

# The Attack of the Counterfeit Christian

“It was your average morning with people heading off to another hectic day of work in this city that never sleeps. But little did these people know, for many of them, it was soon to become their last day alive.

At 8:45 that very morning, a passenger jet crashed into the north tower of this business high-rise, tearing a gaping hole in the building and setting it on fire. And if that wasn't bad enough, precisely 18 minutes later, a second airliner crashed into the twin south tower, causing a devastating explosion.

But even for the fortunate few who survived the explosions and flames, their fate wasn't much better. Why? Because the unthinkable became reality. The buildings were not only of fire, they began to fall.

And as the dust finally settled, the damage was assessed. The once thriving trade center had become a wasteland that required 98,000 truckloads just to remove the debris.

And the loss of life was absolutely heartbreaking with the lives of almost 4,000 Americans being wiped out.

And before going to sleep, the President wrote in his diary, “The Pearl Harbor of the 21st century just took place today.”

The year was 2001. The city was New York. The disaster was, 9/11.”

Now, we all know that the terrorist attack on 9/11 was one of the greatest disasters of all time, right? But what if I were to tell you that I know of a disaster that makes 9/11 look like a **backyard scuffle**. And what if I were to tell you that **this disaster** didn't occur in just one city, but it's going on **right now today** all over the world and it's been leaving a trail of death

and destruction for centuries. That's right. I'm talking about **The Attack of the Killer C's**.

People of God, as American troops have gone off to war to fight an external enemy, so the American Church needs to go to war to fight the **internal enemy** of our souls, satan. Why? Because whether you feel it, see it, or believe it or not, the moment you got saved you entered a spiritual war against a **demonic host** whose sole purpose is to destroy you and extinguish your effectiveness for Christ. Therefore, in light of these wars raging all around us, we're going to continue in our study, **The Attack of the Killer C's**.

We've already seen that the **first weapon** the enemy fires at us is the attack of the **Casual Christian**. The **second weapon** is the attack of the **Cultural Christian**. And the **third weapon** is the attack of the **Compromising Christian**. And last week we saw that the **fourth weapon** the enemy fires at us is the attack of the **Corruptive Christian**. And there we saw that the devil will actually trick us into self-destructing ourselves and self-destructing the Church. How? By getting us to **sound** and **behave** more like satan instead of the Savior.

Oh, but that's not the only thing. The **fifth** and most deadliest **weapon** of all the enemy fires at us is the attack of the **Counterfeit Christian**. But hey, don't take my word for it. Let's listen to God's.

**John 6:60-66** "On hearing it, many of his disciples said, 'This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?' Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, 'Does this offend you? What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. Yet there are some of you who do not believe.'

For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. He went on to say, 'This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him.' From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him."

Now according to our text, Jesus not doesn't even hesitate to tell the people who were following Him that not only were His teachings from God, but that **He Himself was God**. How? By knowing only what God could know. That is, whether or not a person truly believed in Him. And because of this, we observe the shocking truth that "**Not everyone who claims to be a disciple of Christ really is one.**" The Bible says that some are actually going to be counterfeits just like Judas was. And the word **counterfeit** means "to pretend or imitate something else with the intent to deceive." And people this is satan's deadliest trick of all. Just like Judas of Iscariot, he gets people to think they're on the highway to heaven when in reality they're still on the highway to hell. Therefore, to make sure that all of us here don't fall

into this deadly trap, I think we better take a look at the signs to indicate when a person may indeed be a counterfeit Christians, how about you?

The **first sign** to indicate when a person's become a **Counterfeit Christian** just like Judas, is when they **Worship God with Their Head but Not Their Heart**.

**James 2:14-17,19** "What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed, but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it?

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that – and shudder."

People, the Bible declares that not all faith is a saving faith. And according to our text, if your faith is not accompanied with action, it's not only fake, **it's dead**. And people the devil knows this. So here's what he does. He tricks people into thinking that faith is having a **head knowledge** of God instead of a heart knowledge. Or in other words, just giving a mental ascent that God exists. But hello, as we read, even the demons believe that God exists but are they saved? Absolutely not! So if you believe that there's a God, then whip-de-do! This only puts you on the same level as the demons! And this is what the Bible calls a **dead faith**.

And people it's my contention that this **dead faith syndrome** has become an epidemic in the American Church. Many people in Churches today think it's no big deal to not "get involved" and "get serious" about going to Church services. I mean, after all, you don't want to be labeled as one of those Jesus freaks do you? And people, this apathetic behavior has become so commonplace in the American Church that we even make jokes about it all the time, like this one.

"There were three country churches in a small Texas town that were being overrun by some pesky squirrels.

So the 1<sup>st</sup> Church called a meeting to decide what to do about the squirrels. And after much prayer and consideration they determined that the squirrels were predestined to be there and they shouldn't interfere with God's divine will.

And when the 2<sup>nd</sup> Church got together, they decided they weren't in a position to harm any of God's creations. So, they humanely trapped the squirrels and set them free a few miles outside of town. However, three days later, the squirrels were back.

But it was only the 3<sup>rd</sup> Church that was able to come up with the best and most effective solution. You see, they decided to baptize the squirrels and registered them as members of the church. Why?

Because now they only see them on Christmas and Easter."

Now granted that joke is pretty funny, right? Because it's so true, right? But folks, it's really not that funny when you realize that those who are acting like **squirrely Christians** may not even be Christians at all!

People of God, a true Christian **is not** one who lives for God just twice a year! No! They live for the Lord every single day of their lives and God uses them to transform this world. John Wesley said, “**Give me ten people who hate nothing but sin, who fear nothing but God, and who love nothing but Jesus, and I can change the world.**”

And people, I don't know if you've noticed, but the American Church seems to be having a hard time changing this world nowadays. In fact, it seems this world **is having an easy time** at changing the American Church. Why? Well, maybe it's because the American Church is full of people who **Worship God with Their Heads but Not Their Hearts**. Maybe the American Church is full of counterfeit Christians.

Oh but that's not all. The **second sign** to indicate when a person's become a **Counterfeit Christian** just like Judas, is when they **Worship God with Their Lips but Not Their Lives**.

**Titus 1:15-16** “Everything is pure to those whose hearts are pure. But nothing is pure to those who are corrupt and unbelieving, because their minds and consciences are defiled. Such people claim they know God, but they deny him by the way they live. They are despicable and disobedient, worthless for doing anything good.”

People, the Bible declares that not everyone who claims to know God really knows Him. In fact, if all they do is give God lip service instead of **life service** then their so-called faith is actually worthless. And people the devil

knows this. So here's what he does. He tricks people into thinking that all you have to do **is not** live like a Christian, but just **say you're a Christian**, and somehow you've become one. But people we're only fooling ourselves if we think we can **sin up a storm** 6 days a week and go to a Church service on the 7<sup>th</sup> and somehow everything's just fine. Anybody can claim to know God all they want. But if they deny this claim by the way they live then their being a **hypocrite**. And this is not only detrimental to your soul, but to the souls of others. One person said this.

**“The number one cause of atheism is Christians. Those who proclaim God with their mouths but deny Him in their lifestyles, are what the unbelieving world simply finds unbelievable.”**

And people it's my contention that this **lip service syndrome** has become an epidemic in the American Church. Many people in Churches today think that all you have to do is claim to know God **but never live for God** and somehow you're in like flint. But people, a true Christian **is not** one who lives for God just one hour a week. No! They live for the Him every single day of their lives and God uses them to light this world on fire!

When asked why so many people came to hear him preach, John Wesley said, **“It's simple. If you light yourself on fire for Jesus Christ, people will come for miles just to watch you burn!”** And people maybe this is why the American Church can't seem to get the fires of revival

burning across our nation anymore. Why? Maybe it's because people are **Worshipping God with Their Lips but Not Their Lives**. Maybe they're actually counterfeit Christians.

Oh but that's not all. The **third sign** to indicate when a person's become a **Counterfeit Christian** just like Judas, is when they **Worship God with Their Thoughts but Not the Truth**.

**1 John 2:18-19** "Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us."

People, the Bible declares that not everyone who goes to a Church service really belongs to the Church. If they walk away from the truth and start following a lie then it only shows they were never saved in the first place. And people the devil knows this. So here's what he does. He tricks people into thinking that there are many roads to heaven and that Jesus is not **the only way to God**. No! He's just one of the many ways to God. But hello, this is not only calling Jesus a liar, but it's assuming that God's going to bend His truth to your man-made thoughts! And oh, it may sound nice and wonderful, but sooner or later, the truth will be made known, like this story reveals.



“A counterfeit Christian is like a counterfeit ten dollar bill. For instance, let’s suppose you have a counterfeit bill but don’t know it. You think it’s genuine.

So sure enough, you use it to pay for some gas. But as soon as it makes its way to the bank, the bank teller spots the phony and says, ‘I’m sorry, but this bill is a counterfeit.’

Now that ten dollar bill may have done a lot of good while it was in circulation, but when it arrived at the bank it was exposed for what it really was and it was immediately put out of circulation.

And so it is with the counterfeit Christian. They may do a lot of good things in their life, but when they face Christ at the final judgment, they’ll immediately be rejected.”

People of God, if a person professes to be a Christian yet walks away from the truth that Jesus really is the only way to heaven, then the Bible says their a counterfeit. And maybe this is the reason why the American Church has lost it’s zeal for the lost. Maybe it’s because the majority of the American Church is still lost themselves? How? Because their **Worshipping God with Their Thoughts and Not the Truth.**

Oh but that’s not all. The **fourth sign** to indicate when a person’s become a **Counterfeit Christian** just like Judas, is when they **Worship God with Their Religion but Not a Relationship.**

**Matthew 7:21-23** “Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles? Then I will tell them plainly, I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!”

People, the Bible declares that not everyone who says, “Lord, Lord” really belongs to the Lord. If their faith is based on **pious religious deeds** instead of a personal relationship, then they don’t belong to Christ. And people the devil knows this. So here’s what he does. He tricks people into thinking that if they want to get to heaven, then just be a good religious person who does good religious deeds once in awhile. But people, hello! Jesus didn’t die on the cross so people could **get religious** for Him. NO! He died on the cross so we could have a relationship with Him.

And people it’s my contention that this **religious attitude** has become an epidemic in the American Church. And because of this, many people who claim to be **alive in Christ** are actually dead to Christ because of their religion, like this story reveals.

“A new minister in a small Oklahoma town spent the first four days desperately calling on the Church membership and begged them to come to his first services. But try as he might, nobody would come.

So he decided to place a notice in the local newspapers, stating that as the Church was dead, it was his duty to give it a decent Christian burial the following Sunday.

Well, this of course got the curiosity of the whole town and everyone turned out. And when they got there, they saw a coffin smothered in flowers in front of the pulpit.

And after the minister read the obituary and delivered a eulogy, he invited his congregation to step forward and pay their respects to the dearly departed.

And without a moments hesitation a long line was formed because each person couldn't wait to see what in the world was in the coffin. But, as soon as each person peeped into the coffin, a strange thing happened. Each person quickly turned away with a guilty look. Why?

Because the minister had placed a large mirror inside the coffin which meant that every single person simply saw themselves."

People of God, I place a mirror before the American Church today and say this, "If you have to have your arm twisted to come to a Church service, then maybe you don't have a relationship with Christ, but a religion." And if you can't ever seem to get motivated to come hear the Word of God, then maybe one day you'll hear from God, "Away from me you evildoer, **I never knew you!**" But how could this be? Well, it all starts by **Worshipping God with Your Religion and Not a Relationship.**

People of God, do you see the cunningness of the enemy? Do you see what he's up to? It's his greatest trick of all! He knows if he can trick people into having a **dead faith** then they'll have a false salvation. And instead of being on the highway to heaven they're still on the highway to hell!

Therefore, if you're suffering from an **Attack of the Killer C's** and you've actually become a **Counterfeit Christian**, what do you? It's called repent, and ask for God's forgiveness. And people this is the great news. Once you do, you've just became God's child. And by His grace He'll turn you from a Counterfeit Christian into a **Committed Christian**. And folks a

committed Christian isn't that hard to spot. You see, they'll not only live for Jesus every single day of their lives, but they'll refuse to turn from Him all the way to the end, like **Thomas Hawkes**.

"The year was 1555 and Thomas Hawkes was condemned with six others to be burned at the stake. Their crime? They refused to turn from the truth and place themselves under the authority of a dead Church.

And just before his death, several of Hawkes friends, asked him a favor. You see, they were afraid for their own lives and wondered how long true faith could stand in the midst of the fire.

So Thomas Hawkes agreed that if the pain was tolerable and his mind was till at peace, that he'd lift his hands over his head.

And when he had been in the fire so long that he could no longer speak, his skin had shrunk, his fingers had been burned off, and everyone thought he was dead, Thomas Hawkes suddenly raised his hands over his head and clapped them together three times!

And the people there – especially those who understood his gesture – broke into shouts of praise and applause as Thomas Hawkes sunk down into the fire and gave up his spirit to be with the Lord."

People of God, search your heart and ask yourself, "Would you, like Thomas Hawkes, being willing to show a true faith in Christ by being burned alive at the stake before entering heaven?" Or have you been tricked by the devil into having a dead faith and are actually being led into the fires of hell?

People of God, there's a war going on and its not just abroad but its right here in our own country. It's a cosmic battle for the souls of men and

women all around us. The stakes are high and millions of lives are at risk. And if we're ever going to win this war then the American Church needs to once again shine for Jesus Christ. People, this is no time to be a **Counterfeit Christian!** Why? Because the alarm has sounded. We're under attack, **The Attack of the Killer C's**. Don't let the enemy get you! Amen?

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To find the way to God, to understand the *truth* of God's Word, and to received the gift of eternal *life*, begin by repentance and faith through a prayer like this:

“Dear God, I understand that I have broken Your Law and sinned against You. Please forgive my sins. Thank You that Jesus suffered on the cross in my place. I now place my trust in Him as My Savior and Lord. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.”

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