

# SEED & BREAD

FOR THE SOWER    ISA. 55:10    FOR THE EATER  
BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM

## THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

Otis Q. Sellers, Bible Teacher

# THE CHRISTIAN FAKERS

It may seem somewhat inelegant to use the word *Christian* to describe a certain class of fakers, but the words in this title state precisely what I have to say in this study. In all fields of endeavor, there are millions of fakers; and among these are the thousands who practice their deceptions under the cloak of Christianity. These delude themselves into thinking that since they profess to be Christians, they could not possibly be deceivers. Since they make much use of the name of Christ, they feel that this frees them from every taint of deception; especially so, since they are acclaimed by Biblically illiterate masses as being God's servants doing His work and His will. Thus, they deceive not only themselves; but they deceive others as well and are described in 2 Tim. 3:13 as displaying one of the prominent characteristics in the concluding days of God's present dispensation-"**deceiving and being deceived.**"

Yet, there are many today who refuse to even think that there are present and prominent in professing Christian circles those who are fakers, even though the words of Christ tell of them. All who profess to follow Him should know that He spoke of this class of deceivers when He said: "**Many shall come in My name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many**" (Matt. 24:5). In view of these words, how can anyone think that there are no such things as Christian fakers?

The full force of this warning has been obscured in this passage by an inadequate translation. It is a well-known fact that the Greek word *christos* means "anointed"; and even though it is translated "Christ" in all its 569 occurrences, we lose much truth in many passages by always translating it this way. In this passage it could be better rendered, "**Many will come in My name, saying, I am the anointed one,**" thus claiming that they have

been designated or appointed by God to perform some great service or function. Our Lord warned that there would be "many" of these, and that they would be well received since "**they will deceive many**" (Matt. 24:5).

Following this, our Lord declared: "**For there shall arise false Christs** (*spurious anointed ones*), **and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders**" (Matt. 24: 24). If all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ would take Him at His word here, they would once and for all banish from their minds the popular superstition that anyone who can foretell future events, or those who can produce signs and wonders, are of necessity in close relationship with God. Let this truth be burned into our minds-that supernaturalism is never in itself an index of divine activity, since it is by means of the supernatural that evil forces gain their greatest victories.

We need to note carefully the words of Paul that tell us that the presence of the Antichrist is "**after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders**" (2 Thess. 2:9). It is imperative in these days for the true servants of God to warn all professing Christians of the danger of being deceived, not by that which is obviously evil, but by that which has all the outward appearances of good. Beware of the Christian fakers! They surround us on every side.

However, the words from Scripture which we have been considering are declarations that mostly have to do with a future time, the great tribulation (Matt. 24:21); and we need to examine those that have a more direct application to the time in which we now live. The words spoken by our Lord in Matt. 7:15-23 do have a direct application to the present time. It is a time immediately preceding the divine assumption of sovereignty, the advent of the kingdom of God upon the earth. He said: "**Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves**" (7:15).

Then, in the time of which Matt. 7:21 speaks, it is evident that the kingdom of God has become a reality upon earth, the judgment of all living men is in progress (2 Tim. 4: 1 ), and many are pleading their cases before the Judge of all the earth. They speak on earth and are heard in heaven. He speaks in heaven and is heard upon the earth. They are seeking to be allowed to continue to live upon the earth where all the blessings of God's beneficent government are starting to be enjoyed.

Concerning them, our Lord said: **"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?"** (Matt. 7: 22). These people are so deceived by their own supernatural works that they dare to present them as evidence to God for the reason that they think they should find a place in His kingdom. Nevertheless, the Lord replies to them, **"I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity."** In view of these words, the warning needs to be repeated, "Beware of false prophets, especially those who perform supernatural works!"

It is generally believed that a prophet is demonstrated to be false if his predictions fail to come true, but this is not the way it is presented to us in Scripture. There, if the prophecy comes to pass and he uses his apparent success to aggrandize himself and lead people away from the Lord, the fact is pure and simple, he is a faker. The venerable Moses said: **"If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul"** (Deut. 13:1-3).

Could it not be that also in our day, God is testing our profession of love toward Him by proving us to see if we will hold fast His simple and explicit declaration of **"One Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus"** (1 Tim. 2:5); or will we accept as mediators all great and small miracle workers that come along? Will we allow some self-styled prophetess, like Jeanne Dixon, to use her few successful predictions to lead us away from finding our all in Jesus Christ, and into the worship of sun, moon, and stars as little gods to stand between us and our great God, and to be the real controllers of our lives to which we must pay due homage before any movement we might make? She attempts to do this in her syndicated newspaper column on astrology. And since she brings into all this the name of Christ, she becomes a most pertinent example of Christian fakery.

Another outstanding example is found in the revelations of Marjoe Gortner, who now repudiates his hypocrisy. Exploited by his mother, he was ordained a minister at the age of four and performed a marriage ceremony one year later-an incident that created a wave of notoriety which he was able

to ride for the next ten years. However, by the age of fifteen, the "adorable child" had become an awkward, unattractive adolescent whose career quickly went into eclipse. After a few obscure and lean years, he decided to try a comeback and enjoyed a measure of success on the holiness and pentecostal circuits. He carried with him grosses of bandannas stamped, "Marjoe's Miracle Handkerchief," which he sold at meetings for ten dollars each. He painted a cross on his forehead; and as he perspired, it would appear and disappear. Men and women adored him, fell at his feet, and showered him with money. All this is according to his own words.

Feeling the need of some new gimmick in his ministry, he worked hard to perfect his ability to make people faint, a hypnotic routine that had emerged in holiness circles and was claimed to be a manifestation of the power of God. This demonstration was one developed to perfection by the late Kathryn Kuhlman, the foremost practitioner of this (miracle?).

In a meeting in Detroit, Gortner asked everyone who did not feel the power of God within them to stand. Sixteen men and women stood up. He called them forward, lined them against a wall, and kept them standing there through a long sermon. In the sermon he declared that the wicked would stand fast in their sins, but the saved would yield. Following this preconditioning of mind and body, he jabbed his finger at them; and they fell to the floor like a row of dominoes. This was declared to be the power of God coming upon them, a visitation of the Holy Spirit.

This gimmick of making people faint is certainly one of the most crass bits of fakery practiced by the Christian fakers, especially when it is set forth as being a supernatural visitation of God. It has no basis in Scripture, and there is not one line in the Bible to support it. It is nothing whatsoever but religious hypnotism such as any practitioner of the art can easily duplicate. All the elements required for successful results by a hypnotist are present—the preconditioning by song and sermon, the willingness of the subject, and his anxiety for a successful outcome. A professional hypnotist, one well-known by his stage appearances, declares that in an hour or so, he can teach a bright fourteen-year-old boy the trick of making people faint.

"I do not know how I do it." This was the constantly repeated exclamation of Katherine Kuhlman as one of her subjects would fall backward to be lowered to the floor by the ever present "catcher." If she truly did not know, then she was very ignorant of hypnotic processes and the power of

suggestion upon a preconditioned person. She was utterly blind to any fact that threatened the validity of her ministry.

The deception in this fainting routine was clearly revealed in a ninety-minute television program entitled, "Kathryn Kuhlman in Las Vegas," the only time one of her public services was recorded for later television showing. A middle-aged woman, who was supposedly smitten by the power of God, was lowered to the floor by the "catcher"; but in doing so, he clumsily pulled his arm over her head and caused her wig to slide forward until it completely covered her face. This brought her out from under the supposed power of God immediately. She tried to replace the wig without raising her head, but could not do so. Finally, she raised herself into a ridiculous squatting position and replaced the wig, but, lacking a mirror, got it on crooked. The sharp eye of the television camera revealed all of this, and it also revealed the fakery of the whole performance.

In this study it has been necessary to name names; but in doing so, it has not been my purpose to charge any individual with being a faker. My task has been to sound an alarm and to declare certain facts that I have seen, facts that I have heard, and facts that have been published. Uppermost of all, I have set forth certain facts written in the Word of God. The reader can now from these make his own judgments. Finally, I say, beware of Christian fakers!

**END   ISSUE NO. SB068**