

DANGERS OF THE END TIMES

Matthew 24: 4,5,10-12, 21-25

Key Word: Dangers

Key Thought: There Are Many Dangers Listed in the Bible During the End Times

There is a danger lurking for every generation to be aware of and prepare itself to overcome it.

Overheard: “I think our bank is in trouble. I was about to complete a withdrawal at the ATM and the machine asked me if I wanted to go double or nothing.”

The Rotarian

Life has moved from a series of risks to a number of dangers. The same is true within the Church. As we approach the closing days of time, there has been an escalate of major problems facing our decision makers. We’ve all heard enough of the natural disasters, medical diseases, family dysfunctions, political disharmony, social discord, monetary disruptions, labor disputes. The list goes on and on.

Jesus warned us that the last generation would have to face incredible hardships. It is during these times that we are susceptible to entering into dangerous decisions because of the unstable society we live in. There are two main dangers that I am seeing today that greatly concern me. I feel we must address these two areas from the Word of God.

I. THE DANGER OF DECEPTION (Matthew 24:4,5,11,23,24)

II. THE DANGER OF DISCOURAGEMENT (Matthew 24:12,21,22)

I. THE DANGER OF DECEPTION (Matthew 24:4,5,11,23,24)

A wife knew her husband had to pass by a cemetery on his way home from the pub. She thought she might use this time frighten him out of drinking. So when he came by, she jumped out from behind a tombstone with a sheet over herself, waved her arms, and howled “*Wooooooo . . . Wooooooo . . .*”

He said, “*What’s this? Who are you?*”

“*I’m the devil,*” she said.

Before she could say anymore, he looked at her immensely relieved and said: “*Well, shake hands! I’m married to your sister!*”

Douglas Mantz

“*Let There Be Laughter*” p. 22

I. THE DANGER OF DECEPTION (Matthew 24:4,5,11,23,24)

The church has entered dangerous time because it has been walking through a place of spiritual death in drunken state and yet not aware of what it is facing.

Jesus said,

“Watch out that no one deceives you.

*5. For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Christ, and **will deceive many** . . .*

10. At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other.

*11. And many false prophets will appear **and deceive many people** . . .*

23. At that time if anyone says to ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ Or, ‘There he is!’ Do not believe it.

*24. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles **to deceive even the elect - if that were possible.***

25. See, I have told you ahead of time.”

Matthew 24: 4,5,10,11,23,24,25

There is a strange spirit that is being accepted in the Church today. There have been many man-made teachings developed from the Word of God over the past 40 years. Each has taken truth to its extreme. **The soulish part of man seems to work in extremes.** Balance is seen as bondage to those who are constantly looking for the bigger and better.

The word used to describe this danger is “*deceive.*” The Greek word “*planao*” means “*cause to roam (from safety, truth, or virtue): to go astray, deceive, err, seduce, wander, be out of the way.*” When Paul wrote about this deception (using the word “*planos*”) he said,

“The Spirit clearly says that in the latter times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.

2. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.”

I Timothy 4:1,2

These “*seducing or deceiving spirits*” according to Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words denote **an imposter of the vagabond type, and so any kind of deceiver or corrupter. It is a word used to describe someone who leads others into error.**

I. THE DANGER OF DECEPTION (Matthew 24:4,5,11,23,24)(Contd.)

It is one thing to be **deceived by the devil** or by someone else while it is quite another **thing to deceive ourselves**. I believe many people are deceiving themselves by making statements that they know are not true in order to have others accept what they are doing. Jesus said,

“Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles? 23. Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers.’”

Matthew 7:22,23

“For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

4. They will turn their ears away from truth and turn aside to fables.

5. But you keep your head in all situations . . .

II Timothy 4:3-5

The Church must realize that we are facing a greater danger than with Benjamin Creme’s belief that the Messiah is about to be revealed to the world in a short time. **The greater deception is within the Church today. Satanic manifestations are being accepted as the work of the Holy Spirit (barking like dogs; urinating on the altar; disrupting the preaching of the Word of God).** Paul made it very clear what Satan (adversary) will do in the final days.

God will eventually become so disgusted with these deceivers that He will add to their delusions.

*“The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, 10. And in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. **They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.***

11. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie.

12. And so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness.”

II Thessalonians 2:9-12

I. THE DANGER OF DECEPTION (Matthew 24:4,5,11,23,24)(Contd.)

The only way to overcome this mass deception is to be grounded in the Word of God and humble ourselves before the Lord.

“Do not be deceived; God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows.

8. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

9. Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”

Galatians 6:7-9

II. THE DANGER OF DISCOURAGEMENT (Matthew 24:12,21,22)

On the very heels of **deception** comes **discouragement**. This is where we find people becoming depressed. We see the signs of it all around us. The sad fact is that it is now a problem within our churches. **I believe one of its reasons is because we have swayed from the doctrines of the Church and replaced them with man-made teachings and desires.** People are suffering from anxiety attacks, chemical imbalances, depression, and many types of disorders.

We have tried to adopt many of the world’s methods to overcome these problems. This has led to further discouragement and disillusionment. Our society has been saturated with bad news. People are truly fearful about the future. Jesus prepared us by saying,

“There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea.

*26. **Men will faint from terror,** apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.*

27. At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.

28 When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

Luke 21:25-28

II. THE DANGER OF DISCOURAGEMENT (Matthew 24:12,21,22)

An article in the February 4, 1997 copy of the Standard Freeholder reported that there were 87 burial permits issued in January 1997 compared to 49 for the same period that year in 1996. There were 112 separate death notices reported during that time.

*** It was mentioned that the funeral directors and city florists couldn't remember a time that has been so busy. Lori Hollingsworth from one of the local funeral homes said *"It's unbelievable . . . *** We've been very, very, busy lately. I don't know what is happening . . . I've never seen anything like that before . . . And its not just older people, it's a wide range of ages, including young people."*

Standard Freeholder
City Page 9
Tuesdays, February 4, 1997

Compare these statistics with those from 2000-2021 and you'll find that in Ontario deaths have increased from around 75,000 to around 120,000 with a noticeable increase in 2021.

The words used to describe "**discouragement**" in the Bible have meanings like ***"to cut down; to scare; to terrify; to break down by violence, confusion or fear; to waste; to faint; to bruise; to crush; to break; to be disheartened."***

People who are reduced to this level of life become completely void of hope. They see nothing positive in their future. They are pessimistic about life. The N.T. word "**athumeo**" describes ***"someone who has passionate rushes of negative feelings."*** People who enter this state feel they are being taken over by something they cannot control.

If deception and discouragement have become a factor in your life, let me encourage you that you are not alone. Let me also say the Bible tells us what we can do about it.

A. Fix your Hope in Jesus

Matthew 24 leads us into a number of verses which point us to our Saviour (Matthew 24:27,30,44). Keep your eyes on Jesus. He will never fail you.

II. THE DANGER OF DISCOURAGEMENT (Matthew 24:12,21,22)(Contd.)

B. Become Anchored in the Word of God

Many of the present foundations are going to be shaken away but God's Word will never pass away (Matthew 24:34,35)

C. Keep a Sober (Alert) Watch

Many people will become taken away by a spirit of slumber/sleep/ and compromise (Matthew 24:42-51)

Don't be deceived or discouraged. These are dangers that we must overcome in our daily lives. We need to encourage each another and pray for each other that we may all be kept true at the Return of our Lord.

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Date: June 12/22

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: Jesus Messiah - G

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Matthew 7:22,23; II Timothy 4:3-5; II Thessalonians 2:9-12; Galatians 6:7-9

II. THE DANGER OF DISCOURAGEMENT (Matthew 24:12,21,22)

Luke 21:25-28

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A. Fix your Hope in Jesus - Matthew 24:27,30,44

B. Become Anchored in the Word of God - Matthew 24:34,35

C. Keep a Sober (Alert) Watch - Matthew 24:42-51