

# THE MESSIAH WARNS AGAINST THE YEAST OR LEAVEN OF RELIGIONISTS: A WARNING AGAINST SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS AND FALSE TEACHING MATHEW 16:01–12

## ***Introduction: Signs, Pharisees and Sadducees***

It is strange to see the Pharisees and Sadducees joining together to oppose Christ. They were diametrically opposed to each other in their beliefs and behaviour (See *Pharisees*, Acts 23:8 *Sadducees*, Acts 23:8). The Sadducees did not even believe in signs and supernatural events, yet they are seen joining forces with the Pharisees who were strict believers in the supernatural. The Sadducees, who are also called Herodians, opposed Christ on only one other occasion (Mt. 22:16). Their opposition was due to two reasons.

1. They cooperated with the Roman government and were thereby put in positions of leadership and wealth. Christ preached a gospel of sacrifice and poverty in order to help a needy world. He was, therefore, a serious threat to them.
2. They did not believe that all Scripture was of God nor did they believe in the supernatural or in the resurrection of the dead. Christ, of course, did believe. Therefore, He was again a threat to their very existence.

The purpose of the Pharisees and Sadducees' tempting Jesus was to prove that He was an imposter and to discredit Him before the people. The Sadducees were sure that Jesus could not give "a sign from heaven" because there was no such thing as a supernatural event, and the Pharisees hoped that He would either refuse or fail in giving a sign. (See Mt. 12:38-40.)

What Jesus did was take the request for *more signs* and give two great warnings — warnings that must be heeded by all. (See notes Mt. 7:15-20. This is an important passage on false teachers.)

- I. Beware of religionists who sought to discredit Christ (v. 1).
- II. Beware of being blind to the signs (vv. 2-4).
- III. Beware of false teaching (vv. 5-12).

## **I. *Mathew 16:01 Religionists***

The religionists sought more signs (see *Generation Seeking Signs*, Mt. 12:38-40).

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## MATHEW 12:38–40 GENERATION SEEKING SIGNS

An evil generation sought a sign. Paul said that the “Jews demand ... signs” (1 Cor. 1:22). And they did; they always required supernatural signs from any prophet or messenger who claimed to be from God. Six things should be noted.

1. This is the same kind of temptation that Jesus faced in the second temptation of His wilderness experience: to prove His Messiahship by some spectacular sign (see Mt. 4:5-7.)
2. The Jews wanted more than the signs of miracles. They wanted *a sign from heaven*, apparently some spectacular event occurring in the sky which would reveal beyond doubt that Christ was the promised Messiah (Mt. 16:1; Mk. 8:11; Lk. 11:16). Note the words “from you,” They wanted the sign to appear at a given moment by His command, not some freak spectacular event happening accidentally in the future that He might claim as a sign.
3. There were at least two reasons why the Jews required a sign.
  - a. Their religion was a religion of signs and of miracles. Their religion had been given by God Himself and established by the miraculous acts of the prophets of God. A quick survey of the Old Testament will show this. Thus, anyone who claimed to be of God had to prove his credentials by what the Jews considered some “sign” from God.
  - b. Jesus had come to supersede or fulfil the religion that had been built upon supernatural signs (Mt. 5:17). The Jews were asking what His signs were. His credentials to do this.

**Mat 12:38** *Then some of the Pharisees and teachers of the law said to him, “Teacher, we want to see a miraculous sign from you.”*

**Luke 11:16** *Others tested him by asking for a sign from heaven.*

**John 2:18** *Then the Jews demanded of him, “What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?”*

**John 4:48** *“Unless you people see miraculous signs and wonders,” Jesus told him. “you will never believe.”*

**1 Cor 1:22** *Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom.*

4. The Jews were totally unjustified in seeking additional signs from Jesus. There had been sign after sign, miracle after miracle, work after work — sufficient to lead any man to the firm belief: “Surely this man was the Son of God” (Mk. 15:39; see Acts 2:22). A lack of signs was not their problem. Their problem was twofold.

- a. They just did not believe and did not want to believe. They were obstinate in their unbelief.
  - b. They did not understand the love and the faith of God, that is, the true religion of God. They failed to see what God was after: faith and love, not signs and works. God wants a man to simply believe and love Him because of who He is and because of what He has done for man. The true religion of God is not a religion of works and signs but of faith and love in Christ Jesus, His own Son (see Mt. 4:1-11; *Saving Faith*, Jn. 2:24; *Israel, God's Special People*, Jn. 4:22; *Jews, the Seed of Abraham*, Rom. 4:1-25; Rom. 4:5.)
5. Those who sought a sign were called an evil and adulterous generation. The reason is simple. They were apostates, going after the false gods of works and signs instead of seeking the God of faith and love. In seeking after signs and works, they were committing spiritual whoredom, that is, turning from the true God and His Messiah to the false gods of signs and works. (Note: it is human reason that seeks after signs and works and proofs. The spirit of man seeks after belief and trust and love — the spiritual qualities that bind life together and make sense of life in all its facets.)
  6. No sign whatsoever shall be given to any generation but one: the sign of Jonah. The sign of Jonah pointed to the resurrection of Christ from the dead (Mt. 12:39-40. See Lk. 11:29-30; 11:33-36.) The resurrection is the *great proof* that Jesus is the Messiah, the Saviour of the world. He is “declared to be the son of God with power...by the resurrection from the dead” (Rom. 1:4).

**Thought 1.** Note two significant lessons.

- 1) Christ will hear and answer prayer, meeting the true needs of His people. But He will not fill the selfish lusts of people, nor satisfy the curiosity of the carnal. He will not answer the arguments of the unbelieving by spectacular signs (Jas. 4:1-3). God is through with signs. He has given the ultimate in signs; He has given His Son: His death, burial, and resurrection.

*Acts 2:23-24* This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.

*Acts 3:14-15* You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this.

*Acts 4:33* With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all.

**Acts 10:39-41** “We are witnesses of every thing he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen — by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.”

**Acts 17:2-3** As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that the Christ had to suffer and rise from the dead. “This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Christ,” he said.

**Rom 1:4** And who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Rom 10:9** That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

**Eph 1:20** Which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms.

2) Note the word “Teacher.” Not everyone who says to Him, “Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Many profess, but few possess. “Many are invited, but few are chosen” (Mt. 22:14; see 20:16. See notes, Mt. 7:21-23.)

**Thought 2.** Men try to *prescribe* how God should act. They insist and beg God to do something, to give a sign; and if God will do it, the man promises to serve God with renewed commitment. Note several things.

- 1) God does not work by signs. He works by faith and love. He wants men to believe Him because He has promised, not because some spectacular sign occurs. He may sometimes grant a sign because of the weakness of a believer, but signs are not His way of dealing with men.
- 2) We should not prescribe to God, trying to dictate how He is to deal with us. God has given us *three enormous helps* that are more than sufficient in meeting our needs: His Word, prayer, and the Holy Spirit.
- 3) Many claim to have received signs, but our Lord says in a clear and unmistakable statement: “There shall no sign be given...but [the resurrection].” The resurrection is the summit of signs. Think — what more can God do? □

## MATHEW 12:39 ADULTEROUS

Spiritual adultery and unfaithfulness; apostate; spiritual whoredom; seeking and carousing with other gods; worshipping and giving one's love to false gods. The generation was committing spiritual adultery against God. However, the word "adultery" could also mean that the people of the day were so given over to sexual sins that they could be characterized as an *adulterous* generation. (See Jdg. 2:17; 1 Chr. 5:25; Psa. 106:39; Eze. 6:9; 20:30; 23:35; Hos. 4:12; 5:4; 9:1.) □

## II. *Mathew 16:02–04 Signs – Spiritual Blindness*

Beware of being spiritually blind to the signs of the times.

1. There is a sharp difference between man's natural and spiritual senses. Man's natural senses can be very sharp and discerning. He is skilful in drawing conclusions from his observations and experiences of the natural world. *Weather is an example*: however, when it comes to the spiritual senses, man is dead and undiscerning. He does not observe nor does he experience the spiritual world, not really. *The signs of the times* are an example.

The people of Jesus' day had signs. They lived in critical times, times that foretold the coming of the Messiah. A thoughtful and genuinely spiritual person could see the signs. Two examples of persons who did see the signs were Simeon and Anna (Lk. 3:25f).

Some of the signs were as following.

- a. The sceptre, the lawgiver had come from Judah (Mt. 1:2).
  - b. The weeks or ages predicted by Daniel were closing out (see *End Time*, Mt. 24:15).
  - c. The prophet Elijah, the forerunner of the Messiah (John the Baptist), had come and proclaimed the Messiah to be Jesus (Mt. 3:1-12).
  - d. The baby Jesus had been born in Bethlehem (Mt. 2:1).
  - e. Many throughout the world were expecting the coming of some great person, some saviour, some messiah (Mt. 1:18).
  - f. Many godly Jews were looking for the coming of the Messiah. God's great Deliverer of Israel (Lk. 2:25f).
  - g. The message and works of Jesus were great evidence. They were phenomenal miracles given by God to substantiate His claims (see *Works of Jesus Christ*, Jn. 14:11).
2. The signs of the times should be discerned. What greater signs can God give than the signs which radically change lives? Unbelief is without excuse. The problem is that men want signs of their own choosing, not the signs which God has chosen to give. Men are always wanting God to deal with them through...

- some spectacular sign
- some astounding truth
- some miraculous experience
- some brilliant sight
- some irrefutable argument
- some unbelievable deliverance

God's great concern is not "signs from heaven" or signs outside man. God's great concern is meeting people in their lives, within their hearts where they really need Him and really need help if they are to live abundantly and eternally. God wants to meet people in their sickness and sorrow and loss. Meeting man in the areas of his need are irrefutable signs given to every generation.

**Thought 1.** There are some very special signs of the times given "in these last days" in addition to the signs given to the Jews.

- 1) There is the completed work of Christ.

**John 17:4** *"I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you gave me to do."*

**John 19:30** *When he had received the drink, Jesus said, "It is finished." With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.*

**Heb 1:3** *The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.*

- 2) There is the completed Scripture, the Old and New Testaments which God has established with man.

**2 Tim 3:16** *All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.*

**2 Pet 1:19-21** *And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*

- 3) There is the presence of much that was prophesied about "the last days" (see Mt. 24:1f; Tit. 3:1-9; 2 Pet. 3:1-7; 3:8-10; 3:11-14; 1 Jn. 2:18-23; Jude 17-19).

**Mat 24:3-4** *As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you." (see vv. 5-15 for a list of the signs).*

3. The reason for blindness and for seeking more signs: the human heart is wicked and adulterous. Men refuse to look at the signs of the times: they choose to be spiritually

blind because they are wicked and adulterous. There are never enough signs or evidences to convince them, to change their lives and cause them to turn to God (see Mt. 12:38-40).

**John 3:19** *This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.*

**Luke 16:31** *“He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”*

4. The only sign to be given to a wicked generation is the sign of Jonah (see Mt. 12:38-40, pt. 6; Lk. 11:29-36). The one irrefutable sign that is geared to unbelievers is the resurrection of Jesus Christ. The fact that Jesus Christ has risen from the dead is proof that He is beyond question the Son of the living God. He is, therefore, able to change the lives of all who willingly believe and surrender to Him as Lord.

**Acts 2:23-24** *This man was handed over to you by God’s set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.*

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**Acts 10:39-41** *“We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen — by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead.*

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**Rom 1:4** *And who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.*

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## MATHEW 16:04 THE SIGN OF JONAH

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Jesus claimed to be greater than Jonah. He claimed to be the greatest messenger who had ever come, the Messiah Himself. Since His coming, all men are definitely without excuse. The worst sinners in history repented at the preaching of a mere man, the prophet Jonah. Now the Messiah Himself, God’s own Son, has come. And He has preached and announced that the Kingdom of God itself is at hand. Every person is now, beyond question, without excuse.

**Thought 1.** Note two significant lessons.

- 1) Christ will hear and answer prayer, meeting the true needs of His people. But He will not fill the selfish lusts of people, nor satisfy the curiosity of the carnal. He will not answer the arguments of the unbelieving by spectacular signs (Jas. 4:1-3). God is through with signs. He has given the ultimate in signs; He has given His Son: His death, burial, and resurrection.

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**Thought 2.** Men try to *prescribe* how God should act. They insist and beg God to do something, to give a sign; and if God will do it, the man promises to serve God with renewed commitment. Note several things.

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### III. *Mathew 16:05–12 False Teaching*

Beware of false teaching. Note that Jesus left the religionists to their own destiny: "He left them and went away" (v. 4). When Jesus arrived on the other side of the Sea of Galilee, the disciples remembered something. They had forgotten to bring food. In this lapse of memory, Jesus saw another opportunity to teach a much needed lesson: beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees (see Mt. 13:33; Mk. 8:15). By "yeast" Jesus meant the *false teaching* of the religionists, but the disciples misunderstood what He was saying. They thought He was rebuking them for not having bread. Their thoughts were, as is so often the case, occupied with earthly matters and cares.

Jesus rebuked such preoccupation with earthly matters. He called it distrust: "You of little faith" (v. 8). Then He began immediately to teach two great lessons of life.

1. He will take care of the believer's earthly needs. He was almost shocked to think that His followers did not trust Him to take care of them.

**Mat 6:31-33** *“So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”*

**Luke 12:7** *“Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.”*

**1 Pet 5:7** *Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.*

**Psa 115:12** *The Lord remembers us and will bless us: He will bless the house of Israel, he will bless the house of Aaron.*

2. His followers are to be primarily concerned with spiritual matters, not with earthly affairs. Guarding one's mind and soul against the yeast, the false teaching, of the Pharisees and Sadducees is to be the believer's constant concern, not worrying and caring for earthly things.
  - a. A person's thoughts must be dominated by the truth so that he may remain in the truth and not be misled spiritually.

**Mat 15:19** *“For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.”*

**Rom 8:5-7** *Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.*

**2 Cor 10:3-5** *For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.*

**Eph 4:23-24** *To be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.*

**Thought 1.** Distrust cuts the heart of God to the core

**Mat 6:31-34** *So do not worry, saying, “What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”*

**Heb 11:6** *And without faith it is impossible to please God. because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

- b. The yeast, the false teaching of religionists and world leaders, is the great threat to human survival.

**Thought 1.** Note: the danger was not in eating bread with false teachers but in being misled by their teachings and behaviour. Christ ate with them (Lk. 7:36; 11:37; 14:1).

Note: the great spiritual lesson was grasped. The disciple of Christ is to beware of the teaching of the religionists (see *False Teaching*, Mt. 16:12). ■

### MATHEW 16: 06 YEAST AND LEAVEN

The yeast is mixed in unfinished flour. If the yeast is the gospel, then the picture is that of the gospel being placed...

- into the unfinished and imperfect world.
- into the unfinished and imperfect church in its earthly state.

The gospel (yeast) has to be placed right in the midst of the world and the church (unfinished and imperfect) if it is to do its work.

Note another point: flour is not bread, not by itself. By itself it is hard, dry, unsatisfying, and not too nourishing (Mt. 13:33). Using flour by itself to make bread is to misuse flour. Yet, how many try to make it through life without the yeast of the gospel. Their flour, that is, their lives, are thereby misused and incomplete.

**Thought 1.** The gospel is powerful, extremely powerful. Just a “little yeast works through the whole batch of dough” (1 Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9). Note three things.

- 1) A person who will allow just a little of the gospel to penetrate his life will eventually have his life changed.

**Acts 17:11-12** *Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true. Many of the Jews believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.*

- 2) Believers are to mix the gospel in the world. Just a little yeast will transform much. But observe: the yeast has to be worked and worked in order to be mixed thoroughly. What a lesson for faithfulness in sounding forth the message of the gospel!

**Mat 28:19-20** *“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

3) It does not take much yeast to do the work. No matter how little of the gospel a person knows, he should be working to reach people and to change the world for Christ. There is no excuse for doing nothing.

**Mark 5:19** *Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you."*

**John 15:27** *"And you also must testify, for you have been with me from the beginning."*

**Acts 4:20** *"For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard."*

If a person interprets the yeast to be evil, then the picture is that of the church in its unfinished and imperfect state. Because it is unfinished and not yet perfected, it is permeated with evil. The evil and unbelieving men (yeast) enter the church; they falsely profess to follow Christ.

The evil of religionists and world leaders is yeast (Mark 8:15). Jesus said, "Be careful...watch out for the yeast of the Pharisees, and that of Herod." The disciples completely misunderstood what Jesus was saying.

What did Jesus mean by the yeast of the Pharisees and of Herod or world leaders? (Matthew uses Sadducees instead of Herod. Most Herodians, followers of Herod, were Sadducees.)

1. The yeast of the Pharisees (religionists) was their doctrine or teaching (Mt. 16:12) and their hypocrisy, deception, and play-acting (Lk. 12:1). The Pharisees *fermented and soured everyone they touched*.
2. The Sadducees or Herodians were the liberal-minded of their day. They took away from God's Word, denying all Scripture except the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament. Again, they collaborated with the Romans in doing away with Jewish culture and instituting Roman and Greek culture. □

### MATHEW 16:12 FALSE TEACHING OF PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES

What is the yeast, the false teaching, of the Pharisees and Sadducees, that is, the religionists? Very simply put, it is just what the disciples finally understood: the doctrine (teachings) of the religionists. They fermented, soured, and brought disease to everyone they touched (See Mk. 8:15).

The Pharisees believed in a personal God and in the Scripture as God's Word to man, but they *added to* God's Word (see Lk. 6:2). They added rules and regulations, rituals and ceremonies laying undue restrictions upon man's behaviour. This led to three gross errors.

1. It led people to think that their good behaviour and their religious rituals and ceremonies made them acceptable to God. A religion of good works — of trying to do enough good to become acceptable to God — was being depended upon for righteousness.
2. It led to a religion of social respectability, an external religion. If a person were respected socially and did all the right things, then he was judged acceptable to God.
3. It led to an attitude and an air of self-righteousness. If a person kept the rules and regulations, he naturally felt righteous and sometimes demonstrated it. There was a dependence upon himself, upon keeping the right rules and thereby becoming righteous.

The Sadducees or Herodians were the liberal minded of their day. Their yeast or false teaching was twofold.

1. They *took away* from God's Word, denying all Scripture except the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament.
2. They were the free thinkers, the rationalists, the secularists, and the materialistic minded of their day. Thus they were willing to collaborate with the Romans in doing away with Jewish culture and in establishing Roman and Greek culture. Because of this, Rome placed their leaders in the governing positions (the Sanhedrin) and gave them wealth. Their worldly mindedness, their secular philosophy, and their liberal theology were always a threat to any man (see Mt. 16:1-12).

**Mat 7:15** *“Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.”*

**Mat 5:19** *“Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.”*

**Mat 15:9** *“They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.”*

**Acts 20:30** *Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.*

**Rom 10:3** *Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness.*

**Eph 4:14** *Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.*

**Rom 16:18** *For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people.*

**1 Tim 4:1** *The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.*

**1 Tim 4:2** *Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.*

**Titus 1:10-11** *For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group. They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach — and that for the sake of dishonest gain.*

**2 Pet 2:1** *But there were also false prophets among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them — bringing swift destruction on themselves.*

**1 John 2:18-19** *Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.*

**1 John 2:22** *Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist — he denies the Father and the Son.*

**2 John 1:7** *Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist. □*