

# Beware of False Prophets

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**Bible Text:** Matthew 7:15-23

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## **Sovereign Grace Baptist Church**

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Matthew seven and I will begin reading at verse 15.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, 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? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.<sup>1</sup>

I have come to this text this morning, I guess, by what you would say was the long way around. I have had it on my mind since the beginning of the week, but, to be quite honest with you, I did my best to avoid it. I did my best to reason and to use logic as to why maybe not his particular day another text would be more suitable and more fitting. I did it to the extent of preparing an entirely separate message, but finding myself at the last minute absolutely unable to preach it.

I come to this text for a reason that is known to God himself and I come to at text like this where we find warnings against error, against false prophets, things such as this and I come to them with fear because I know that a person can know a lot of things that are wrong and not know still the truth. They can be able to explain why this is not right or that is not right or why this is false, what have you, and still in themselves have no love of the truth. They can point out many false prophets and yet at the same time still not know the one who is described as the prophet or that prophet, the Lord Jesus Christ.

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew 7:15-23.

But turn over, if you would to 2 Timothy. Hold your place and turn over to 2 Timothy and listen in 2 Timothy and that fourth chapter to the words of the apostle. You remember he is writing to this young preacher Timothy and he begins in verse one. He says:

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.<sup>2</sup>

That is that dirty word of modern religion, doctrine. And his charge is for this to be done, he says:

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.”<sup>3</sup>

They won’t be able to stand it. They won’t be able to hear it. They won’t have any desire to know it or understand it.

“... but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers.”<sup>4</sup>

Oh, they are going to be taught. They will not be by those who, like Timothy and Paul, are charged of God to preach sound doctrine. No, he says:

“...they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears.”<sup>5</sup>

Somebody that will tell them exactly what they want to hear. And he says:

“And they shall turn away [their] ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”<sup>6</sup>

False stories, man made fairy tales. He says:

“But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions.”<sup>7</sup>

Obviously there is some resistance and some affliction such as Paul being in prison for preaching it. He said:

“...endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist.”<sup>8</sup>

Now what in the world is an evangelist and what is it to evangelize? Well, that word is the word from which we also get this word transliterated and that is to eulogize. Do the

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<sup>2</sup> 2 Timothy 4:1-2.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Timothy 4:3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> 2 Timothy 4:4.

<sup>7</sup> 2 Timothy 4:5.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

work of this one who is called of God to eulogize. So what is it to eulogize God? To eulogize God is to say to men what God has said about himself. It is to speak high things about God.

When somebody stands up in the death of another to give the eulogy they try, in most cases, I believe, to say the best things that can be said about that deceased person. Well, the gospel preacher is to eulogize God and to say the things that are true of God of whom there can be no bad thing said. Speak high things of God.

“...do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”<sup>9</sup>

And so that is what Paul is saying here to Timothy and those who would read that later. But who is speaking the words here in Matthew seven?

And I say that because it would be almost in the minds of most in our day that this sweet little loving Jesus he would never have anything to say such as preachers as myself might say. They say, “You sound hard, preacher. Don’t you have anything good to say about us, positive to say about us?”

But this is the love of God epitomized in this person Jesus Christ and it is he who in that love and as the one who is the truth himself, he is the one giving this morning. He says, “Beware.”

And let me tell you something. Only the people of God, only the true people of God will heed this warning. Only those who are enabled to see by God given faith to understand by the Spirit’s teaching, they are the only ones who are going to heed this warning and he says, “Beware.”

“Beware of false prophets.”<sup>10</sup>

In other words, the Son of God himself is warning his people especially of these false prophets and false teachers that he knew would be found everywhere in every age.

Turn over to 2 Peter and the second chapter. Listen to what the apostle Peter says here in 2 Peter and that second chapter after he says that those men of God, true prophets in past days he said:

“... spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”<sup>11</sup>

But here in chapter two in the next statement that first verse he says:

“But there were also false prophets among the people.”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Matthew 7:15.

<sup>11</sup> 2 Peter 1:21.

<sup>12</sup> 2 Peter 2:1.

Even in the days of all the prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah and all these other ones such as Micaiah and others. He said even in those days there were even at that time:

“...also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you.”<sup>13</sup>

In other words, not everybody that stands under that broad umbrella of Christianity or even grace or that uses all the terms that men associate that. He said:

“...even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.”<sup>14</sup>

And here is the sad thing.

“And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.”<sup>15</sup>

Both they and their converts are not simply satisfied to believe what they want to believe, but they at the same time they speak evil of the way of truth.

“And through covetousness shall they with feigned words...”<sup>16</sup>

That word “feigned” in the original is the word that we get the word “plastic” from. Can you believe that? Molded, fashioned, deceitful words spoken articulately and precisely and pleasantly

“...with feigned words make merchandise of you.”<sup>17</sup>

They are doing it for a reason and that reason is their own gain, whether it be one thing or another, mostly glory.

“...whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.”<sup>18</sup>

It is coming. It is sure. But until such an hour as God brings it to pass, here they are with their feigned words for their own gain making merchandise of the souls of man.

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> 2 Peter 2:2.

<sup>16</sup> 2 Peter 2:3.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

I remember reading or hearing about one popular evangelist in a day past who had this thing down to this science. He had it mathematically figured out that whatever you send it was so much per soul that he would reach and they would be saved. You want 10 souls saved, send 10 dollars. Twenty souls, send 20 dollars. That is it. And here is this problem, this warning that we receive from Scripture such as we do from John the apostle in 2 John he said:

“For many deceivers are entered into the world.”<sup>19</sup>

I will tell you. I don't want to be deceived. But even more than that, I don't want to be a deceiver.

He said even in his day there were already many antichrists going out. You see, the world in our day has everybody looking for the antichrist. No, he said antichrists plural. And then he goes on to say that they are antichrist who do not have the doctrine of Christ. He said if they come to your door, don't receive them into your house and don't bid them Godspeed. Don't say, “Well, I don't agree with you entirely, but I wish you the best.”

Absolutely not. He said you are a partaker of their evil deeds. They are out there. They are everywhere.

And not only that, but to our great danger, we see, if left to ourselves they are absolutely wonderful counterfeits.

Look at what he says.

“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”<sup>20</sup>

That is what our Lord said about the Pharisees who were the most prestigious, religious and moral people of their day, the teachers. He said, “On the outside you are like whited sepulchers, but on the inside you are full of dead men's bones. You have the outward appearance beauty and that which is good and surely to be of God. But on the inside you are corrupt and vile and you know not the truth.”

He said on the outside they are like sheep, but on the inside they are ravening wolves.

You remember when Satan deceived our mother Eve in the garden. When he deceived her, he did so as that one which appeared to her eye the most beautiful beast of the field. Not only that, but he deceived her, taking the Word of God and changing that Word of God to make it say exactly what it didn't say.

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<sup>19</sup> 2 John 1:7.

<sup>20</sup> Matthew 7:15.

Don't ever think that the deceiver and the false prophet does not use the Word of God. The Word of God used by Satan is such that even in the temptation of Christ he used the Scripture, didn't he? He said, "Hasn't God said...?"

That sounds so familiar to my ears. I hear people every day. I hear preachers saying, "This is what the Lord says. This is what the Bible says."

You say, "If that is what the Bible says it has got to be good."

Not if it is not really what the Bible says.

People grow up listening and they grow up hearing and they grow up believing, but they really do not have faith because what they believe is not based on what they know to be true from the Word of God itself because they have never read it.

You say, "I will tell you what I believe."

You don't believe anything that you don't know to be true from this book. You don't know anything that you don't know by virtue of you having read it and the Spirit of God taught it to you as the truth of God. You don't know any of these things unless this is what God has taught you from his book.

Now what a man says may be true, but you don't know it to be true. If you haven't opened up this book, if you haven't sought in the Word of God to see exactly what God himself has said and this is the deception that comes that is characterized by the devil himself in what he has already done.

But turn over to 2 Corinthians and the 11<sup>th</sup> chapter.

Now in his day this man Paul who is the apostle of God, who is used by the Spirit of God to write the greater part of the New Testament and yet compared to the other preachers, you might say, in his day, men and women can look at him and say, "Well, there really isn't much to him."

Now listen to what he says. He says:

"Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me."<sup>21</sup>

He said, "It is almost foolish for me to have to tell you these things."

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy."<sup>22</sup>

Somebody said, "Well, the only reason that preacher is concerned is he is afraid I will run off and join somebody else's church."

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<sup>21</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:1.

<sup>22</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:2.

No, Paul said, “I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy. I don’t want you to be deceived. I don’t want you to fall into error. I don’t want you to die without Christ.”

He says:

“...for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.”<sup>23</sup>

I want you to be in that bride.

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve...”<sup>24</sup>

Do you know the Scriptures say that Adam was not deceived in the transgression, but the serpent in his cunning, in his subtlety, he beguiled or he tricked Eve, deceived her and he says:

“But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.”<sup>25</sup>

What does that mean? From the singleness that is in Christ. I fear lest somebody comes along and as the serpent tricked Eve, deceived her, they will deceive you into thinking that there is more than Christ or something other than Christ or something added to Christ.

No, he said it is the singleness of Christ. He is the way. He is the truth. He is the life. He is the light. He is the Savior, the Redeemer. And there is no other.

“For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.”<sup>26</sup>

That is what I am afraid of. I am afraid that you will be deceived by somebody preaching Jesus who is not the Jesus, another Jesus. I fear for you lest somebody comes along and they have a gospel, but it is another gospel, not the gospel of grace, not the gospel of God, not the gospel of Christ.

And he said, “I fear lest you are led and directed by another spirit, not the Holy Spirit.”

“For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles. But though I be rude in speech...”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:3.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:4.

<sup>27</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:5-6.

Now you just can't hardly imagine that the apostle Paul, the great apostle Paul that he would be anything other than a silver tongued orator, can you? Oh, he says, "I was rude in speech." He told it like it was. He spoke it from God himself. He is rude in speech, he says.

"...yet not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things."<sup>28</sup>

He said:

"Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?"<sup>29</sup>

What is he saying there? He is saying, "Do you think that the gospel I preach is of no value because you didn't have to pay me a big salary for me to preach it?"

He said:

I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service. And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.<sup>30</sup>

I heard an old preacher or I read where an old preacher many years ago he said, "It is better to be a lean bird in the wilderness than a fat bird in a cage."

All these preachers they are just fat birds in a cage. They live sumptuously. They have all these things, but they know if they open their mouth and tell the truth, they won't have them long.

He said:

As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia. Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth. But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we. For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.<sup>31</sup>

Now here is where it gets really serious.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:7.

<sup>30</sup> 1 Corinthians 11:8-9.

<sup>31</sup> 2 Corinthians 11:10-13.



He says:

“And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.”<sup>32</sup>

He is not a little fellow running around here with pointed ears and a pointed tail and a red flannel suit and a pitchfork. He is not out here as one of those to whom is ascribed all the wickedness and evil. The wickedness and evil of this world comes out of the heart of fallen sinners like us. No, he is changed into an angel of light, a messenger of light.

We are going to tell you the truth. We have got a little extra light on this subject now. We have got a new way of worship. We have got a new gospel. We have got a contemporary gospel.

I love what that old Puritan said. He said, “If it is true, it is not new and if it is new, it is not true.”

He says, now listen.

“Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness.”<sup>33</sup>

We are going to tell you about righteousness. We know all about this gospel stuff Christ. But we are going to tell you how to live. We are going to tell you how to have a Christian family.

He says:

“...whose end shall be according to their works.”<sup>34</sup>

I am telling you what. I don't want my end to be according to my works. No way, I don't.

You see and not only that, but according to this text and almost everyone that we have read, they also outwardly appear as successful. They are successful. Many... that is how success is measured in our day. How many? How many did you have in Sunday school? How many members do you have? How much money did you take in? All these things.

That is what measures man made religion, not God. The Bible says that Noah was a real preacher of righteousness. His congregation consisted of eight people. He is the only preacher of righteousness on the earth in his day. He was preaching a message God gave him concerning the only way of salvation.

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<sup>32</sup> 2 Corinthians 11:14.

<sup>33</sup> 2 Corinthians 11:15.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

Well, no, you are talking about being saved and look at us. You are talking about a flood. We have never seen it rain.

He was telling the truth and everyone but those eight people they perished. They died under the hand of divine just wrath.

You look down in Matthew chapter seven and verse 22. This is what our Lord says. They are going to go into the judgment with this glorious résumé of theirs. Verse 22. He said:

“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord...”<sup>35</sup>

Thank the Lord, the good Lord.

What was that one described in your reading this morning? The Lord of lords and King of kings. And they are going to talk about him like they do in this world like he is just, you know, your best buddy. He is just your... you know, everybody knows the Lord. Not this one.

They will 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?”<sup>36</sup>

You look around you in religion and all these preachers and groups and all you listen. You don't really have to look too hard. They will tell you what they have been doing, how they support this. This time of year they are going to go around and they are going to gather all this food or whatever it is.

You know, I am all for poor people getting food. I am. Help, but when you do that to offer it up to God as a basis of his accepting you, it is awful. It is a disgusting, evil, shameful thing in his sight. And there are... what they do is basically sell their services.

You know, if you stop and think about it, a man who claims to be a preacher, if he is not going to preach the gospel he has got to have something to sell. He has got to have some goods to offer. What does he do? Oh, well, I will tell you what. You get sick and he will go camp out at the hospital for you. Somebody in your family needs married? He is right there on the spot. When you die, he will give you a good burial and brag over you, lie about you, whatever you want. He sells his services. He doesn't have any gospel. He doesn't have bread for the sheep. He doesn't have those green pastures of God's Word, but he is always in the majority.

You remember when Elijah went up on Mount Carmel and stood up there before the prophets of Baal and the prophets of the groves? Eight hundred and fifty of them to one. And so he just backed off and gave them the first go round. And so they began to do all

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<sup>35</sup> Matthew 7:22.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

these things that impress flesh which is simply things of the flesh. They began to cry and they began to scream and they began to call out and look up with pious faces, I am sure. And it got to the point to show their sincerity they began to cut themselves with knives and sacrifice and do all these things.

But the heavens were as brass to them when everything was said and done. And God had not received their sacrifice.

Elijah, he brought forth the sacrifices that God had commanded him. Not only did he lay them on that altar, but he began to bring barrels of altar and heap on them and pour on them because he said, "The God that answers by fire, let him be God."

And here he is one man against 850 religious figures and God as in the answer to his prayer, I think, something like 64 words which amounted to this. "Lord, if you be God and I am your servant and I am here at your bidding, receive your sacrifice."

And God rained down fire out of heaven and consumed the sacrifice, every bit of it to the point that the fire even licked up the water in those ditches around it.

And as one man stood in the face of those prophets and all those people and he said, "How long are you going to halt between two opinions. And it ain't but two opinions, man's opinion, God's opinion, salvation that is of the Lord is all of his grace, it is all in Christ Jesus and him crucified." He said, "How long will you halt between two opinions? If Baal be God you serve him. If the Lord be God, you serve him. This ain't a game. We are not competing for church membership. We are not competing for favors. We are not competing for your valuable self. It is the glory of God."

But notice here how Christ says that they will be recognized. How will they be exposed these false prophets that he... you see, he never warns his people about something without giving them a means by which to heed that warning and to know what is being warned about.

Look at what he says in verse 16.

"Ye shall know them by their fruits."<sup>37</sup>

Are you going to go to a thistle tree to get some figs? Are you going to go to an old sweet gum tree like we have around here to get you a nice orange?

"Ye shall know them by their fruits."<sup>38</sup>

And then in verse 20:

"Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them."<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Matthew 7:16.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

I am so thankful to God that he says to his people, "You shall know them."

How are you going to know them? By their fruits.

What is the fruit of a preacher? What is the fruit of a prophet? It is his doctrine. He has already told us it was not simply his outward moral conduct. Outwardly he said, "They will just appear just like God's sheep, the finest of the finest."

And you know you stop and think about it. If you are looking for sincerity. If you are looking for zeal. If you are looking for all these outward things, morality. There are some folks in this religious world that can outshine you. Sincerity, sacrifice. But how do you know them? Their fruits, their doctrines. You know them by what they major on. You know them by what they emphasize. You know them by what they preach. That is right, because a man that calls himself a preacher or a servant of God, whatever his name is.

I got a Christmas card that was sent to Reverend Shepherd. I am not any reverent.

"...holy and reverend is his name."<sup>40</sup>

But a preacher really believes what he consistently preaches. He doesn't believe what he says he believes over a cup of coffee at Bojangles. He doesn't believe, really what he is willing to maybe slip in on an occasion on a Wednesday night service when the crowd is kind of small. He believes what he preaches service after service after service after service.

I have always said, "Whatever is in the well, that is what comes up in the bucket."

Whatever is in our hearts, whatever is in our mind, whatever we are convinced in our soul by the Spirit of God and the Word of God that is what we preach, not like a politician.

Now you can watch this. You want to see a prime example of a false preacher, you get a lot of examples in the next year. Here is political candidate politician Joe Jones and today he is at the union gathering. He is preaching and he is giving a speech before the union crowd. What is he going to do? He is going to throw them a few bones, isn't he?

I think it is a disgrace the way that the working man has been treated.

Tomorrow he will be over with a veterans group and he will say, "I am thoroughly for expanded benefits in our VA program."

And tomorrow he will be over in front of the women's group and he will just cry out against the abuse of women and such as that.

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<sup>39</sup> Matthew 7:20.

<sup>40</sup> Psalm 111:9.

He is praying to the crowd. That is the way a preacher does. He knows that old so and so is there that he might have a little inkling about. He will throw him a bone. He will mention maybe something about the elect quickly, sovereignty, quickly. He just throws him a bone, you know. He just got him on a hook because he is wanting a reason to justify why he is not where the gospel is really being preached. He has a head knowledge of it, but no heart love for it. He loves something else better and he wants to appease his conscience.

Well, I will tell you what. My preacher he preaches grace. You wish he did by name, but you know he doesn't. That is why you keep trying to convince yourself of it.

There is one thing about it. I ain't much of a preacher, but if you come to hear me, you are going to find out what I really believe.

He will beguile you.

On one hand it says... Paul said, "I didn't come with you with enticing words of man's wisdom."

But when he warned about false prophets and people being deceived he said, "They will come to you with enticing words and brag on you. They will make you feel good about yourself. They will feel that positive inspirational message and they won't tell you who you are based on what God says you are. They won't tell you the one way that God can be just and yet justify a sinner. They won't exalt the holy character of God.

But not only that, not only in what he says, but what a man really believes is reflected in his methodology. A man doesn't... he doesn't believe one thing and do another. What he really believes is what his methodology is based on. I know that first hand, because one of the first things that happened to me when the Lord began to reveal the truth to me and he began to show me the gospel of his free and sovereign grace, the very first thing that got me in trouble was that it changed my methodology.

You see, men and women, religious men and women, they don't mind a little grace as long as you don't tear down any of their idols.

Well, you know, we don't agree with him everything he said, but, you know, he doesn't push it. We can still have our cantatas and we can still have our big Christmas programs and we can still have our social programs and we can still do this and we can still do that.

I will never forget when I saw and I knew that this invitation business where people are exploited by preachers who are just looking for another notch or two on their preacher gun and he puts the pressure on them to get them to come down the aisle and shake a preacher's hand and sign a card and do all these things and gets them to make a profession of faith and he is so mercenary he invades the children's department and gets these professions of faith out of young children who have no understanding of the

gospel... When I saw that and that invitation had to stop, because Christ is not at the front and being saved is not by shaking my hand. That is when I got in trouble.

When the godless Christmas program had to go, when I had to tell somebody that Jesus was not actually born on December 25<sup>th</sup>. I am sorry, but he wasn't.

We had to say, "There is actually no command in Scripture or even hint that we are to worship any special day with regard to the birth of Jesus Christ."

Oh, my. You have to ask yourself. Do you want to know God or do you want to go on this little hallelujah hay ride to hell. Everybody is going to like you. Everybody is going to have a big time. Everybody is going to feel good about themselves and each other, but you are going to perish because you don't know the true God and Jesus Christ.

All the various groups and programs and the godless denominations...

I will tell you why I am not in a denomination. Number one, there is no example of it in Scripture, no God given mandate. But most of all their goal and my goal are far apart.

You see, their goal is to get numbers to magnify the denomination, to pay for all the hired help in the local and regional and national and world wide structure. And mine is to tell the truth about God, glorify him and try to preach that gospel by which he will call out all his sheep.

When you tell them that God does not love everybody.

That is three questions I want to know from a person. What do you think about the love of God? Well, we believe god loves everybody. No. He said he hated Esau. He said he hates all workers of iniquity. He hates those that sow discord among the brethren and you are trying to tell me he loves everybody?

The love of God is in Christ. He loves his people in Christ.

Well, what do you think about the death of Jesus Christ?

Well, Jesus died for everybody. He said he did. He said, "I lay down my life for my sheep." And with those Pharisees he said, "You are not of my sheep." He says he purchased the Church with his own blood, that husbands are to love their wives even as Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it.

Can you imagine that Christ shed his blood for anybody that he didn't actually save? It is the biggest most blasphemous thing I have ever known.

And then what is the Holy Spirit trying to do? Well, he is trying to save everybody. You mean to tell me that the omnipotent Spirit of God, if he wanted to save you he couldn't? Oh, me.

You see where this is going to in our day? His sheep hear... he said:

“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.”<sup>41</sup>

And they won't follow a stranger. They won't.

They speak peace to sinners when there is no peace. That is what he said in Jeremiah. He said a false prophet speaks peace to men when there is no peace. You see, there is no peace with God. There is no peace from God apart from the blood of Jesus Christ.

You say, “Well, preacher, I had this experience when I was young.”

Well, you are probably a Christian then. Or I just... like one lady told me once, “I just feel like I am saved.”

Well, you probably are.

No. Peace with God is not by anything you do or you feel. It is through one outside of yourself and his cross death.

Well, I got to church. No.

I have been baptized.

I give.

I am sorry, if that is the basis of your peace with God you have no peace. You can't make peace.

And the only way that we can ever be brought through this by this, kept from being deceived is the Spirit of God taking the Word of God. When he convinces us that this is the Word of God. This is the truth, that salvation is of the Lord, that we are sinners, helpless ever of saving ourselves, he will bring us through all this stuff.

Sometimes the Lord's people even, because they have such pressure put on them by friends or family say, “They kind of take a little glance back.”

Well, you know... no, no. This is what it says. This is what it says.

Only by his gospel and by his Spirit will God expose them and save all of his people from their sins and therein will be... Joe read it, where the beast and the false prophet were cast into the lake of fire.

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<sup>41</sup> John 10:27.

Oh, I am so glad it is true, that his name is Jesus because he shall save his people from their sins.

And so terrible and so deceptive is the deception of our day and of all this age between the first coming and the second of Christ, that if it were possible, even the very elect of God would be deceived. I sure do like that “if it were possible.”

God, hold fast to us. Put our eyes on Christ. Keep us until he bears us into his presence.

*Father, this day we give you praise and glory. You alone are worthy. We are thankful that you are the Savior of your people and that not one of them will perish and not one of them will be ultimately and finally deceived. They shall all be taught by you and everyone that has learned by you comes to Christ, believes on him alone and finds that rest and peace and safety in him. We thank you for this day. We thank you for your dear Son. We thank you for this food that we are about to partake of, for every blessing from you for this time of fellowship, for these that are gathered here today. Bless your Word to their hearts, for we ask it all in Christ's name. Amen.*