

## Quarter Two: The Great Controversy

### Lesson 10—Spiritualism Exposed

#### Wednesday: Spiritualism in the Last Days, Part 1

June 5, 2024

- **Last Week:** “The Foundation of God’s Government”
  - The law as the foundation of God’s government; the sanctuary, God’s law, the Sabbath, the mark of the beast
- **This Week:** “Spiritualism Exposed”
  - The unbiblical teaching of life continuing after death opens the door to the great deception of spiritualism.
  - Used throughout history, it will have widespread influence and power in the last days

**Memory Text:** “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.” (1 Thess, 4:16, 17, NKJV)

The week in brief:

- 1. **Sunday:** The Deadly Consequences of Spiritualism (James)
  - Spiritualism’s rise in the church & its demonic underpinning
- 2. **Monday:** Death in the Old Testament (Daniel)
  - Biblical understanding of death as a sleep from the OT & how that prevents us from deception as Christians
- 3. **Tuesday:** Death in the New Testament (John D)
  - Biblical understanding of death as a sleep from the NT; the Cross & Jesus’ resurrection as a promise of the second coming / future resurrection
- 4. **Wednesday:** Spiritualism in the Last Days: Part 1 (Jill)
  - Counterfeit miracles & “signs” in the last days that appeal to emotion, instead of a “thus saith the Lord” from the Bible; the strength of this deception
- 5. **Thursday:** Spiritualism in the Last Days: Part 2 (John L)
  - Miracle & spiritualistic deception in the last days

#### Wednesday: Spiritualism in the Last Days, Part 1

Matt 24:5, 11, 24; 2 Thess 2:7 – 9; Rev 13:13, 14; Rev 16:13, 14

- What is spiritualism?
  - Oxford Dict: Spiritualism – “a system of belief or religious practice based on supposed communication with the spirits of the dead, especially through mediums.”
  - **History of spiritualism**
    - **Beginning:** Garden of Eden – serpent, “You shall not surely die”
      - Immortality of the soul concept
      - Deception part of the belief (1 Tim 2:14 – “the woman was deceived”)

- Rev 12:9 – the dragon, “Satan deceives the whole world”
    - Deception is part of Satan’s plan
    - Deception is connected with spiritualism
- Ancient **paganism** practices
  - Witchcraft, communicating with the spirits, sorcery, magic
  - Practices continue through until today
  - Deceptive part of paganism
    - If children are burned, the gods will be appeased
    - The “witch doctor” can communicate with the spirits
    - If “**this**” is done, rain will come
      - Mom will be healed
      - The “curse” will be averted
    - None of that is true, yet people are led to believe it
      - Deception is connected with spiritualism
- **Church** acceptance
  - 1<sup>st</sup> few centuries, AD – paganism crept into the church as it entered the middle ages, and was “baptized” or cloaked in other guises
    - Jer 10:2, AMP – “Thus says the Lord, ‘Do not learn the way of the [pagan] nations, and do not be terrified and distressed by the signs of the heavens although the pagans are terrified by them;’”
    - Yet, the church embraced the practices of the pagans
  - One practice of spiritualism = immortality of the soul
    - Spiritualism flourished in the church
    - Not just Catholics; most mainline Protestants, too
  - Deceptive part of immortality of the soul
    - “Gives me peace to think of Grandma in heaven”
    - If “see” grandma after she’s died, hard to argue with that
      - Word of God vs deception
- **Last days** = rampant deception of spiritualism
  - Overwhelming deception
    - False “christ’s”
      - Matt 24:5 – “For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.”
    - False prophets
      - Matt 24:11 – “Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.”
    - Deception for Christians – not just the world
      - Matt 24:24 – “For false christ’s and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.”

- The land beast (Apostate Protestantism) will perpetuate this deception
  - Rev 13:13, 14 – “He (the land beast who has just enforced worship to the sea beast / the papacy) performs **great signs**, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. (14) And he **deceives** those who dwell on the earth
    - Great signs = miracles that establish his authority
    - Deception across the earth
  
- 3-fold union of deception = counterfeit trinity / counterfeit to 3 angels messages
  - Rev 16:12 – “Then the 6<sup>th</sup> angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.”
    - Traces fall of ancient Babylon as symbol for fall of end-time spiritual Babylon
      - Babylon’s support is dried up (Euphrates drying up)
    - Preparing the way for the coming of Christ
      - Illusion to Cyrus & his armies who overthrew ancient Babylon
  - Rev 16:13 – “And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the **dragon**, out of the mouth of the **beast**, and out of the mouth of the **false prophet**.”
    - Counterfeit trinity / counterfeit to 3 angels’ messages
      - 3 angels gather the remnant / 3 demons gather the wicked
      - This is Satan’s last attempt to counterfeit the work of God (plague of frogs was last of Moses’s plagues that the Egyptian magicians were able to duplicate)
    - Dragon = modern-day spiritualism (roots in ancient paganism)
    - Beast = sea beast of Rev 13; papacy
    - False prophet = land beast; Apostate Protestantism
  - Rev 16:14 – “For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.”
    - Last battle between Christ / His people & Satan / his followers, just b4 the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Christ
    - Deception with miracles & “signs”

- GC, p. 588, “Through the 2 great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. The **Protestants** of the United States (false prophet) will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of **spiritualism**; (dragon) they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the **Roman** power; (beast) and under the influence of this threefold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience.”
- **Emotion as the basis for deception**
  - Jill’s thesis: “Deception is effective because we trust our emotions, instead of the authority of the Word of God.”
    - It looks like Grandma, so it must be her, even though she already died
    - If he looks like Christ, sounds like Christ, talks like Christ, so it must be Him
    - How could that person be healed, except by divine power?
    - It feels so good
      - Eve, “saw tree was good for food, pleasant to the eyes & desired to make one wise”
      - Deception appeals to our senses: what feels good, what looks good, what seems right philosophically
    - Deception in the church
      - Pagans = immortality of the soul (ancient Babylon & Egypt, & later the Greeks)
        - Church = immortality of the soul
      - Pagans = Babylonian mythology & veneration of mother & child (Ishtar & Tammuz)
        - Church = veneration of Mary as Jesus’ mother
      - Pagans (Eastern religions) = meditation
        - Church = contemplative prayer
      - Eastern religion = yoga & breathing
        - Church = Scripture yoga (meditating on Scripture while holding yoga poses)
  - Feeling vs fact: emotion vs the Word of God
    - 2 Pet 1:16 & 19 - 21 – “For we did not follow cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ... (19) And so we have the **prophetic word confirmed**, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; (20) knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, (21) for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”
      - Vs 16 = What Peter taught was from his own personal experience
      - Vs 19 = Prophecy (the Word of God) is more authoritative than personal experience
        - Prophetic word confirmed = “the prophetic word more fully confirmed”
      - Personal experience can be deceiving
        - The Word of God is unshakable

- **How can we not be deceived?**
  - **1. Test every experience by the Word of God**
    - Isa 8:20 – “To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”
      - In context, about spiritualism (mediums & wizards)
    - **Takeaway #1: Trust the Word of God above the deception of spiritualism**
  - **2. Emotions & experiences are not always reality**
    - Jer 17:9 – “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?”
    - **Takeaway #2: Trust the Word of God over your own instincts / “gut”**
      - John 17:17 – “Sanctify them by Your truth; Your Word is truth.”
  - **3. Walk in obedience to what the Word says**
    - Matt 7:21 – 24 – “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven, (22) Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ (23) And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’ (24) Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wiseman who built his house on the rock...”
    - **Takeaway #3: Trust the Word of God enough to walk in obedience**
      - We can “feel” saved
      - We can “feel” as if we know Jesus
      - We can “feel as if we’re following Him
      - But unless we are willing to walk in obedience to His Word, we’re deceived
- **3 takeaways to avoid spiritual deception**
  - #1: Trust the Word of God above the deception of spiritualism
  - #2: Trust the Word of God over your own instincts / “gut”
  - #3: Trust the Word of God enough to walk in obedience