

Glad Tidings

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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An Angel Of Light

(Jerry Fite)

The familiar description of Satan fixed in many minds is the grotesque figure in a red suit, with a pointed tail holding a pitch fork. While the Bible never gives us such a description, how would we recognize Satan if he were in our midst? It may surprise you, but the Bible says he can appear in a fashion we might not ever recognize as pertaining to the Devil. “*For even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light*” (2 Corinthians 11:14).

This is an area of which we must be aware in our progress toward spiritual maturity. Paul is warning Christians of “*false apostles*” and “*deceitful workers*” who appear as “*apostles of Christ*” (2 Corinthians 11:13). He enforces his warning with a comparison. Christians should be aware of such irony, for even Satan can transform himself into appearing as an angel of light. Satan can be in our midst cutting a pleasant figure before our eyes but in reality be Satan, the evil one, our ultimate advisory. How might this transformed angel of light appear before us?

He might be promising us liberty. The wonderful concept of freedom is definitely a character-

istic of God’s light. This is a blessing from Christ. “*For freedom did Christ set us free. . .*” (Galatians 5:1). But appearing as an angel of light the messenger may channel the freedom towards the liberty to give in to our fleshly lusts. You are free to live like you want. God’s grace has covered all your sin. Enjoy your freedom may be the enticing message of what appears to be an angel of light. But God instructs us that the freedom in Christ is not a license to sin. Peter warns of deceptive messengers. They “*utter great swelling words of vanity, they entice in the lusts of the flesh. . . promising them liberty, while they themselves are bondservants of corruption*” (2 Peter 2:18-19). In Christ we definitely have freedom from sin, but become servants of righteousness (Romans 6:18), instead of serving our own desires and becoming servants of corruption.

The angel of light might approach promising us wisdom. Wisdom is definitely a blessing of light. Treasures of wisdom are available to those who are “*in Christ*” (Colossians 2:3). He is “*our wisdom*” (1 Corinthians 1:24). The angel of light may appear as sophisticated and highly educated. The philosophy offered

however may be merely “*vain deceit and after the rudiments of the world*” instead of being from Christ. Look out! Paul says we can be captivated with man’s philosophy, and Satan, the angel of light, will take us away as spoils of war, adding us to his collection of destroyed souls (Colossians 2:8).

Satan, the angel of light, might approach offering us happiness. The Christian, from the beginning of his walk in the remission of sins to the walk that transcends all circumstances, can rejoice in the Lord (Acts 8: 39, Philippians 4:4). The light of the Gospel offers this blessing. But it is the happiness “in the Lord,” not as the angel of light directs. He offers “*pleasure*” instead of “*happiness*.” Sin is definitely pleasurable. This is what makes sin so enticing. But when reality sets in, the pleasure is short lived. Moses remained righteous and suffered instead of “*enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season*” (Hebrews 11:25).

Freedom, wisdom and happiness are appealing and supplied in Christ. Arm yourself with God’s word so you can see the poor substitutes offered by the angel of light when he appears.