

Signs Of The Times



Are They From God?

THE SIGNS OF THE TIME

The signs of the time are here. People are eager to talk about what they have felt and seen. When you encounter someone who is trusting in a sign, ask them this question, “What makes your supernatural experience (or sign) any more authoritative than someone else’s?” Signs are a deception.

Talk to a Pentecostal, and he will tell you that he knows he has the truth because of receiving the sign of tongues. This supernatural experience has convinced him that his faith is in the right place. Now that he has that “sign,” he believes that Pentecostals are teaching the truth.

Talk to a person in Europe who has been praying by one of the huge statues of Mary, especially if that statue was either weeping or had blood dripping from its hands. You will find a person who is convinced by this sign that he or she has the true religion. The “sign” has cemented this conviction in their hearts. They know the truth because of the sign.

Talk to a person who has read the Book of Mormon and then prayed for a sign to know if it is true. Whether spiritual or physical, when he gets a feeling in his chest that is called the “burning of the bosom,” he has found his answer. You have a person who will put this sign above all other subjective truth, above speaking in tongues or seeing a statue bleed. You have a person who will place this sign within his chest above all objective truth, even the Word of God. No matter how much their “sign” may contradict the teachings of the Bible, it will become their assurance.

Have you sought for a sign? Have you trusted in a sign to know that you have the “truth”? From whom did your sign come?

The New Testament speaks of three different groups of signs. They are as follows:

1. The signs of Christ
2. The signs of the apostles
3. The signs of Satan

The Signs of Christ

Toward the end of Christ's earthly ministry, he was asked for a sign. Both Pharisees and Sadducees had come to him. The Bible says that they were "tempting" Him, desiring He would show them a sign from heaven (Matthew 16:1). Notice how He responded to their seeking of a sign:

Matthew 16:4 –

A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas.

Jesus Christ said that no sign would be given, but the sign of His resurrection.

Matthew 12:40 –

For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Jesus also taught His disciples that there would be a specific sign that would signal His second coming.

Matthew 24:30 –

And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

These two signs are the only signs Christ said he would give. No other sign would be given. These are the only signs one can fully trust to be true, the only signs one can trust to be from God.

Revelation 1:7 –

Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

The Signs of the Apostles

After the signs of Christ, the next groupings of signs are the signs of the miracles

performed by the Lord's apostles. The purpose of these signs was to vindicate the message of the gospel. The apostles raised the dead, cast out devils, made the lame to walk, healed the sick, etc. The Scriptures confirm that the signs of the apostles came from God:

Acts 5:12 –

And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people....

2 Corinthians 12:12 –

Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.

The Signs of Satan

Since the time period in which the apostles lived, there has been only one other group of active signs during the Church Age: they are the signs of Satan. Some examples of how Satan's signs convince people to follow a false religion are as follows:

1. A statue of Mary weeping real tears.
2. People, after reading the Book of Mormon, getting a feeling in their chest of burning.
3. People who experience unintelligible babbling (unknown tongues).

These supernatural, satanic signs mislead people into believing they have the truth. Consider the following passages:

Matthew 24:4-5; 11; 23-25 –

And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. 5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. 11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. 24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if

it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect. 25 Behold, I have told you before.

Galatians 1:6-9 —

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 **But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.** 9 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.**

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12 —

Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 —

For such are false, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. 14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 15 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.

Revelation 13:11-15 —

And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon [the devil]. 12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, 14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. 15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

Revelation 16:14 –

For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

Yes, it might truly be said that the “signs of the time” are the miracle signs of deception, used by Satan to deceive the lost. God’s Word is not enough to most. Today, like in the days of Christ Himself, the unbelievers want more signs. However, the Bible alone is the only, and final, authority for all faith and truth.

The Bible will lead a seeking soul to the Saviour, giving him peace and confidence based on the promise of God’s Word. A sign will lead a soul into Satan’s snare. When that happens, the erring soul will say, “But, I felt it! I saw it! It must be true!”

Have Satan’s signs and lying wonders become the source of your testimony?

CONSIDERATION

The Genesis Chapter One account of creation describes not only the creation of the earth, but all the countless stars, galaxies and universes which would include the star Kolob.

John 1:3

All things were made by him [Jesus Christ]; and without him was not anything made which was made (Joseph Smith Translation).

Jesus said, John 8:24 *I said therefore unto you [Mormons and all others], that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he [who created all things], ye shall die in your sins.*

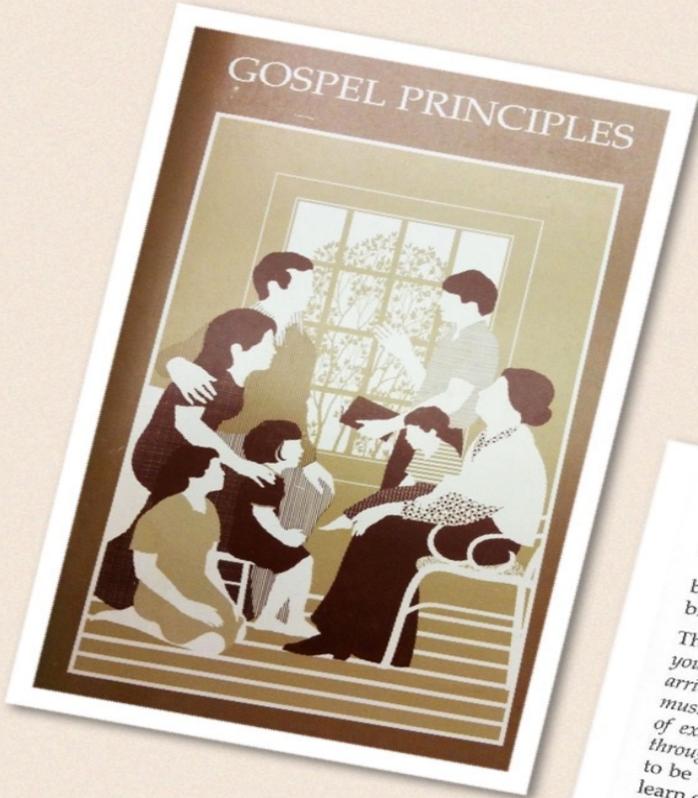
One cannot believe in a false god or a false Jesus and have true salvation. The true Jesus of the Scriptures is the Eternal (no beginning or ending) Son of God and the Creator of all things.

This is the way our Heavenly Father became a god. Joseph Smith taught: “It is the first principle of the Gospel to know for a certainty the character of God. . . . He was once a man like us; ... God himself, the Father of us all, dwelt on an earth, the same as Jesus Christ himself did.” p. 305.

How, then, could a Mormon ever come to the conclusion that what he has been told about the afterlife is not true? The answer to this question is in the Scriptures:

Romans 10:17 –

So then faith [true faith] cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.



bathed in the fulness of truth, which shall grow brighter and brighter until the perfect day" (*Doctrines of Salvation*, 2:36). The Prophet Joseph Smith taught: "When you climb up a ladder, you must begin at the bottom, and ascend step by step, until you arrive at the top; and so it is with the principles of the Gospel—you must begin with the first, and go on until you learn all the principles of exaltation. But it will be a great while after you have passed through the veil [died] before you will have learned them. It is not all to be comprehended in this world; it will be a great work to learn our salvation and exaltation even beyond the grave" (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, p. 348).

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Our Heavenly Father knows our trials, our weaknesses, and our sins. He has compassion and mercy on us. He wants us to succeed even as he did.

Imagine what joy each of us will have when we return to our Heavenly Father if we can say: "Father, I did what you wanted me to do. I have been faithful and have kept your commandments. I am happy to be home again." Then we will hear him say, "Well done; . . . thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (*Matthew 25:23*).

Discussion

- Describe how you might feel to hear the Savior's words in *Matthew 25:23*.
- What must we do to endure to the end?

Additional Scriptures

- D&C 132:3–4, 16–26, 37 (pertaining to exaltation)
- D&C 131:1–4 (eternal marriage is key to exaltation)
- D&C 76:59–70 (blessings of celestial glory explained)