

20th Century Bible Study

LESSON SIXTEEN.

Dear friend.

In every age, God's people have been confronted with deceptions designed to draw their hearts away from truth. Among the most dangerous of these is spiritualism, the belief that the dead are conscious and can communicate with the living. This teaching, which many don't realize actually contradicts the plain testimony of Scripture, has not only captivated the imagination of the world but has also infiltrated churches, culture, and even Christian thought.

The Bible warns us that in the closing scenes of earth's history, spiritualism will become one of Satan's chief tools of deception, preparing multitudes to receive "lying wonders" and to turn away from the authority of God's Word. Christ Himself cautioned, "Take heed that no man deceive you... for there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24:4, 24).

This study seeks to equip us with a clear, biblical understanding of the state of the dead, the true nature of spiritualism, and how the enemy uses deception to prepare the world for his final masterpiece of deception. At the same time, it points us to the unshakable hope found in Jesus Christ, the Resurrection and the Life, who alone holds the keys of death and the grave.

As we prayerfully open God's Word, let us seek discernment, humility, and courage. May this study strengthen your faith, sharpen your spiritual eyesight, and anchor you in the truth that sets us free.

LESSON 10

THE INROAD OF SPIRITUALISM AND FINAL DECEPTION

Purpose of this lesson

- To understand what the Bible says about the foundation of spiritualism.
- To expose its deception and how Christians are to discern and remain faithful in the end times.
- To equip believers with scriptural truth and tools for spiritual discernment.
- To apply this understanding to life and prepare for what may come.

Part 1: Understanding Key Concepts

What is Spiritualism?

Define spiritualism: communication with the dead, belief in spirits that survive bodily death, mediums, séances, etc.

What is the foundation of Spiritualism? Genesis 3:4 KJV And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall ___ surely ___:

Spiritualism traces its origin to the very first lie recorded in Genesis. When Satan declared, “Ye shall not surely die,” he directly contradicted God’s clear command that disobedience would bring death. (Gen 2:16-17) This deception denied the reality of sin’s consequence and laid the very foundation upon which spiritualism is built.

In Lesson 11, “Is There Life After Death?” we explored what the Bible truly teaches about the state of the dead, the meaning of life, the result of sin, the crucifixion of Christ, and the resurrection of the saints. The doctrine of spiritualism, however, undermines these foundational truths of Christianity. It strikes at the very heart of the gospel message and opens the door to massive deception in the last days—a danger this lesson will now expose.

Part 2. Five Major facts about the state of the dead.

1. Death is a Sleep

The Bible consistently describes death as an unconscious sleep. The dead are not aware of the passage of time and have no interaction with the living.

Texts: John 11:11–14; Ecclesiastes 9:5–6, 10; Psalm 146:4

2. No Immortal Soul by Nature

Human beings do not possess inherent immortality. Life is a gift from God, and immortality is granted only through Christ at the resurrection.

Texts: 1 Timothy 6:15–16; Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 6:23

3. Resurrection is the Christian Hope

The dead in Christ will rise at the Second Coming of Jesus, when immortality is bestowed. Until then, they remain in the grave.

Texts: 1 Thessalonians 4:13–16; 1 Corinthians 15:51–54; John 5:28–29

4. Judgment Follows Death

The dead do not face judgment immediately at death; rather, judgment occurs at the appointed time when books are opened and lives are reviewed, after Christ returns.

Texts: Hebrews 9:27; Revelation 20:11–13; Daniel 12:1–2

5. Spiritualism is Built on a Lie

The teaching that the dead are conscious or can communicate with the living is a deception rooted in Satan's first lie: "Ye shall not surely die" (Genesis 3:4). This lie prepares the way for end-time deceptions.

Texts: Genesis 3:4; 2 Corinthians 11:14; Revelation 16:13–14

What is the Final Deception in Particular? 2 Corinthians 11:13-14 KJV

For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. [14] And no marvel; for Satan _____ is transformed into an angel of _____.

False apostles disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, but Scripture warns us that Satan himself can go even further. The text declares that Satan himself "able to transform himself into an angel of light." If he can assume such a holy appearance, how much greater is the scope of his deceptions, and how careful must we be to discern truth from error.

What kinds of "great signs and wonders" are mentioned in verse 24, and what is their purpose?

Jesus' warning: Matthew 24:4-5, 24 — many will come in His name, false _____, false _____,...

False Christs and false prophets will both play a major role in deceiving humanity in the end times, yet their methods and influence differ. The false Christs appeal by claiming divine authority and identity, while the false prophets amplify their reach by spreading false messages and interpretations. Working together, empowered by signs and lying wonders, their combined efforts will culminate in a worldwide deception designed to mislead nations and draw people away from the truth of God's Word.

Part 3: Questions for Group Reflection or Personal Meditation

- How do biblical descriptions of spiritualism compare with common beliefs/teachings in culture or religion today?
- Why is belief in immortality of the soul (or converse) significant in relation to deception and spiritualism?
- What are the "spirits" that must be tested (1 John 4)? How can one test them practically?
- How does knowing the true state of the dead give comfort or protection in times of deception?
- What kind of deception is most subtle or likely to catch Christians unawares?

Part 4: Warning Signs of Spiritual Deception

- Supernatural phenomena that confirm our desires rather than Scripture.
- Communication with dead, seeking guidance from spirits or mediums.
- Any teaching that undermines the sufficiency of Christ's atonement, or the authority of Scripture.
- Doctrines that blur the line between truth and error, "partial truths" that lead away.
- Spiritualism seeks exalt the words of man above the law of God.

Part 5: How to Be Prepared & Protected

- **Study the Word** — Let Scripture be the standard. Acts 17:11 (Bereans), Psalm 119:105.
- **Prayer & the Holy Spirit** — Depend on the Spirit to reveal truth. John 16:13.
- **Discernment** — Practice testing spirits, doctrines; ask questions.
- **Community** — Seek fellowship with those who love truth. Accountability.
- **Faithfulness & Obedience** — Live out what is known; being steadfast even when deception is tempting.

How do these verses debunk the lie of spiritualism?

Ecclesiastes 9:5-6 KJV

For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. [6] Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.

Verse 5

“For the living know that they shall die:”

- The living are aware of the certainty of death.
- Death is the universal destiny of humanity (Hebrews 9:27).

“But the dead know not any thing,”

- Once dead, a person is unconscious.
- No awareness, no knowledge, no participation in life.

“Neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.”

- Earthly recognition and opportunities end at death.
- Human memory fades, and the dead no longer receive honors or rewards in this life.

Verse 6

“Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished;”

- Emotions and passions cease at death.
- The dead can no longer feel or express human experiences.

“Neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.”

- The dead no longer play a role in the affairs of this world.
- They are completely cut off from the living realm until the resurrection.

Death is a state of unconscious rest; the dead remain inactive and unaware until the resurrection. If we accept what the Bible clearly teaches about the condition of the dead, spiritualism loses its power to deceive. God’s people must learn to trust His Word above their physical senses. No sign, miracle, or supernatural manifestation should ever outweigh the plain truth of Scripture.