

The Counterfeit

Counterfeiting, exactly what is it? The Merriam-Webster Dictionary gives the following definition of the word "counterfeit." "The legal Definition of counterfeit: made in imitation of a genuine article (as a document) without authorization and especially with intent to deceive or defraud." It seems as though counterfeiting has been around since time immortal. The reason or purpose behind the counterfeit practice has always been the same and, over the years, it has become more developed as counterfeiters have become more sophisticated. With the evolution of modern technology, detecting a counterfeit product has become more difficult. One popular item to counterfeit has always been money, and the counterfeiters seem to have mastered the technique. However, there are ways to detect counterfeit currency and there are trained people with the skill to recognize a bogus bill. Being trained, properly and having the necessary skill is very important to the task. Even more important is having a true copy to go by; the true copy reveals the true nature of the product the counterfeiter is trying to imitate. By having the true representation as a guide, the counterfeit copy is, then revealed for what it really is. With these thoughts now established, let us now shift our thinking to religion and spiritual matters.

The greatest counterfeiter of all time is the person called Satan and known by the name of Lucifer. As a created being, his original position was that of an archangel but he was not satisfied with that; he wanted to be like God and even God himself {Isaiah 14:13-14} and for that he was expelled from Heaven {Isaiah 14:12}. He is also known by many other names in the Bible, names such as "Abaddon" {Revelation 9:11}, "Accuser" {Revelation 12:10}, "Adversary" {I Peter 5:8}, "Angel of the bottomless pit" {Revelation 9:11}, "Apollyon" {Revelation 9:11}, "Belial" {II Corinthians 6:15}, "Beelzebub" {Matthew 12:24}, "The Devil" {Matthew 4:1}, "God of this world" {II Corinthians 4:4} just to name a few.

Expelled from Heaven, and cast down to the earth because of his rebellion, Lucifer has ever since taken on the form of different beings but, always with the intent of undermining God. The first time we read about him, he is manipulating Eve in the Garden of Eden as he puts doubt in her mind about what God had said. {Genesis 3:1-5}. Ever since that fateful day when Adam and Eve were deceived, by Satan, and yielded to his temptation, there has been deceivers counterfeiters in the world and we find them at all levels of life. When it comes to religion and churches, the wicked influence of Satan is there. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ." {II Corinthians 11:13} When it comes to counterfeiting, Satan is the master counterfeiter; he is so good at it that he even appears as an angel of light. "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." {II Corinthians 11:14} Not everyone who claims to be a Christian is one. How can this be? One answer to this question we read in this verse of Scripture: "Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." {II Corinthians 11:15}

The counterfeiter, no matter how skilled or how good the counterfeit item may be, when it is examined under the best of microscopes, it will be revealed for what it is; a counterfeit. An examination of the religions of the world under the intense microscope of God's Word, the Bible, reveals them for what they really are, and they do not pass His inspection. With his false ministers of the Gospel, Satan as the master counterfeiter, has deceived multitudes. Because of this, lost souls are dying and going to the Hell that God created for the Devil. ". . . everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:" {Matthew 25:41 b}

The Christian faith is not exempt from the counterfeiting attempts of Satan. Often, in a church, there are men who will preach a Gospel sermon but it is **NOT** the same Gospel, the Bible has as they ignore many important doctrines. These doctrines include such biblical truths as repentance, the blood of Jesus Christ, eternal security of the believer, and sin. God's Word warns against this by saying, "As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." {Galatians 1:9}.

God gave us His Word, the Bible that is, settled in Heaven. "For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven." {Psalm 119:89} Christians are to study the Bible " Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." {II Timothy 2:15} because "All scripture is

given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." {II Timothy 3:16-17} Satan may be a master counterfeiter but God's Word, the Bible is **THE** microscope for examining everything. Christians of today need to be like those of Berea: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." {Acts 17:11} God's Word is a lamp to guide us, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." {Psalm 119:105} and by studying it, we will not be fooled by the master counterfeiter and his imitations. Finally, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world." {I John 4:1}. To "try" the spirits means to test them and we do this under the microscope of God's Word.

~Richard A. Ciarrocca/2018

All Scripture references are KJV