

Daily Devotional December 11, 2020 Seeking What is Real

At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Messiah!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you ahead of time. Matthew 24.23-25 (NIV)

Have you ever seriously thought about how much time and energy we put into distinguishing what around us is real and what is fake? To take this matter a little bit further, have we given any of our treasured time and energy over to trying to convince ourselves that the feelings we have that we thought might actually be fake are in fact real; or, that what we have considered to be real might actually be fake? The phrase “fake news” has grown to be a household phrase these days. Fake news, however, did not just come into being in the twenty first century. Looking at the opening passage above from the Gospel of Matthew, we see Jesus essentially warning people to be on the lookout for fake news.

We live in a world where it often feels as if the main guiding principle is to conceal truth. There are beauty products available to help us look younger. Fake IDs can be purchased to make us appear older. Photo wide angle spans make us look smaller. Heal lifts and stacked heals make us look taller. We can have any color hair and eyes that we desire. Outside of ourselves, we even have vegetables made to look and more or less taste, like meat, rice made from cauliflower, and all sorts of plant products substituting for traditional dairy items. How do we know what is what we think it is and what is fake anymore?

Maybe a more important question is, how do we know *who* is the person we think they are and *who* is fake? Who is the person they profess to be? Who can we trust? We live in a time where it is so easy to disguise what is real, to hide behind an image that is created from the imagination rather than through living a genuine and authentic life. Why is it that we are so afraid of authenticity? Granted, it is not always pretty or comfortable, but at least when we are forced to struggle against an “ugly truth”, we know what it is that we are battling.

So, how are we going to know the real Jesus when He comes again? Maybe He will be dressed in rags, or maybe He will be dressed in rich, flowing robes. Will He be taller, shorter, fatter, or skinnier than what we expect? He may not look anything like what our mind's eye could ever have imagined Jesus. Will we miss an opportunity to be with the Messiah while we are trying to figure out if who we see is real or fake? Taking that into account, how might our lives be different if we could take everyone at face value, for who they truly are? How different would the world be if we treated everyone that we met as if *they* are the Messiah? Aren't we called to seek, serve and love the Christ we find in all people?

Live your life as a Christ seeker. Seek Him in others—in all the others in life whom you encounter.

Prayer: God, I pray today that I may live the authentic life that You have intended for me, that I may use my words to say what I mean and mean what I say, and that I may claim to be nothing more and nothing less than the real child of God that I am, that you have created and intended me to be. In Christ, my real and only Savior. Amen.