

Religion: Lucifer's False Prophets to Israel & False Teachers to the Church, 2 Pet 2:1-2; Categories of False Teachers: Hypocritical, Matt 7:15; Legalistic, Gal 4:17; Judgmental, 2 Cor 10:12; Idolatrous, Hab 2:18-19; Naïve, 1 Tim 1:5-7; Perverse, Prov 8:13; Col 2:8; Satanic Strategy

This circumstance is also addressed by Peter in:

2 Peter 2:1 - There came into existence false prophets [in the dispensation of Israel] among the people [the Israelites], even as there will always be false teachers among you [Church Age], who will insidiously introduce destructive deviations from doctrine [heresies, factions, divisive ideas], even denying repeatedly the Lord who bought and purchased them [unlimited atonement], bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

These emissaries of the cosmos assert they are Christians and in so doing introduce false teachings to those who are vulnerable. Hand-picked by Lucifer, these religious recruits have all the rhetorical skills and personality traits that are necessary to captivate the easily impressed.

Many in the public eye today have the personal charisma and eloquence of phrase to win over those who are impressed with what sounds good and promises solutions to intractable problems. The message, inspirational in delivery but absent of divine viewpoint, destroys souls but at the same time guarantees that the false teachers will also be destroyed by divine justice.

2 Peter 2:2 - Many will follow their salacious behaviors [“make love, not war”; hooking up, friends with benefits, premarital sex, unwed mothers] and because of whom the way of truth will be maligned [marriage redefined];

v. 3 - and in their frantic search for happiness [exploitation of all the lust patterns] they will exploit you with faulty merchandise [the lie cannot hold up over time]. The judicial verdict of eternity past is not idle and their destruction is not asleep [the Great White Throne judgment].

Scripture reveals several categories of false teachers:

1. Hypocritical. These types have an outward appearance that conceals while advancing a nefarious intent.

Matthew 7:15 - Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

2. Legalistic. There are salesmen for the Dark Side that recruit those not yet oriented to grace. Their hatred and antagonism for grace motivates them to use guilt to lure weak believers into religion.

Galatians 4: 17 - They [legalistic Jews] keep on zealously courting you, but not honestly. They wish to separate you from doctrine so that you will be zealous for them.

NOTE: An example of legalism is the gospel of salvation by works taught by the Catholic Church. This excerpt is from the Web site www.saintaquinas.com:

Can we have a definitive assurance of our Salvation?

No, St. Paul and St. John's epistles warn us that justification can be lost. Thus without an extraordinary revelation from God, we cannot be assured of our salvation or justification. The Council of Trent¹ tells us, "If any one saith, that he will for certain, of an absolute and infallible certainty, have that great gift of perseverance unto the end, -unless he have learned this by special revelation; let him be anathema (Council of Trent, Sixth Session, Cannon 16)."

Assurance of salvation is a presumption upon God that we can infallibly judge the state of our souls. The Bible is very clear that only God and God alone can judge a person's soul. Paul writes, "For we must all be manifested before the judgement (*sic*) seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the proper things of the body, according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil (1 Corinthians 5:10)." Paul also emphasizes that salvation and justification are not a one-time event, but a lifetime process that we must work out with participation in grace.

Contrary to the doctrine of the Reformers, we must note that Christ never said that faith alone would supplant good works and obedience to God's laws. Jesus (*sic*) message in the Gospels tells us that if we truly believe in Christ we will obey his commandments, be baptized into a life of grace and thus receive divine sonship in Christ. The gift of grace imputes forgiveness of sin, sanctification of the soul and the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity. God's grace works within us to move us to new, divine heights of faith, hope and charity. By cooperating with the grace of Baptism, we can do good works out of faith and love for Christ.²

¹ "The 19th ecumenical council of the Roman Catholic Church (1545-63) ... clarified virtually every doctrine contested by the Protestants. Paul III convoked a council at Trent (northern Italy), which opened on Dec. 13, 1545. Period I (1545-47): the council ruled against Luther's doctrine of justification by faith alone: man, the council said, was inwardly justified by cooperating with divine grace that God bestows gratuitously. Period II (1551-52): the council finished an important decree on the Eucharist that defined the Real Presence of Christ in opposition to the interpretation of Huldrych Zwingli, the Swiss Reformation leader, and the doctrine of transubstantiation as opposed to that of Luther. The sacrament of penance was extensively defined, extreme unction (now, the anointing of the sick) explained. Period III (1562-63): the council defined that Christ is entirely present in both the consecrated bread and the consecrated wine in the Eucharist. It defined the mass as a true sacrifice; issued doctrinal statements on holy orders, matrimony, purgatory, indulgences, and the veneration of saints, images, and relics. Pius IV confirmed the council's decrees in 1564 and published a summary of its doctrinal statements" ("Trent, Council of," in *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Micropaedia*, 15th ed. [Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1979], 10:110).

² Saint Thomas Aquinas Forum, http://www.saintaquinas.com/Justification_by_Grace.html.

A person who adheres to Catholic theology is led to the tragic conclusion that he may believe Christ died on the cross for his sins, but, at the same time, not believe that it results in eternal life. Salvation is assumed to be achieved through baptism, good works, and obedience to God's laws. One's salvation and justification are considered the results of a progressive process, not instantaneous events that occur simultaneously at the moment of faith alone in Christ alone.

3. Judgmental. There are those who consider themselves theologians and arrive at this conclusion by means of arrogance. With arrogance they judge, criticize, and malign pastors.

2 Corinthians 10:12 - We do not have the boldness to judge ourselves worthy or compare ourselves favorably with certain ones who constantly recommend themselves favorably [Paul uses sarcasm here: "My critics are so much greater than I."]. Those who measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves favorably with themselves, they are without understanding.

4. Idolatrous. False teachers are drawn to images that they worship expecting a response from man-made bric-a-brac.

Habakkuk 2:18 - "What good is an idol? Why would a craftsman make it? What good is a metal image that is a teacher of lies? Why would its creator place his trust in a speechless thing?"

v. 19 - "Woe to him who says to a piece of wood, 'Awake!' To a mute stone, 'Arise!' Can it give reliable guidance? Of course not! It is overlaid with gold and silver; it has not life's breath in it."

5. Naïve. Those who are not grace oriented insist upon promoting human good categories of cosmic 1 that reflect self-righteous arrogance: the assumption of righteous superiority over all others but without a clue of what they are talking about.

1 Timothy 1:5 - The objective of our instruction is love [virtue] that comes from a pure heart [status quo spirituality], a good conscience [a disposition of biblical integrity], and a sincere faith [doctrinal orientation without hypocrisy],

v. 6 - from which some have deviated [through anthropocentric academic speculation (category 8 of cosmic 2), e.g., a Progressive worldview] and have peeled off [into reversionism] into empty speculations.

v. 7 - They want to be teachers of the law. But they do not understand either what they are teaching or the things which they dogmatically proclaim [they teach the Mosaic Law in the dispensation of the Church].

6. Perverse. The communication of the lie to the unsuspecting, often by quoting biblical passages in order to lend legitimacy to the message. It is this type of false teachings that is condemned by Wisdom in the verse we are currently studying:

Proverbs 8:13 - Respect and reverence of the Lord is to disapprove evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverted mouth I hate.

Colossians 2:8 - Constantly be on your guard that there will not be anyone who will capture and enslave you through human speculation and empty deception, according to the pseudo-traditions of men, according to the basic teachings of the cosmic systems, and not according to the teachings of Christ.

7. Satanic Strategy. Throughout the Church Age, false teachers take on many forms of expression and their impact can be seen in several ways:

1) Enemy of God.

James 4:4 - You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

2) Enemy of the cross.

Philippians 3:18 - For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ,

v. 19 - whose end is destruction, whose god is their emotion, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.

3) Haters of God.

John 15:23 - "He who hates Me hates My Father also." (Also see Romans 1:30)

4) The double-minded: the spiritual schizophrenic.

James 4:8 - Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands [rebound], you sinners; purify your hearts [renovation of the soul through spiritual growth], you double-minded [reversionists].

5) Children of the devil.

1 John 3:10 - By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his fellow believer.

6) Shipwrecked.

1 Timothy 1:19 - Keeping faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and suffered shipwreck in regard to their faith.

