



## False Teaching Attacks Truth About Jesus & the Bible

False teachers have distorted or disregarded biblical truth for almost 2,000 years. Over this time, false teaching has been used in an attempt to undermine truth on two fronts: Jesus, God's Son, and the Bible, God's Word. Followers of Christ were warned in Scripture about this assault (2 Peter 2:1).

The most obvious characteristic of false teaching is its denial that Jesus is the Son of God (1 John 5:9-11). This error is used to try to negate the biblical revelation that Jesus was fully human (2 John 1:7) and fully divine (Hebrews 1:3-4).

By emphasizing Christ's humanity and negating His divinity, false teachers try to promote an alternative leader whose words supposedly equal and, typically, are said to supersede those of Scripture. Jesus can then be presented as a "prophet" or "teacher" with a lower status than the founder of a false religion.

By emphasizing Christ's deity and negating his humanity, false teachers say that Jesus did not experience what we must endure. If this were true, then it would mean that Jesus didn't face temptations (contradicting Matthew 4:1) and cannot personally relate to what we experience (contradicting Hebrews 4:15-16). It would also mean that Jesus did not physically die, a necessity if He was to be the atoning sacrifice that provided forgiveness of sin (contradicting 1 Peter 3:18).

False teachers also attack scriptural truth by contradicting specific verses. For example, one error says that good works help earn eternal salvation, a concept that directly contradicts Ephesians 2:8-9. Such a contradiction assumes that the Bible is *deficient*. To counteract this supposed scriptural deficiency, a "religious authority" will arise to correct scriptural "shortcomings." This earthly authority may be a person, committee, organization, or a combination of these entities. This self-proclaimed authority is often linked to at least one "religious book" that is used to "overrule" the Bible or to "retranslate" Scripture to fit the false teaching.

False teaching may not be used to contradict specific verses but, instead, will try to undermine biblical validity as a whole. False teachers "accept" God's Word to a point, but they claim there are aspects of life not addressed in Scripture. Thus, additional help is needed outside the scope of Scripture. As a result, the Bible is deemed to be *insufficient*, disregarding scriptural claims to the contrary (2 Timothy 3:16-17). When biblical insufficiency is accepted, some type of earthly authority or perceived "expert," not necessarily religious in nature, will assume a decisive role to determine where Scripture is authoritative and where it is not.

Basically, false teachers claim that Jesus and the Bible are *inadequate* and, thus, not complete Truth. There can only be one source of eternal Truth ... it is either from imperfect man or a perfect God. It pays lasting dividends to know the difference.

### SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

**2 Peter 2:1**, But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.

**1 John 5:9-11**, If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater, for this is the testimony of God that he has borne concerning his Son. Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

**2 John 1:7**, For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist.

**Hebrews 1:3-4**, He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become as much superior to angels as the name he has inherited is more excellent than theirs.

**Matthew 4:1**, Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

**Hebrews 4:15-16**, For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

**1 Peter 3:18**, For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit.

**Ephesians 2:8-9**, For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

**2 Timothy 3:16-17**, All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.