

# TAKE HEED THAT NO MAN DECEIVE YOU

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MATTHEW 24:4-5 • TV173A

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By

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## Matthew 24:4-5

*“And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.”*

We are turning for our message today to the **Book of Matthew**. I will be speaking from **Matthew 24: and verse 4**, this will serve as our text.

I will be referring to several verses from this passage of Scripture. So, if you will take your Bible and open it with me to **the 24<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Matthew**; here is my subject: **“TAKE HEED THAT NO MAN DECEIVE YOU.”**

Four times in this one chapter, **Matthew 24**, our Lord uses the word “*deceive*.” Now, what does it mean?

Well, the word deceive means to be misled or it means to make a person to believe that which is not true, to use cunningness, craftiness, or something of this sort, subtlety, or to deceive a person, to lead them to believe something is true when it is not true.

Now, let’s check the text in **Matthew 24**: reading, first of all, **verse 4**; this is Christ speaking and He says; “*take heed that no man deceive you.*” In other words, it’s your responsibility to search the Scriptures and see if what you are hearing is true, it is your responsibility.

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The Scripture said about the Bereans *“that they were more noble than the people at Thessalonica in that they searched the scriptures to see if these things be so.”* They heard the apostle Paul; they heard Timothy, and they heard the apostles of Christ. Yet, these Bereans searched the Word of God *“to see if these things were so.”*

My friends, don't follow a man no matter how gifted that man is, no matter how persuasive he may be. Do not follow a man; follow Christ. What our Master is saying here in **verse 4** is: *“You have the responsibility to give diligence and take special heed that no man deceive you.”*

Now, look at **verse 5**: He warns again and says, *“Many shall come in my name saying that I am the Christ and they shall (by these words) deceive many.”*

In **verse 11** he says: *“Many false prophets shall rise and shall deceive many.”* He warned us about false prophets. Not only did our Lord warn us but His disciples continually warned us.

Peter said this: *“As there were false prophets and teachers among Israel (in the days of Moses, Abraham, Elijah, Jeremiah, in the days of all of these men), even so, there shall arise false prophets and false teachers in the church.”*

Look at **verse 24**: The Master warned that these false teachers and false prophets would be so crafty and so subtle; now listen to this, *“and so cunning that if possible, they would deceive the elect (the true people of God).”* That is how crafty they are but *“they are of their father the devil”* who is a master at subtlety and a master at deception.

*“False prophets and false teachers shall rise and they shall deceive many. If it were possible these men working lying wonders and great signs shall deceive many and if it were possible, they would deceive the very elect of God.”*

My friends, I speak from my heart as sincerely as I possibly can speak now. I do not want to be misled and more than that, I don't want to mislead you. I don't want the responsibility upon my shoulders of leading someone away from Christ.

I want to lead men to the Word of God, to the truth of God. I have nothing to gain by misleading you. I certainly do not want to be misled.

So, let's take these warnings seriously. Let me show you an example:

The apostle Paul was a compassionate man; there is no question about that. Paul was a tolerant man. Listen to him; here are several Scriptures:

He said, *“If a brother be overtaken in a fault, (we are not taught to exclude that person or to treat them harshly).”* He said, *“Restore the brethren. If a man be overtaken in a fault, restore such a one in the spirit of humility, considering yourself, lest you also be tempted.”*

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Now, that is compassion and that is tolerance and that's tenderness in the case of a brother who is overtaken in a fault.

Now, here is another Scripture in **Ephesians**: He says, "*Be ye kind one to another, tender hearted, forgiving one another as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*"

Then, another; Paul took Timothy down to preach to the Jews, knowing that they would be offended if Timothy was not circumcised like all the other Jews and like all the sons of Abraham. Paul had Timothy circumcised to get along with these Jews. Now, that is how tolerant he was and that is how compassionate he was.

But, there was an area in which the apostle Paul was unyielding. He was firm and uncompromising. You may say, "What area was that?" It was in denouncing false prophets, in denouncing false teachers, in reference to how God saves sinners, in reference to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul would not tolerate another Gospel.

Now, here was a man who was tolerant, full of pity and compassion. Here was a man who would not tolerate another Gospel. Listen how clearly he puts it, how strongly: He says, "*Though we or an angel from heaven preach unto you any other gospel, let him be accursed.*"

He said, "*If any one comes preaching another gospel, I don't care if it is an angel from heaven; let him be accursed.*"

Now, Paul would not tolerate a false Gospel in this matter of how God saves sinners, how God redeems sinners. On the basic, fundamental truths of the Gospel, Paul would not yield, he would not compromise.

It's not just preaching that saves; it is the preaching of the Gospel of Christ. "*I am not ashamed of the gospel, it is the power of God unto salvation, to everyone that believeth: To the Jew first and also to the gentile.*"

My friend; it is not just knowing facts about the Bible that saves; it is to know the truth of the Gospel; "*you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free. If the Son shall set you free, you shall be free indeed.*"

So, while we want to be as understanding as we can, and while we do not want to condemn everyone who disagrees with us on various points, there is one point at which we must not disagree and that is who is Jesus Christ? What did He do? Why did He do it and where is He now?

How does God save sinners? How is a man redeemed from sin? How does a sinner approach a holy God? How can God be just and justify? "*How can he be clean that is born of a woman?*" There is just one Gospel and that is the saving Gospel of God's free grace.

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I want to present some questions to you today. I ask you to search the Scriptures *“to see if these things be so.”* I am going to present to you about six or seven questions and remember; we must not submit the Word of God to our doctrines; we must submit our doctrines to the Word of God.”

We must not submit the Word of God to our teachings; we must submit our teachings to the Word of God.” I beg you, I ask you, and as Paul said; *“I beseech you brethren; search the scriptures to see if these things be so.”* I want you to weigh these questions and weigh them carefully.

Here are six or seven questions that I want to present to you. I do not want to deceive nor do I want to be deceived. I do not want to mislead nor do I want to be misled. I want to abide by the Word of God.

Now, here is the first question: Did the Lord God create man or is man the result of the process of evolution?

I know what men think but that is not what we are interested in. We are interested in what does the Word of God say? Did the Lord God create man in His own image, or did man come about by the process of evolution?

Well, the Scripture clearly declares: *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”* There is no way for a man to believe the Bible and believe in evolution.

I brought a message one time on this TV station several years ago on this subject: **“FIVE REASONS WHY I DO NOT BELIEVE IN EVOLUTION, FIVE REASONS WHY I REJECT THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION.** I made this statement:

No man can believe the Bible and believe in evolution. A man wrote to me and he said, “I’ll have you know that I believe in evolution and I believe in God.” I wrote back to him and said, “I didn’t say that a man couldn’t believe in God and believe in evolution; *“the devil believes in God.”*”

That is what James said: *“You believe in one God; the devil believes there is one God?”* A man can believe there is a God and believe in evolution. A man would have to be a fool to reject the idea of God, the truth of God. *“The fool has said in his heart there is no God.”*

What I am saying my friend and I want to say it clearly to you; a man cannot believe the Bible and believe in evolution because the Bible says, *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”* That is what the Bible says.

The Word of God plainly says, *“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God and all things were made by him and without him was not anything made that was made.”* That is what the Bible says.

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In **Colossians 1: verse 16**; listen to this: *“For by him were all things created that are in heaven, that are in earth. All things were created by him, and for him. He is before all things and by him all things consist.”*

I am saying this and we are answering these questions from the Scripture, not from our notions or ideas, visions, or dreams. We are answering them from the Word of God.

Did God create man? The Scripture says He did. The Scripture says that God declared, *“let us make man,”* and God created man in His own image. He created man upright and holy and man fell. Now, that is the first question and it is answered in this way; yes, the living God created all things.

Here is the second question: What happened in the Garden of Eden?

When man sinned; we know that man sinned, no question about that, we have the results of it all about us. God created Adam and put him in the Garden. He was holy and upright and without sin. He didn't know sickness, sorrow, pain, or death. He didn't know any of these things.

Adam was created not to die but to live. But, everything about us tells us that death is in this world. *“As by one man sin entered the world and death because of sin. So, death passed upon all men for all have sinned.”*

The trees in the fall lose their leaves, they die. There are cemeteries everywhere; they tell me that the florists supply more flowers to the dead than they do to the living. We have funeral homes, we have hospitals, we have cemeteries, and we have all these things that tell us about sin.

Something happened to man in the Garden. What I want to know is this; what happened to man, what happened in the Garden of Eden? When man sinned against God, did man become spiritually dead, spiritually ruined, or only partially disabled?

Now, there is the question, what happened in the Garden? Was man partially disabled spiritually or did he die? We know that he began to die physically. We know that even the creation, even the nature began to die physically. We have death all about us.

Did man die spiritually? Some people call this, “original sin.” Some people call it, “total depravity.” Call it what you will, the Scriptures teach that man, as a result of his sin, lost spiritual life. He lost fellowship with God. He lost communion with God. Now, that is what the Scripture teaches.

Listen to **Romans 5:12**: *“Wherefore, as by one man, sin entered into the world and death by sin, so death, spiritual death, passed upon all men.”*

Listen to **1 Corinthians 15:22**: *“For as in Adam all die.”* Listen to **Ephesians 2:1**: *“And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sin.”*

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My friends, man is without hope, without Christ, and without God. He loves darkness and hates light. He loves lies and hates truth. He loves the bitter and hates the sweet. He does not know God nor see God.

He has not only inherited this nature from Adam, but from the day he was born, now listen to the Scripture: *“In sin my mother conceived me. I was shapen in iniquity. I was brought forth speaking lies.”*

Now, if any man is restored to spiritual life, that life which Adam lost in the Garden, if any man is restored to that spiritual life, Christ said *“he must be born again,”* born from above, born of the Word of God, and born of the Spirit of God. In other words, spiritual life must be restored to men from the one from whom it came in the first place, from God Almighty.

What happened in the Garden? When man fell, what happened to man? The Scripture teaches that *“he began to die physically.”* He did not die immediately, physically, but he began to die physically.

But, he did die spiritually. He took on an evil nature. He took on a sinful nature. He took on the principle of rebellion; he fell from the fellowship and communion with God. The only way to restore it is by regeneration by the new birth.

Here is the third question: Is salvation a gift (salvation from sin, restoration from spiritual death, and restoration back into the fellowship of God) or is it only an offer?

The gift of righteousness and eternal life and the forgiveness of sin, is this a gift, is it a gift of God or is it an offer? Well, the Scripture plainly teaches that salvation from sin, from the curse of the law, from eternal death, is a *“free gift of God.”*

I want you to listen to the Word in **Romans 6:23**: *“The wages of sin is death.”* We earned that; we get what we deserve when God condemns us, *“but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

Listen to **1 John 5:11**: *“This is the record that God hath given to us eternal life and that life is in his Son.”* Listen to **Ephesians 2:8 and 9**: *“For by grace, (by the grace of God), are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.”* Listen to **Titus 3:5**: *“Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy hath he saved us.”*

I’m teaching this, that the Word of God declares that this thing of salvation from sin, from the curse of the law, this thing of redemption, redemption from evil, from the bondage of sin, from the slavery of sin, is the free gift of God Almighty. Salvation is all of grace from Alpha to Omega, from first to last, from beginning to end; it is the gift of God.

Yes, we call on God because He called on us. Yes, we seek the Lord willingly and lovingly because He seeks us. Yes, we choose Christ because He chose us but it begins with Him. Listen to the Scripture:

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*“Herein is love, not that we love God, but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sin.”* Christ said to His disciples, *“You didn’t choose me; I chose you. You didn’t choose me but I chose you. I set my affection upon you; I chose you.”*

*“You will not come to me that you might have life.”* What I am saying is this: salvation begins with God. It begins with God’s eternal plan, God’s eternal purpose to save a people.

Paul, writing to the Thessalonians said in **1 Thessalonians 1:4**: *“Brethren, I know your election of God.”* In **Chapter 2 of the 2 Book of Thessalonians**, he said; *“I thank God for you brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning, chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth.”*

But, it began with God. God gave us eternal life because He purposed to. Watch this now, not only did the Father purpose to save but the Son purchased that salvation. Salvation is purchased by the obedience and death of Jesus Christ in human flesh.

That is why He came to this earth to atone for our sins, to impute to us a perfect righteousness in order that we might be saved, *“that God may be just and justify us.”*

That salvation is applied by God’s Spirit in quickening, in regenerating, in awakening power. It is a divine call. *“He hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace given to us in Christ before the world began.”*

Here is my question, according to the Scriptures; is salvation from sin, is redemption from the bondage of the law, from the curse of the law, is that a gift or is it an offer? Does it come to us as a gift of God or does it come to us as a result of our cooperation, our own works, and merit?

The Scripture teaches, *“It is the gift of God.”* He said to Moses; *“I will be merciful to whom I will be merciful. I will show compassion on whom I will show compassion.”*

Now; here is the fourth question: Is Jesus Christ God?

Most people agree that a person by the name of Jesus of Nazareth walked on this earth 2,000 years ago. Most people agree that He was a good man, even a great man. Most people agree that His teachings were pure and lofty and His life was holy.

But, the issue then and the issue now, is who is this man Jesus Christ? He asked that of his disciples, he said; *“who do men say that I the Son of man am?”* They said, *“Well; they have different opinions about you.”*

*“Some say that you are Elijah, some say that you are Jeremiah, some say that you are one of the prophets.”* But He said, *“Who do you say that I am?”* One of the disciples said, *“Thou art the Christ; thou art the Son of the living God.”*

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I ask you today, who is Jesus Christ, who is Jesus of Nazareth? Is He God in human flesh or is He only a man with great morality, great wisdom, great power, and great perception? Is He only a man or is He God Almighty? Let's check the Scripture!

We start with the Old Testament Scriptures; we start with the prophets. **Isaiah** said in **Isaiah 7:14**; *"Behold the Lord himself shall give you a sign. A virgin shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name Immanuel, (God with us)."*

Listen to **Isaiah Chapter 9:6**: *"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace."* That's what the prophets said.

What did Christ say? Well, He said in **John 14**, when Philip asked, *"show us the father,"* He said; *"he that hath seen me hath seen the father."* In **John 10** He said, *"I and my father are one."*

What did the Father say? When Christ was baptized in the River Jordan the Father said, *"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."* Then the father said on the Mount of Transfiguration: *"This is my beloved Son; hear ye him."*

What did the apostles say about him? Thomas bowed before Him worshipping Him and cried, *"My Lord and my God."* John said, *"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God."* Paul said to the elders at Antioch; *"Feed the church of God which he purchased with his own blood."*

*"He was in the world and the world was made by him and the world knew him not. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth."*

Whatever you say about Jesus Christ, the Word of God declares He is God! The Father said to the Son, *"Thy throne O God is forever."* And He said again, *"Let all the angels of God worship him."*

Here is the next question: Is the atonement of Christ, (now when we talk about the atonement of Christ we are talking about his death on Calvary), His blood, and His sacrifice, is that atonement effectual?

Effectual means to get the job done; that is what effectual means, it gets the job done; it does what it was designed to do, fully and completely, with no addition and it is sufficient.

Is the atonement of Christ effectual to justify a sinner in the sight of God to deliver him from all guilt, all charges, all condemnation, or does His atonement need a contribution from the sinner to make that redemption perfect?



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Well, the Scripture teaches that His death is sufficient. The Scripture says this in **Isaiah 53**: *“He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him: By his stripes we are healed.”*

The angel said in **Matthew 1:21**, *“call his name Jesus. He shall save his people from their sins.”* Peter said, *“They are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ as a lamb without spot or blemish.”* Paul said in **Romans 5:19**; *“Christ is our righteousness.”*

*“By Adam’s disobedience we were made sinners; by the obedience of Christ we were made righteous.”* Paul says in **Ephesians 1:6**; Christ is our sanctification that *“we are accepted in the beloved.”*

He says in **Ephesians 1:7**; Christ is our redemption, *“in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sin according to the riches of his grace.”* He tells us plainly that we are redeemed by the blood of Christ, that we have eternal life. Christ’s death is sufficient.

When the Old Testament priest went into the Holy of Holies, crawled under the veil once a year on the Day of Atonement with the blood of the lamb, the incense’s smoke ascending up from the censer that he had in his hand, burning the incense, he approached the mercy seat and there in typical fashion, symbolically placed the blood of the lamb on that mercy seat covering the broken law.

When that was done the atonement was made and the wrath of God was held back until the next year when the same sacrifice was repeated. Every year it was repeated, every year it was repeated by many different priests.

Many lambs died; much blood was shed; atonement was made every year. The Scripture says in **Hebrews 10**; *“But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins forever sat down on the right hand of God. For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.”*

Christ will never die again. There is no more blood to be shed. There is no more sacrifice to be made. There is no more sin-offering to be presented. There is no more atonement to be made. We have in Christ received the atonement and *“the blood of Jesus Christ, God’s Son, cleanseth us from all sin.”*

Now, here is the sixth question: Is salvation, this thing of redemption, is it a decision of the mind, is it mental acceptance of facts, or is it an experience of grace whereby a man becomes a new creature?

My friends, it is easy to believe facts in the head and miss the grace of God in the heart. It is so easy to be taken up with the ceremonies of religion, the rituals of religion, and miss the peace of Christ in the life.

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It is one thing to receive the doctrines of Christ and quite another to receive the person of Christ. This is true in so many, many, lives today.

We have walked aisles, we have made professions, we have been baptized, we have joined the church, and we have gone about the duties of religion.

We have fasted and paid our tithes, gone to church, and done all of these things, but missing from our hearts is the peace of Christ, the rest of Christ, and the joy of Christ. That is because the person is missing. Salvation is not receiving a doctrine it is receiving a person.

My last question is this: Is salvation eternal or temporary?

The Word of God says *“My sheep hear my voice and they follow me and I give them eternal life; they shall never perish. Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hands; my Father which gave them to me is greater than all and no man shall pluck them out of my Father’s hand.”*

*“Let no man deceive you;”* turn to God’s Word!