **Wolves in Pulpits – Celebrity Pastors & Doctrinal Drift**
5. **Buying God’s Favor – Firstfruits, Tithes & False Promises**
6. **The Spirit of Jezebel – What Revelation 2 Warned the Church About**

7. How to Biblically Test Spirits – The Discernment Every Believer Needs

Why It Matters:

Because deception is no longer knocking on the church door—it’s **preaching from her stage**.

Because the warnings of Revelation 2–3 weren’t for pagans—they were for **churches that tolerated false teachers**.

Because Jesus is not coming back for a bride **entertained, deceived, or asleep**—but one **washed in truth** and **clothed in righteousness**.

This is not for the faint of heart.

This is not seeker-sensitive.

This is **VerseQuest: where we confront deception with the sword of the Spirit**.

Stay tuned. Stay alert.

Because the light you follow better be the Light of Christ—or it’s a false fire.

“Beloved, believe not every spirit...” (1 John 4:1)

1 of 7: Deceivers Among Us – Spiritual Deception & Bible Truth

“Take heed that no man deceive you.”

—Jesus Christ, Matthew 24:4 (KJV)

We are living in a time foretold by the prophets, emphasized by Christ, and warned of throughout the Scriptures—a time when deception wouldn’t come in obvious evil, but cloaked in light. These are not the days of blatant heresy alone, but of **subtle spiritual seduction**, where wolves dress in sheep’s clothing, false prophets wear designer suits, and the truth is diluted in the name of unity, positivity, and “love.”

This first essay lays the groundwork for a vital series: *“Deceivers Among Us: Exposing False Lights with the True Light of Scripture.”* It addresses the **urgent need to discern truth from deception**, not just in the world, but in pulpits, podcasts, political arenas, and social media platforms that parade as ministries of light.

The Rise of Deception in the Last Days

Jesus didn't say, "Beware of atheists." He said:

"Many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many."

—Matthew 24:11

The apostle Paul echoed this:

"But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived."

—2 Timothy 3:13

Deception isn't new, but **its acceleration is prophetic**. The closer we get to Christ's return, the thicker the fog of spiritual confusion becomes. What used to be fringe has gone mainstream. The messages once whispered behind closed doors are now shouted from megachurches and streamed to millions. **The deceivers haven't left the church—they've taken over its stage.**

What Makes Deception So Dangerous?

Satan doesn't always roar. Sometimes, he whispers.

"And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."

—2 Corinthians 11:14

That's what makes deception so deadly—it **looks like truth, feels like love, and sounds like revelation**. But it's poison in a polished glass.

The serpent's first strategy wasn't violence—it was a question:

"Yea, hath God said...?" (Genesis 3:1)

Deception is subtle. It redefines terms. It spiritualizes sin. It trades repentance for relevance. It doesn't always deny Christ—it simply **rebrands Him**.

The Root: Rejection of the Word

Every form of spiritual deception begins with one fatal error: **departing from the final authority of God's Word**.

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

—Isaiah 8:20

The Bible is the standard. Not dreams. Not feelings. Not charisma. Not tradition. **When we leave the Bible, we enter Babylon.**

Today, many ministries are guided more by algorithms than anointing. They preach messages that “feel good,” but are empty of **biblical meat**. As Paul warned:

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine...” (2 Timothy 4:3)

That time isn’t coming—it’s here.

Deception Wears a Cross

False teachers aren’t usually outside the church. They’re in it. Paul warned the elders of Ephesus:

“Of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.”

—Acts 20:30

They speak in Jesus’ name. They quote verses. They even claim to operate in the gifts. But their fruit is off.

Today, we see:

- **Celebrity pastors** using the pulpit as a platform to sell books, get likes, and push agendas.
- **New Age terminology** (vibrations, alignment, manifestation) dressed up in church clothes.
- **Christian influencers** quoting the Bible one day and promoting crystals or yoga the next.

They sound spiritual. They look clean. But they’re leading sheep straight to the slaughterhouse.

Biblical Hallmarks of Deception

Jesus said **you’ll know them by their fruits** (Matthew 7:15–20). Let’s break down what to watch for.

1. They Preach a Different Gospel

“If any man preach any other gospel... let him be accursed.” (Galatians 1:8)

The true Gospel is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins.

The false gospel is “God wants you to be rich, happy, and fulfilled—just sow a seed!”

2. They Use Smooth Words and Flatter

“By good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.” (Romans 16:18)

They avoid hard truths. They never preach about sin, hell, or repentance. They tickle ears and tell you what you want to hear.

3. They Merchandise the Gospel

“Through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you.” (2 Peter 2:3)

They monetize their “anointing.” They sell access, charge for deliverance, and promise blessings in exchange for “first fruits.”

4. They Love Status More Than Surrender

“They love the praise of men more than the praise of God.” (John 12:43)

You’ll find them rubbing shoulders with celebrities and politicians, but rarely kneeling in humility before God.

The Real Problem: Christians Tolerating It

Just as Jesus rebuked the church of Thyatira, He’s rebuking much of the modern church:

“Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel...” (Revelation 2:20)

We’re tolerating Jezebel.

Not because we believe her lies—but because she’s famous. She prays in Jesus’ name. She says some good things.

And slowly, that tolerance becomes endorsement.

Many believers remain silent because they don’t want to “cause division.” But biblical truth **will divide**—between light and dark, truth and error.

Silence in the face of deception is not compassion—it’s compromise.

The True Light Still Shines

The good news? Jesus said:

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.” (John 10:27)

Even in an age of deception, **the true sheep of God are being awakened**. They’re coming out of false churches. They’re testing spirits. They’re returning to the **pure Word of God**.

The Bible is the plumbline. Not experiences. Not trends. Not YouTube prophets.

How to Guard Yourself in These Times

1. Know the Word for Yourself

The best defense against deception is to be **filled with truth**.

You won’t spot counterfeit if you don’t know the original.

2. Test Every Spirit

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God...” (1 John 4:1)

Don’t assume someone is from God because they’re popular, emotional, or powerful. Test their message against Scripture.

3. Follow Fruit, Not Flash

Charisma is not character. Power is not purity.

Ask: Do they preach repentance? Do they glorify Christ or self? Do they fear God or love platforms?

4. Stay in Fellowship with Truth-Loving Believers

You need people around you who aren’t afraid to call out error. Isolation is a breeding ground for deception.

A Word of Warning and Hope

Jesus didn’t just warn about deception—He gave us the solution:

“Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” (John 17:17)

The Word is our sword, our filter, our compass. It cuts through emotional manipulation, glittering lies, and doctrinal drift.

We're in a war. But it's not new. The serpent still whispers, false prophets still rise, and Babylon still beckons.

But **Christ still reigns.**

His Word still stands.

And His people still shine.

Conclusion: Don't Be Deceived—Be Determined

As we move forward in this series, we'll expose false lights, one by one. We'll examine:

- The rise of false Christs and prophets.
- The infiltration of New Age mysticism into Christian language.
- The celebrity pastor culture replacing shepherds with salesmen.
- The blending of yoga, chakras, and Eastern mysticism into church practice.
- The "One World Religion" being built under the disguise of peace and unity.
- And how to **test every spirit** in a time when spiritual confusion is celebrated.

This isn't about hate. It's about **holiness**. It's not about judging hearts—it's about judging doctrine (John 7:24). The same Jesus who said "love your neighbor" also said "beware of false prophets."

In the end, **truth doesn't need to trend. It just needs to be told.**

And the time is now.

2 of 7: False Christs and Prophets in the Last Days

Series Title: "Deceivers Among Us: Exposing False Lights with the True Light of Scripture"

"For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many."

—Matthew 24:5 (KJV)

We are living in an age of unprecedented spiritual confusion. Turn on your television, scroll through social media, or walk into many churches today, and you'll see what Jesus predicted 2,000 years ago: **a rise in false Christs and false prophets**, deceiving many with signs, charisma, and promises of peace and power.

But deception doesn't always look like rebellion. Sometimes, it looks like revival. And the greatest deceptions always come cloaked in the language of truth.

This essay pulls back the curtain on what Jesus, Paul, Peter, and John warned about: **false messiahs and counterfeit prophets**, not just in the world, but within the ranks of professing Christianity. This isn't fringe anymore—it's mainstream. And many are being swept away, all while believing they're following Jesus.

I. Jesus' First Warning: "Take Heed"

In Matthew 24, when the disciples asked Jesus about the signs of the end, He didn't first mention wars or earthquakes.

He said:

"Take heed that no man deceive you." (Matthew 24:4)

Spiritual deception was His **top concern**—and it should be ours.

Why? Because deception **feels like truth**. It wears religious garments, quotes Scripture, and even uses the name of Jesus. It doesn't push people away from faith; it pulls them into a **false version of it**.

II. The Rise of False Christs: It's Already Here

"For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many."

—Matthew 24:5

Jesus wasn't only warning about lunatics claiming to be the literal Messiah (though we've seen plenty of those). He was warning about anyone who comes in His name but **redefines who He is**—or presents themselves as a substitute savior.

1. Literal False Christs

- **Jose Luis de Jesús Miranda** (Florida-based cult leader) claimed to be "the Man Christ Jesus." He even tattooed 666 on his followers.
- **Sun Myung Moon**, founder of the Unification Church, claimed to be the new Messiah come to finish Jesus' "unfinished work."
- **Sergei Torop** in Russia—once a traffic cop—claims he is "Jesus returned," with thousands of followers.

These are extreme, yet frighteningly successful examples. Millions have been deceived.

2. Functional False Christs

Not all false Christs call themselves Jesus. Some position themselves **as saviors**—offering salvation, identity, healing, or purpose apart from the true gospel.

- The **celebrity pastor** who says, “If you just believe in yourself, God will bless you.”
- The **spiritual guru** who says Jesus was just one path among many.
- The **prosperity preacher** who reduces Jesus to a lottery ticket.
- The **political messiah** hailed as “God’s chosen one” who can “save the nation.”

They might not say, “I am Christ”—but they **act in His place**. And millions follow.

III. The Flood of False Prophets

“And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.”

—Matthew 24:11

Jesus said **many** would rise. And that’s exactly what we’re seeing:

- YouTube prophets giving daily “words” that contradict Scripture.
- Mega-church leaders “prophesying” wealth, success, or national victory based on feelings or politics.
- Influencers who claim to hear from God, yet twist His Word to fit their brand.

False prophets don’t just exist in cults—they now dominate Christian media. And they’re usually:

- **Unaccountable** (no biblical oversight).
- **Uncorrectable** (any rebuke is “persecution”).
- **Unbiblical** (more visions than verses).

They predict elections, economic booms, and personal breakthroughs—but rarely call for repentance, brokenness, or holiness. Their god is not the **Holy One of Israel**, but the **god of success**.

IV. What Do These False Teachers Preach?

1. A Redefined Christ

“He that cometh preacheth another Jesus...” (2 Corinthians 11:4)

False prophets don’t need to deny Jesus—they just **reshape Him**:

- From **Lord and Savior** to **life coach and motivator**.
- From **suffering servant** to **spiritual ATM**.
- From **King of Kings** to **political mascot**.

This “other Jesus” has no cross, no blood, no repentance. He exists to serve *you*, not save *you*.

2. A Gospel Without Repentance

“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.” (2 Timothy 3:5)

The real gospel calls sinners to die to self and be born again.

The false gospel tells people to embrace their “authentic self” and “live their truth.”

The biblical Jesus says:

“Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me.”

The false version says:

“God wants you to feel good, be rich, and live your dream.”

V. What Is Their Fruit?

Jesus gave us the test:

“Ye shall know them by their fruits.” (Matthew 7:16)

What kind of fruit do false prophets produce?

- **Pride**, not humility.
- **Confusion**, not clarity.
- **Dependence on man**, not God.
- **Loyalty to brand**, not truth.

Many of these so-called prophets surround themselves with yes-men, silence critics, and **sell “access” to God** through sowing “seeds.” They peddle the gospel like merch and use manipulation instead of Scripture.

They build **empires**, not disciples.

VI. The Role of Signs and Wonders

“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders...”

—Matthew 24:24

Miracles alone are **not** proof of truth.

Satan can perform signs. Emotional experiences can be counterfeited. The real test is doctrine—not demonstration.

Many are deceived because something felt spiritual or powerful. But power isn’t purity.

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

—Isaiah 8:20

God’s Word is the filter. Not feelings. Not manifestations.

VII. Apostasy Within the Church

Paul prophesied it clearly:

“That day shall not come, except there come a falling away first...”

—2 Thessalonians 2:3

The end times will be marked by a great apostasy—a departure from the faith.

We’re watching it now.

- Churches removing crosses to avoid offending.
- Pastors refusing to say homosexuality is sin.
- Ministries affirming other religions in the name of “unity.”
- Christian celebrities leading deconstruction movements.

The spirit of antichrist isn't just coming—it's already among us.

"Even now are there many antichrists..." (1 John 2:18)

VIII. Modern Examples and Movements

While we must be careful not to judge prematurely, there are clear examples of deception:

- **"Prophets" who guaranteed Trump's 2020 win**—now rebranding and moving on.
- **Ministries charging thousands for deliverance sessions** or "prophetic consultations."
- **Christian influencers promoting New Age practices** (manifestation, chakras, sage, etc.) as part of their "faith journey."
- **Mega-churches** with no mention of sin, hell, repentance, or the cross for years.

They may have big followings. But wide is the gate that leads to destruction.

IX. How to Respond Biblically

We don't respond with fear. We respond with **truth**.

1. Be Watchful

Jesus said:

"What I say unto you I say unto all, Watch." (Mark 13:37)

Discernment isn't optional—it's survival.

2. Stay Rooted in Scripture

You can't spot counterfeit unless you know the original.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." (Psalm 119:105)

Daily Bible reading isn't legalism—it's protection.

3. Judge Righteously

"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." (John 7:24)

We're called to test doctrine, examine fruit, and reject lies.

4. Call it Out

Paul publicly named false teachers (e.g., Hymenaeus and Alexander).
Silence in the face of deception is complicity.

“Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”
(Ephesians 5:11)

X. A Remnant Will Stand

In Elijah’s day, Jezebel’s prophets ruled the land—but God had reserved **7,000 who had not bowed the knee.**

Today, a remnant is rising again—**those who refuse to be deceived**, who refuse to compromise, who cling to the Word and wait for the true Christ, not a counterfeit.

Conclusion: Hold Fast to the True Light

Jesus Christ is not a brand, not a politician, not a motivational speaker.
He is the Son of God, the Lamb slain, the returning King.

He warned us:

“If any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.” (Matthew 24:23)

Because when He returns, **every eye shall see Him** (Revelation 1:7). There will be no livestream, no tour, no hype campaign. Just glory, power, and judgment.

Until that day, hold the line. Expose the darkness. Cling to the Word. And remember:

“Let no man deceive you by any means...” (2 Thessalonians 2:3)

The deceivers are here. But so is the truth.

3 of 7: The Serpent’s Strategy – Deception from the Garden to the End

“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made...”

—Genesis 3:1 (KJV)

From the very beginning of human history, deception has been Satan’s primary weapon. He didn’t first come with a sword, but with a question. He didn’t wage war by force, but with suggestion. The fall of mankind didn’t begin with violence—it began with words.

This essay explores the **thread of deception** that begins in Genesis and weaves all the way through Revelation. It reveals the **ancient strategy** of the serpent—how he deceives individuals, families, nations, and even churches—and exposes how that same strategy is now flooding our world with spiritual darkness masked as light.

I. The First Lie: “Hath God Said?”

The first recorded words of Satan in Scripture were not a command, but a question:

“Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” (Genesis 3:1)

Satan didn’t initially deny God’s Word. He simply cast **doubt** on it. That is always his starting point: create confusion, then present a counterfeit.

Let’s examine his steps:

1. Questioning God’s Word

The enemy didn’t attack Eve outright. He began by subtly suggesting God’s Word wasn’t clear—or perhaps wasn’t fair.

“Did God really say...?”

Today, the same tactic is used:

- “Does the Bible really condemn that lifestyle?”
- “Isn’t that verse just cultural?”
- “How do we even know what God meant?”

The modern church is flooded with this same spirit of **questioning**, and it always leads to compromise.

2. Rewriting God’s Character

“Ye shall not surely die...” (Genesis 3:4)

This was a direct contradiction of God’s warning. Satan accused God of lying. But again, it was cloaked in *suggestion*, not hostility.

He reframed God's command as restriction rather than protection. He painted God as withholding, not loving.

Sound familiar?

Today, people say:

- "A loving God wouldn't send people to hell."
- "If God wants me happy, He wouldn't deny me this."
- "My truth is just as valid as Scripture."

The result? A generation that doesn't fear God, because they no longer know Him as He is—but only as they imagine Him to be.

3. Offering God-Likeness Without Obedience

"Ye shall be as gods..." (Genesis 3:5)

Here's the hook: You can be enlightened, empowered, awakened—**without submission**. The same promise the serpent made in Eden is now the core of modern spiritual deception.

False prophets today preach:

- "You are divine."
- "You can manifest your destiny."
- "You don't need religion, you just need to awaken your inner god."

This is not new. This is Eden—repackaged.

II. The Pattern Repeats: Cain, Babel, and Beyond

The serpent's strategy didn't end with Adam and Eve. Let's trace the next steps in Genesis.

1. Cain – False Worship

Cain brought an offering of his own works, not a blood sacrifice. It was religion without repentance. God rejected it.

"Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain..." (Jude 1:11)

Today, the world is full of Cain-style religion:

- Emotional experiences without the blood.

- Churches filled with music but void of the cross.
- “Christian” influencers who quote Scripture but never preach sin, judgment, or hell.

2. Tower of Babel – Unity Without God

“Let us build us a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven...” (Genesis 11:4)

Babel represents **man’s attempt to reach heaven without God**. It was a one-world religion, one-world language, one-world government... and one giant act of rebellion.

We see the same spirit rising today:

- Interfaith movements seeking “common ground.”
- Global religious summits declaring all paths lead to God.
- A push for peace through **compromise**, not truth.

This is not unity—it’s rebellion in disguise.

III. Satan’s Strategy Through the Ages

The Bible shows Satan employing the same tactics over and over again:

1. In the Time of the Prophets

“The prophets prophesy falsely... and my people love to have it so.” (Jeremiah 5:31)

False prophets rose up during Israel’s history promising peace, prosperity, and blessing—while the true prophets cried for repentance. The people chose lies over truth.

Nothing has changed.

Today’s false prophets promise:

- “Your best life now.”
- “Breakthroughs without brokenness.”
- “Favor without faithfulness.”

2. In the Temptation of Jesus

Satan used Scripture to tempt Christ—but **out of context**.

“If thou be the Son of God...” (Luke 4:3)

He questioned identity. He offered power. He twisted the Word.

But Jesus replied with, *“It is written...”*

The Word of God is always the sword to cut through the serpent’s lies.

IV. The Last Days: The Serpent’s Final Assault

“And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan...”

—Revelation 12:9

The serpent who deceived Eve will unleash one final flood of deception before Christ returns. Revelation reveals this satanic climax.

1. The Rise of Antichrist

“Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders...” (2 Thessalonians 2:9)

The Antichrist won’t come looking evil. He will appear **spiritual, peaceful, and powerful**. He will unite religion and politics, seduce the nations, and demand worship.

He is the serpent’s final counterfeit Christ.

2. The False Prophet

Revelation 13 describes a second beast—a **religious leader**—who performs miracles to glorify the Antichrist.

“He doeth great wonders... and deceiveth them that dwell on the earth...” (Revelation 13:13–14)

This is spiritual deception at a global scale. False fire. False revival. A demonic Pentecost.

And it’s already being prepared through false unity, global “peace” agendas, and compromised churches.

3. Mystery Babylon

“Babylon the great... with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication...” (Revelation 17:1–5)

This is not just a political system—it’s a **false religious empire**. A blend of paganism, world religion, and corrupted Christianity.

And at her heart? The same serpent who said, *“Ye shall be as gods.”*

V. The Strategy Today: Confusion, Compromise, Counterfeit

Satan doesn't need to destroy the church—just dilute it.

He sows confusion:

- “Don't be so literal.”
- “Truth is subjective.”
- “Everyone's on their own journey.”

He promotes compromise:

- “We all worship the same God.”
- “Let's focus on love, not doctrine.”
- “Unity matters more than truth.”

He offers counterfeits:

- Experiences instead of transformation.
- Hype instead of holiness.
- False fire instead of the Holy Ghost.

VI. The Role of the True Church in This Hour

We're not called to blend in—we're called to **stand out**. As the serpent rises, so must the **standard of truth**.

“When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.” (Isaiah 59:19)

The standard is **the Word of God**, upheld by **a remnant of believers** who will not bow to Babylon, tolerate Jezebel, or trade Jesus for comfort.

We must:

1. Preach the True Gospel

Christ crucified. Sin condemned. Repentance demanded.

This is not hate—it is **hope through truth**.

2. Expose the Works of Darkness

“Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”
(Ephesians 5:11)

Silence is not love. Tolerance is not virtue.

We are called to **name the lies**—and proclaim the truth.

3. Equip the Saints to Discern

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro... by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness...” (Ephesians 4:14)

Churches must stop entertaining and start **equipping**.

Discernment is not a gift for the few—it’s a mandate for all.

VII. The Final Victory Over the Serpent

The serpent may deceive the world—but he will not win.

“And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire...” (Revelation 20:10)

Jesus crushed the serpent’s head at Calvary—and He will destroy him forever at His return.

“The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.” (Romans 16:20)

Until that day, we are not powerless. We have:

- The **Word** as our sword.
- The **Spirit** as our guide.
- The **Cross** as our victory.
- The **truth** as our weapon.

Conclusion: Be Wise as Serpents, Harmless as Doves

The serpent is subtil—but God’s Word is sharp.

The deception is thick—but the **light still shines**.

And while many are falling for the lies of Eden, Babel, and Babylon—God is raising up a remnant who will stand firm, speak boldly, and refuse to bow.

“And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony...”
(Revelation 12:11)

Let that be us.

4 of 7: Wolves in Pulpits – Celebrity Pastors & Doctrinal Drift

“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”

—Matthew 7:15 (KJV)

It's one of the most sobering realities in the modern church: the pulpits have become platforms. The shepherds have become celebrities. The preachers have become performers. And the doctrine has become diluted.

While pastors used to be known for their commitment to sound doctrine and sacrificial service, today many are known for stylish wardrobes, massive followings, and curated public images. The local church has given way to spiritual empires, and the cross has been replaced by branding, charisma, and influence.

This is not revival. This is regression. This is not reformation. This is deception.

In this essay, we expose one of the greatest threats to biblical Christianity today—**the rise of celebrity pastors**, their departure from sound doctrine, and how this phenomenon is **spiritually identical to the wolves Jesus warned us about**.

I. From Shepherds to Showmen: How the Role of Pastor Has Shifted

The biblical office of pastor is rooted in humility, oversight, sacrifice, and truth:

“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock... to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”

—Acts 20:28

Pastors are called to **feed**, not entertain. To **watch**, not trend. To **guard**, not gain.

But now, we're seeing a massive shift in how pastors are selected, perceived, and followed:

1. Popularity Over Piety

Churches now look for leaders who can draw a crowd, not divide truth from error. If he can speak well, dress modern, and connect emotionally, he's a "great leader"—even if he can't rightly divide the Word of God.

2. Performance Over Preaching

Many modern pastors have traded exposition for entertainment. Sermons are crafted for applause, not repentance. There's more about branding and optics than brokenness and obedience.

3. Influence Over Integrity

Social media clout often matters more than doctrinal fidelity. Pastors are now "influencers," gaining mass followings but losing spiritual depth.

This shift is not harmless—it's heretical. And Jesus saw it coming.

II. Jesus' Warning: Wolves Dressed Like Shepherds

"They come to you in sheep's clothing..." (Matthew 7:15)

Wolves don't announce themselves. They blend in. They use the right phrases. They smile. They seem loving. But their fruit is rot.

How do wolves operate in the pulpit?

- They **preach partial truth** to avoid offense.
- They **abuse grace** to avoid preaching repentance.
- They **draw attention to themselves**, not Christ.
- They **feed on the flock** instead of feeding it.

Paul saw this danger:

"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

—Acts 20:30

False shepherds don't build God's kingdom. They build their **own following**—one sermon clip, bestselling book, or Instagram reel at a time.

III. The Fruit of Celebrity Culture in the Church

The fruit of a tree reveals its nature (Matthew 7:17–20). And the fruit of the celebrity church is telling.

1. Doctrinal Confusion

Celebrity pastors rarely preach clear, hard truths. Instead, they:

- Redefine sin.
- Avoid topics like hell, wrath, judgment, or repentance.
- Preach "self-help" wrapped in religious language.

The result? A church with **no foundation**, tossed by every wind of doctrine (Ephesians 4:14).

2. Moral Scandals

From adultery and abuse to financial fraud and narcissism, many of these celebrity leaders eventually fall—and take thousands with them.

Why? Because when the platform becomes higher than the cross, **pride follows**—and pride precedes a fall (Proverbs 16:18).

3. Spiritual Dependence on Man

Followers begin to worship the personality more than Christ. Their faith is built on the preacher's brand—not the Word of God. And when he falls, their faith often falls with him.

Paul rebuked this:

“Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers... I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.”

—1 Corinthians 3:5–6

But today, many Christians **know their pastor better than they know their Bible.**

IV. Modern-Day Examples: Wolves in Designer Suits

While we speak generally, the patterns are undeniable.

1. Those Who Deny Core Doctrines

Pastors who publicly deny:

- Hell exists.

- That Jesus is the only way to salvation.
- The need for repentance and holiness.

They often cloak it in soft speech:

“I just focus on God’s love.”

“Let’s not judge.”

“We don’t want to offend seekers.”

But love without truth is **cruelty**.

2. Those Who Preach Prosperity and Self-Worship

Some celebrity pastors reduce God to a **cosmic vending machine**. Give a seed, get a harvest. Speak it, claim it, own it.

They promote vision boards, manifesting, and wealth-attraction—**witchcraft in Christian wrapping**.

“Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds... supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.”

—1 Timothy 6:5

3. Those Who Fall, Then Rebrand

Many of these leaders commit grievous sin—adultery, abuse, embezzlement—yet quickly return with a book or new platform. There is no weeping, no repentance, no fruit of restoration.

They treat the ministry like a business, not a calling.

V. The Psychology of Celebrity Christianity

How did we get here?

1. People Crave Charisma

We are drawn to personalities. Israel asked for Saul—a king like the nations. He was tall, strong, and likable—but lacked the heart for God.

Many today follow preachers who are *charismatic but not called*.

2. People Want Entertainment

Modern congregations often prefer short, exciting sermons with lights, fog, and a coffee bar. The culture has shaped the church instead of the church transforming the culture.

3. People Don't Know the Word

Because many believers aren't grounded in Scripture, they can't discern between a good speaker and a good shepherd.

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge..."

—Hosea 4:6

VI. Biblical Models vs. Modern Imitations

Let's compare the true biblical model of leadership with what we see in celebrity Christianity.

Biblical Shepherd	Celebrity Pastor
Serves in humility (1 Pet 5:2)	Seeks fame and influence
Preaches sound doctrine (2 Tim 4:2)	Preaches soft motivational messages
Points to Christ	Points to self, brand, and platform
Lives above reproach	Covers sin and avoids accountability
Is accountable to elders	Surrounded by yes-men and handlers
Equips saints for ministry	Builds fans and consumers

VII. The Cost of Tolerating Wolves

The church has lost its fear of God because it has tolerated wolves in the name of "not judging."

But Jesus didn't tolerate wolves. Paul didn't tolerate wolves.

They called them out publicly (see Galatians, 2 Timothy, 2 Peter, Jude).

To tolerate false shepherds is to abandon the flock to devourers.

"His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant... they are greedy dogs which can never have enough."

—Isaiah 56:10–11

If we don't draw a line, we'll lose the church's voice entirely.

VIII. What Can Be Done? A Call to Repentance and Reform

1. Return to Biblical Preaching

The pulpit must be restored to its original function—to declare *“Thus saith the Lord.”* Not stories. Not TED talks. Not “vision casting.” But the **pure Word of God.**

“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season...”

—2 Timothy 4:2

2. Reestablish Biblical Accountability

No pastor should be above rebuke. There must be elders, discipline, and **humble submission** to the Word.

“Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear.”

—1 Timothy 5:20

3. Encourage Discernment in the Pew

Christians must **stop blindly following personalities.** We must be Bereans—searching the Scriptures daily to test what we hear (Acts 17:11).

4. Pray for a Pure Church

Not a bigger church. Not a trendy church. A **pure bride** for Christ.

“That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle...”

—Ephesians 5:27

IX. The Rise of the Remnant

While celebrity pastors dominate headlines, God is raising a **remnant:**

- Unknown shepherds preaching with fire and tears.
- Small churches with big truth.
- Online ministries exposing lies and declaring the gospel.

These men and women are often overlooked by the masses—but not by Heaven.

Conclusion: Wolves Will Rise, But So Will Watchmen

We cannot stop wolves from rising. Jesus said they would.

But we can **expose them, warn others,** and **raise the standard of truth.**

“Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression...”

—Isaiah 58:1

The time for silence is over. The time for entertainment is done.

It’s time to clean the pulpits, remove the wolves, and bring the focus back to the **cross of Christ.**

Let us weep. Let us repent. Let us warn.

And let the true shepherds rise again.

5 of 7: Buying God’s Favor – First Fruits, Tithes, and False Promises

“Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.”

—Acts 8:20 (KJV)

In an era where Christianity is becoming increasingly commercialized, few doctrines have been more twisted than those concerning **giving, tithing, and firstfruits.** What was once an act of worship has been turned into a **spiritual lottery,** where God’s blessings are supposedly up for sale—and the cost? Your next paycheck.

False teachers like Paula White have taken this distortion to unthinkable levels. In 2018, she infamously urged her followers to send her their **entire first paycheck of the year—**under the threat of **“consequences from God”** if they didn’t comply.

Let that sink in: the so-called prophetess demanded a full paycheck in the name of “firstfruits,” not as a freewill offering, but with **fear-based manipulation,** promising supernatural rewards and threatening divine punishment.

This is not biblical Christianity. This is spiritual extortion.

This essay explores the **false teachings around firstfruits, tithing, and prosperity promises,** revealing how wolves have merchandised God’s grace and twisted Scripture into a weapon of greed.

I. What the Bible Actually Teaches About Firstfruits

1. The Old Testament Context

The *firstfruits* offering was part of the Mosaic law and agricultural economy of Israel. Farmers were instructed to bring the **first portion of their harvest** as a sacred offering to the Lord (Exodus 23:19, Leviticus 23:10).

- It was about **thankfulness**, not transaction.
- It was about **honoring God**, not manipulating Him for blessings.
- It was **seasonal and agricultural**, not financial and mandatory.

Firstfruits were never a requirement to hand over your paycheck to a prophet.

2. Christ Fulfilled the Law

Under the New Covenant, Jesus is the **firstfruits of the resurrection** (1 Corinthians 15:20). The ceremonial system has been fulfilled in Him.

Now, believers give **cheerfully, voluntarily, and led by the Spirit** (2 Corinthians 9:6–7). No percentage. No paycheck threats. No "sow this and get that" formulas.

II. How Prosperity Preachers Twist It

False teachers like Paula White have taken this rich biblical concept and weaponized it to **extract money through fear and promises**. Here's how the scam works:

1. They Redefine Firstfruits

They claim:

- "The first paycheck of the year belongs to God."
- "If you don't give it, you're cursed."
- "If you do give it, you unlock a year of blessings."

None of this is in the Bible.

Giving your first paycheck to a preacher is **nowhere** taught in Scripture. It's pure fabrication—a rebranding of Old Testament law for modern manipulation.

2. They Weaponize Malachi 3

"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me... in tithes and offerings." (Malachi 3:8)

This verse is ripped from context and hurled at congregations like a dagger. But it was spoken to **Israel under the law**, not to the church under grace.

The New Testament never commands tithing for Christians. We are told to give:

- **Cheerfully** (2 Cor. 9:7)
- **Not of compulsion**
- **As we purpose in our hearts**

Tithing was a **system of taxation** under the law—**not a New Covenant requirement**.

3. They Tie Giving to Blessings

False teachers create a **spiritual vending machine**:

- You give \$1,000, and God gives you breakthrough.
- You sow \$300, and you'll get a debt cancellation.
- You send your first fruits, and you'll unlock a prophetic blessing.

But God's blessings **aren't for sale**.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money..." (Isaiah 55:1)

God blesses out of grace, not greed.

III. The Psychological and Spiritual Manipulation

What Paula White did in 2018 wasn't just unbiblical—it was **spiritually abusive**.

She claimed:

"Send your first paycheck of the year... or face consequences from God."

This is **religious intimidation**.

1. She Weaponized Fear

God doesn't operate like a mafia boss. Yet Paula presented Him as one:

- Obey her demand, or else.
- Send your money, or face divine punishment.

This is *not* Christianity. This is **Simony**, named after the man who tried to buy the Holy Ghost in Acts 8.

2. She Preyed on the Poor

Most people who give to prosperity ministries are **not wealthy**. They're hoping for a miracle. They're desperate.

These preachers don't fleece the rich—they fleece the **widow with two mites** (Mark 12:42), not to honor her faith but to **rob her blind**.

IV. Biblical Giving: Free, Not Forced

Contrast Paula's teaching with Paul's:

“Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.”

—2 Corinthians 9:7

Paul never demanded a specific amount. He never promised a financial return. He called believers to give:

- From **gratitude**, not guilt.
- By **the Spirit**, not by pressure.
- In **freedom**, not fear.

And he was often reluctant to even receive offerings for himself.

V. The True Cost: A Corrupted Gospel

The firstfruits fraud isn't just about money. It's about **a distorted view of God** and a corrupted gospel.

1. It Reduces God to a Banker

Instead of a holy, loving Father—He becomes a **cosmic investor**, returning dividends based on your faith payments.

2. It Promotes Works-Based Blessing

If your blessing depends on your giving, then **grace is no longer grace**.

“And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace.” (Romans 11:6)

3. It Damages Faith

People give. They don't receive. They feel betrayed by God—but **it was never God who lied. It was the preacher.**

VI. Modern-Day Moneychangers

In John 2, Jesus entered the temple and drove out the moneychangers. Why? Because they had turned God's house into a **marketplace**.

“Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.” (John 2:16)

That's what we see today:

- Preachers charging for “prophetic words.”
- Ministries selling healing packages.
- Leaders demanding offerings in exchange for deliverance or breakthroughs.

Merchandising the anointing is blasphemy.

Peter warned of this:

“Through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you.” (2 Peter 2:3)

It's no coincidence that some of these preachers are worth **millions**—like Paula White, whose reported net worth in 2018 was \$5 million—while they pressure their struggling followers to empty their bank accounts.

VII. What True Biblical Stewardship Looks Like

Let's return to **biblical giving**:

1. It's About the Heart, Not the Amount

Jesus praised the widow's two mites, not because it was much—but because it was honest, sacrificial, and real.

2. It's Meant to Bless Others

New Testament giving was always **outward-focused**:

- Feeding the poor (Acts 11:29).
- Supporting missions (Philippians 4).
- Helping fellow believers (2 Corinthians 8–9).

It was never about sowing into a *personality's platform for personal gain*.

3. It's Done in Secret, Not for Show

“Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.” (Matthew 6:3)

Jesus condemned public displays of giving for attention. Today, some preachers post their “giving testimonies” online to manipulate others into matching them.

VIII. Why So Many Fall for It

You might wonder: *How do people still fall for this?*

Because it feels spiritual. It appeals to:

- The desire for control: “If I give this, God must bless me.”
- The hunger for breakthrough: “This seed will break the curse.”
- The longing for purpose: “My giving will unlock my destiny.”

But the devil always mixes lies with just enough truth to sound convincing.

“Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.” (2 Corinthians 11:14)

These preachers quote Scripture—but **out of context, twisted, and poisoned**.

IX. How the Church Should Respond

We can't remain silent. The church must **call this out**, protect the sheep, and preach the real gospel.

1. Name It for What It Is

This is not just “another denomination.” It is heresy.

It is **Simony**.

It is **Merchandising the gospel**.

It is **Witchcraft cloaked in Scripture**.

2. Teach Sound Doctrine

Churches must go back to **expository teaching**. Verse by verse. Line upon line. No more “30-minute life hacks” masquerading as sermons.

3. Call for Repentance

If Paula White and others will not repent, they will be judged.

“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows’ houses...”

(Matthew 23:14)

But if they do repent, the same Jesus they exploit is **willing to forgive**. But repentance means **public confession and turning away from false doctrine**—not rebranding it under new slogans.

Conclusion: You Cannot Buy What Christ Paid For

The greatest tragedy of all this? It cheapens the cross.

You don’t need to sow a seed to be delivered.

You don’t need to send a paycheck to be healed.

You don’t need to “unlock” anything Jesus already **unlocked at Calvary**.

“It is finished.” (John 19:30)

That wasn’t a discount code—it was a declaration.

The gospel is free.

Salvation is free.

Healing, peace, and forgiveness—**paid in full by Christ’s blood**.

So let the moneychangers be cast out.

Let the wolves be exposed.

And let the Bride return to her first love.

“Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess...”

—Revelation 2:20 (KJV)

There is a name in Scripture that carries a chilling weight—**Jezebel**. Not simply for who she was in the Old Testament, but for the spirit she represents in the New. A manipulative, seductive, power-hungry presence that infiltrates leadership, perverts worship, and silences truth.

In Revelation 2, Jesus rebukes the church of Thyatira, not because they were preaching heresy outright, but because they were **tolerating** a woman who called herself a prophetess—**Jezebel**—and she was **teaching and seducing His servants**.

This isn't just about a woman. It's about a **spirit**. And today, that same spirit is alive and well—sitting in pulpits, commanding stages, and infiltrating both the church and political realms. Whether through figures like Paula White or the broader rise of false female prophets claiming to speak for God, the warnings of Revelation 2 are more urgent now than ever.

This essay unpacks the **spiritual DNA of Jezebel**, how she operates today, and why Jesus takes this deception so seriously. Because when Jezebel teaches the church, destruction follows.

I. Jezebel in the Old Testament: A Case Study in Control and Corruption

Before Revelation 2, we meet Jezebel in 1 Kings—a Sidonian princess who marries Ahab, king of Israel, and brings with her a flood of Baal worship and rebellion.

“There was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness... whom Jezebel his wife stirred up.”

—1 Kings 21:25

1. She Promoted False Worship

Jezebel brought Baal and Ashtoreth into Israel's heart. She wasn't content with private idolatry—**she institutionalized it**.

2. She Silenced True Prophets

She **killed the prophets of the Lord** (1 Kings 18:4) and threatened Elijah into fleeing after his greatest victory (1 Kings 19:2). She used fear to drive God's mouthpieces into hiding.

3. She Used Power to Steal and Murder

In 1 Kings 21, Jezebel arranged for Naboth's death so Ahab could steal his vineyard. She manipulated laws, forged letters, and weaponized authority.

Jezebel wasn't merely evil—she was **strategic, spiritual, seductive, and deadly**.

II. Jezebel in Revelation: The End-Time Warning

Centuries later, Jesus references Jezebel in His letter to the church in Thyatira:

“Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.”

—Revelation 2:20

This is not the same woman—but the **same spirit**.

Let's unpack Jesus' indictment:

1. “She calleth herself a prophetess”

She wasn't appointed by God. She **appointed herself**.

Just like many today who claim to hear from God while promoting false doctrine and personal gain.

2. “To teach and to seduce”

Jezebel doesn't come with open rebellion—she **teaches, influences, and draws people in**. Her deception is sweet on the surface, but poison in the soul.

3. “To commit fornication”

This is both **physical and spiritual**. She leads God's people into compromise—sexually, morally, doctrinally.

4. “To eat things sacrificed unto idols”

She blends the sacred with the profane. She mixes truth with error. She **sanctifies sin with spiritual language**.

III. The Spirit of Jezebel in the Modern Church

Jesus wasn't just talking to Thyatira. He was **warning us**.

The Jezebel spirit is:

- Seductive but spiritual.
- Bold but manipulative.
- Religious but rebellious.

Let's examine how she manifests today.

1. Self-Appointed Prophetesses

Like Jezebel, many today **call themselves prophetesses**—without any biblical testing, accountability, or fruit. They claim divine insight, but twist Scripture and promote self.

Paula White, for instance, calls herself a prophetess and spiritual advisor to national leaders. She teaches “firstfruit” scams, summons “angels from Africa,” and uses her position for political influence—**all while claiming divine endorsement.**

Others on social media use their platforms to give daily "prophetic words" that never align with Scripture but draw thousands of likes and donations.

2. Teaching Seduction Over Sanctification

Jezebel's teachings encourage the church to “lighten up”—to become **spiritually tolerant** and emotionally driven.

Her modern doctrines include:

- “God just wants you to be happy.”
- “We're all gods in some form.”
- “You can live your truth and still be blessed.”

It's not holiness—it's **spiritualized rebellion.**

3. Feminine Power Without Submission

The Jezebel spirit masquerades as empowerment—but **rejects submission to God's order.**

True biblical women like Deborah, Priscilla, and Lydia honored God's Word, never promoted themselves.

Jezebel teaches rebellion disguised as liberation:

- “I don't need covering.”
- “I speak directly for God.”

- “I’m above correction.”

This spirit **hates spiritual authority** unless it can control it.

IV. Jezebel in Politics and Religion: A Dangerous Merger

In Revelation, Jezebel isn’t just in the temple—**she influences kings**.

Just like the original Jezebel pulled the strings behind Ahab, the modern version **enters politics through religion**.

We saw this with Paula White being appointed as a spiritual advisor to the White House—blending biblical language with political agendas. The lines between kingdom and nation blurred. Prayers became speeches. Prophecy became campaign strategy.

The result? **Spiritual fornication**.

“The kings of the earth have committed fornication with her...” (Revelation 17:2)

When church leaders get into bed with political power, Jezebel smiles.

V. Jesus’ Response to Jezebel: Judgment, Not Tolerance

“I gave her space to repent... and she repented not.” (Revelation 2:21)

God is merciful. He offers repentance. But if she refuses?

“Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation...” (v. 22)

There is **no neutrality** when it comes to Jezebel. If you follow her, you share her judgment.

Jesus also says:

“I will kill her children with death...” (v. 23)

This symbolic language refers to her **spiritual offspring**—those who adopt her doctrines and reproduce them in others.

False teaching leads to spiritual death.

The end of Jezebel’s influence is judgment, not revival.

VI. The Call to Overcomers: Hold Fast

Jesus doesn't just rebuke—He calls a remnant to stand:

“But unto you I say... as many as have not this doctrine... hold fast till I come.” (v. 24–25)

Even in Thyatira, there were faithful believers.

Even today, amidst the noise of self-proclaimed prophetesses and compromised pulpits, **God has a remnant.**

He says:

- Don't accept false teaching.
- Don't follow spiritual seduction.
- Don't fear her power—**hold fast to truth.**

VII. How to Recognize the Jezebel Spirit

Here are clear marks of Jezebel in the church today:

Characteristic	Biblical Jezebel	Modern Example
Self-appointed authority	“Calleth herself a prophetess”	Claims divine insight without accountability
Teaches spiritual compromise	Leads into fornication and idolatry	Blends Christian language with New Age ideas
Controls spiritual leaders	Manipulated Ahab	Influences male pastors through charisma or status
Craves power and platform	Sat with kings	Uses media and politics for gain
Hates true prophecy	Persecuted Elijah	Attacks those who preach repentance
Twists Scripture	Promotes Baal as divine	Rebrands sin as empowerment

VIII. A Word to the Church: Stop Tolerating Jezebel

Jesus didn't say the problem was **Jezebel's presence**—He said the church **allowed her to teach.**

“Thou sufferest that woman Jezebel...” (Revelation 2:20)

The problem is **tolerance**.

The modern church says:

- “She’s not that bad.”
- “She’s helped so many people.”
- “Who are we to judge?”

But Jesus judges. And He commands us to **guard the flock**.

Paul told Timothy:

“Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.” (2 Timothy 4:2)

Tolerating false doctrine is spiritual treason. We are not called to accommodate Jezebel—we’re called to **oppose her**.

IX. Hope for Jezebels Who Repent

There is grace—even for Jezebel.

Jesus said:

“I gave her space to repent...”

If any woman—or man—caught up in false prophecy, manipulation, or seduction comes to the Lord with **brokenness and truth**, He will forgive.

But repentance must be:

- Public, not private.
- Total, not partial.
- Immediate, not delayed.

The same Jesus who judged Jezebel is the **Lamb slain**—and He still saves all who come to Him in humility.

X. Conclusion: Rise Up, Church—The Battle Is Not Over

We are in the final hour. Jezebel is speaking. Seducing. Building platforms. Selling her teachings. Partnering with kings. And claiming divine authority.

But the Lamb is still on the throne.

The Word is still the sword.

And the remnant is still rising.

So to the true Church:

- **Refuse to be seduced.**
- **Refuse to be silenced.**
- **Refuse to be ashamed of the truth.**

“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” (Revelation 2:29)

Jezebel may have influence now—but her reign will end.

Christ will return.

Truth will triumph.

And only those who **overcome** will reign with Him.

“To him that overcometh... I will give power over the nations.” (Revelation 2:26)

Hold the line. Stand in the truth. And expose the lies—before it’s too late.

7 of 7: How to Biblically Test Spirits – The Discernment Every Believer Needs

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

—1 John 4:1 (KJV)

In a world where deception has become indistinguishable from devotion, where wolves wear wool and heresy has a halo, the need for biblical discernment is no longer optional—it is **essential for survival**.

The apostle John didn’t say, “Test doctrines,” though that is necessary. He said, *test spirits*. Because behind every teaching, every prophecy, every ministry, and every pulpit—**there is a spirit** at work. And not all spirits are from God.

This final essay is a call to arms. A manual for every believer who refuses to be deceived. A trumpet blast for the remnant rising in these last days. If we are to stand against Jezebel,

false Christs, celebrity pastors, seducing doctrines, and prosperity poison, we must learn to test spirits as Scripture commands.

I. The Command: “Try the Spirits”

1 John 4:1 doesn’t suggest testing—it **commands it**.

“Beloved, believe not every spirit...”

Notice the tenderness in John’s voice: *Beloved*. He isn’t scolding; he’s protecting. He knows the sheep are vulnerable.

1. Not Everyone Speaking in Jesus’ Name Is of Jesus

Just because someone says “God told me...” or quotes Scripture doesn’t mean they are operating in truth.

Jesus warned:

“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord... and then will I profess unto them, I never knew you.”

—Matthew 7:22–23

These people **did miracles** and used the name of Jesus—but were false. That should sober every believer.

2. Testing Is a Mark of Maturity

The more mature you are, the less impressed you are by charisma—and the more concerned you are with **truth**.

“Strong meat belongeth to them... who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

—Hebrews 5:14

Discernment is not suspicion. It is **Spirit-guided separation** of what is from God and what is not.

II. Why We Must Test Spirits in This Generation

“Because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

This is the **motivation** behind the command. The danger isn't outside the church—it's within.

1. False Prophets Are Plentiful

Not a few—*many*. False prophets don't just wear robes—they wear jeans, smile in Instagram posts, and fill arenas.

They:

- Speak on behalf of “God.”
- Predict vague or unverifiable events.
- Give emotional, generic words (“This is your breakthrough season!”).
- Mix Scripture with cultural ideologies.

2. Signs and Wonders Don't Prove Anything

“For there shall arise false Christs... and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.”

—Matthew 24:24

The test of a spirit is not power, popularity, or polish. It is **truth**.

III. What Are Spirits?

Before we can test, we must understand what we're testing.

1. Spirit Behind a Person

Every person is influenced by a **spiritual source**:

- The Holy Spirit.
- The spirit of the world.
- The spirit of antichrist.
- Doctrines of devils.

When someone preaches, prays, sings, or “prophesies,” a spirit is flowing. And we must discern which one.

2. Spirit Behind a Message or Movement

Movements can be spiritual—but **not godly**.

- Emotionalism can feel like “anointing.”
- Entertainment can look like “revival.”
- Ecumenism can sound like “unity.”

But what **spirit** drives it?

IV. How to Test Spirits Biblically

Let’s now explore how Scripture instructs us to test spirits—and the questions we must ask.

1. Do They Confess the True Jesus?

“Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God...”

—1 John 4:2

This isn’t just a verbal confession—it’s a **doctrinal position**.

Ask:

- Do they believe Jesus is fully God and fully man?
- Do they preach the blood, the cross, and the resurrection?
- Do they affirm the exclusivity of Christ as the only way to God?

If their “Jesus” is just a good teacher, a cosmic energy, or one of many paths—they are **antichrist** in spirit (1 John 4:3).

2. Do They Preach the Biblical Gospel?

“If any man preach any other gospel... let him be accursed.”

—Galatians 1:8

Paul didn’t tolerate alternate gospels. Neither should we.

Ask:

- Is salvation by grace through faith in Christ alone?
- Or do they add works, sowing seeds, secret knowledge, or rituals?

If they promote **prosperity, works-righteousness, or universalism**, they are not operating under the Holy Spirit.

3. Do They Submit to the Authority of Scripture?

“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”

—Isaiah 8:20

True spirits agree with the Word. False spirits twist it, avoid it, or claim “new revelation.”

Ask:

- Do they rightly divide the Word (2 Timothy 2:15)?
- Do they preach in context?
- Do they elevate dreams and visions above the Bible?

If they contradict Scripture—they are false.

4. What Is the Fruit of Their Ministry?

“By their fruits ye shall know them.”

—Matthew 7:20

The Holy Spirit produces fruit: love, joy, peace, holiness, humility, truth.

False spirits produce:

- Pride.
- Confusion.
- Emotionalism.
- Greed.
- Sexual immorality.
- Spiritual elitism.

Ask:

- Are people growing in holiness or just hype?
- Is sin being exposed or excused?
- Is the preacher becoming more like Christ—or more like a celebrity?

5. Are They Willing to Be Tested?

True servants of God **invite testing**.

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”

—1 Thessalonians 5:21

False prophets fear questions. They isolate themselves. They call every critic “religious” or “Jezebel.”

Ask:

- Can they explain their teaching with Scripture?
- Do they welcome correction and accountability?
- Do they bear witness with the Spirit of God in you?

V. False Spirits in Disguise

Let’s now expose some of the most **common false spirits** active in the church today:

1. Spirit of Antichrist

Denies Christ’s divinity or exclusivity. Promotes pluralism, “coexist,” and all-roads-lead-to-heaven lies.

2. Spirit of Jezebel

Uses seduction, manipulation, and false prophecy to control and deceive. Targets leadership. Seeks platform and power.

3. Spirit of Mammon

Turns church into business. Teaches sowing for blessings. Monetizes prophecy, deliverance, and the gospel itself.

4. Spirit of Entertainment

Turns worship into concerts. Preaching into TED talks. Removes reverence and replaces it with showmanship.

5. Spirit of Error

Subtly distorts doctrine. Focuses on emotional “rhemas” over the written Word. Claims new revelation that supersedes Scripture.

VI. Tools for Discernment

You don't need a seminary degree to test spirits. You need **the Word and the Holy Spirit**.

1. Know Your Bible

Discernment flows from familiarity with the Scriptures. The more you know the truth, the quicker you spot the lie.

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.”

—Psalm 119:105

2. Be Full of the Holy Ghost

The Spirit teaches all things (John 14:26). When you walk in the Spirit, you'll sense when something is off—even if you can't articulate it at first.

3. Pray for Wisdom

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God...”

—James 1:5

God delights in giving wisdom to those who ask. You don't have to be fooled—**if you ask for light, He'll give it.**

VII. Why Many Don't Test Spirits

Despite clear commands, many in the church today refuse to test spirits. Why?

1. They Fear Offending

Testing sounds “judgmental” in a culture of tolerance.

But Paul judged doctrine (Galatians 1), called out names (2 Timothy 2:17), and rebuked error publicly (Acts 13:10). Love warns.

2. They Lack Knowledge

Without a strong foundation in Scripture, people rely on feelings. And feelings lie.

3. They Idolize Leaders

Some are so enamored with their favorite preacher or prophet that they won't question anything. That's idolatry.

If your allegiance to a person is greater than your allegiance to the Bible—you've already been deceived.

VIII. The Cost of Failing to Test

When we fail to test spirits:

- We tolerate false teaching.
- We allow wolves to devour sheep.
- We quench the true Spirit by welcoming the counterfeit.

Jesus warned:

“If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.”

—Matthew 15:14

And Paul wept over the church:

“After my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you...”

—Acts 20:29

This is not a side issue. It's a matter of life and death.

IX. Final Call: Be a Berean, Not a Bystander

“These were more noble... in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.”

—Acts 17:11

The Bereans didn't blindly accept teaching—even from Paul. They tested it by the Word.

We are called to do the same. In the face of false prophets, prosperity peddlers, political pulpit puppets, and self-proclaimed Jezebels—we must be **rooted, bold, and unmovable**.

X. Conclusion: Hold the Line

You now have the tools. You know the tactics. You've seen the truth.

So what will you do?

- Will you tolerate Jezebel or cast her down?

- Will you follow the crowd or follow the cross?
- Will you test the spirits or fall for the signs?

The choice is yours. But make no mistake: the last days are here. The deception is real. And only those who **cling to the Word** and **walk in the Spirit** will endure.

“Let no man deceive you by any means...”

—2 Thessalonians 2:3

You’ve been warned.

You’ve been equipped.

Now stand.