

# Don't Be Fooled

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Every year on the first day of April, people from various parts of the world play pranks on others. Apparently the tradition goes back to antiquity, and nobody knows for sure how, when, or where it began. It's called "April Fool's Day," because people look foolish when they "get fooled." Those who are aware of the tradition and potential pranksters are less likely to be fooled. Since the invention of the Internet, pranks and hoaxes have bigger audiences than ever, and entire websites have been created for the sole purpose of debunking hoaxes.

When it comes to spiritual things, there is a deceiver out there who wants everyone to be fooled. Satan is the father of lies (Jn. 8:44), and he and his servants fool people into believing things that are not true (2 Cor. 11:13-15). However, they do not limit their efforts to once per year! They work around the clock, around the world.

As the Internet is often used to spread hoaxes, Satan's servants spread the hoaxes of immorality and false doctrines all over media outlets such as print, radio, television, and the Internet. Although Paul did not have Internet access, he had something much better—access to the all-knowing God! Paul, via inspiration of God, taught his generation and all future generations something very important—if we are ignorant of Satan's tactics, Satan will take advantage of us—he will fool us! (2 Cor. 2:11). This principle, along with all other Bible truths, holds true today, because "...scripture cannot be broken" (Jn. 10:35). With this in mind, let the reader beware that he does not get fooled into something that will cost his soul.

**Don't be fooled into believing there is no God.** *"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God..."* (Psa. 14:1). Sadly, there are many school teachers and college professors out there who cherish the thought of converting good-hearted, Bible believing young people into atheists or agnostics. Satan uses people like these teachers to push what is surely one of his favorite doctrines—the general theory of evolution. He loves that theory, because it is fully incompatible with Bible truth; thus causing many people to reject God's Word. However, the theory of evolution is just that—a theory, not fact. There is no objective evidence to support it, only propaganda and illustrations from the imaginations of those who profess themselves to be wise, but have become fools (Rom. 1:20-22). Young people and those of all ages would be wise to heed Paul's warning to young Timothy: *"O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called"* (1 Tim. 6:20).

There are only two options for our origins: creation or evolution. Upon examining all the evidence objectively, the logical, open-minded person will concede that the evidence points to creation, not evolution. The universe and all we observe therein is too complex, orderly, beautiful, and clearly indicative of design (Psa. 19:1-3). If one merely studies the human body, with its intricate code of life called DNA, the human brain, and all the complex systems in our bodies, he will be amazed, and he will see that all of this points directly to an Intelligent Designer (Heb. 3:4). Any other explanation is irrational. However, if one chooses to believe that a tiny something came from absolutely nothing, and then that tiny something exploded to randomly cause all of the beauty, order, and complexity in this incredibly vast universe, let him be warned that he has been fooled.

**Don't be fooled into believing the Bible is not God's Word.** Once a person believes in God, he should wonder, "Has God ever communicated with His creation?" When examining documents from history that claim to have come from God, there are less than ten, and out of those the Bible shines like a diamond in the rough! With distinct qualities such as amazing scientific foreknowledge, unparalleled unity, flawless factual accuracy, and hundreds of fulfilled

prophecies, there is no other book that can hold a candle to the Holy Scriptures of the Bible. That is because the Bible is the one book that *“...is given by inspiration of God...”* (2 Tim. 3:16). However, if one chooses to believe that the Bible, with all of its amazing qualities, is no greater than any other religious book, let him be warned that he has been fooled.

**Don't be fooled into believing Jesus is not God's sinless, resurrected Son.** Consider the facts! The most accurate book in history records hundreds of prophecies that He fulfilled, such as: He would be born to a virgin (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 7:14); He would come from the family of Abraham (Gen. 12:3; 22:18); from the family of Judah (Gen. 49:10); from the family of David (2 Sam. 7:12-13). The place of His birth was specifically foretold (Mic. 5:2); He would be betrayed by a friend (Psa. 41:9); He would be crucified (Psa. 22:16); people would gamble for His garments (Psa. 22:18); none of His bones would be broken (Psa. 34:20), and so many more! He also taught the greatest teachings known to man, and confirmed it all by miracles to prove that He was sent by God (John 3:2; Acts 2:22).

Concerning evidences for His resurrection: 1) What changed His disciples from fearful to fearless, willing to die for Him? (Matt. 26:31; Acts 4:18-21; 5:27-33; 21:13); 2) What made even many of His worst enemies convert to follow Him and die for Him? (Acts 2:36-41; 6:7; 9:1-6, 18-20; 21:13); 3) What made thousands upon thousands from various parts of the world leave other religions to follow Christ in the first century A.D.? (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 6:7; 17:6; etc.); 4) Why were there well over 500 people who would readily confess that they had seen Jesus after His resurrection? (Acts 1:3; 1 Cor. 15:4-8); 5) If He is not risen, where is His body? The only thing the enemies of Jesus had to do to bring Christianity to a screeching halt was to bring forth His body; but they could not, because He arose to Heaven! His disciples actually saw His resurrected body and His ascension to Heaven, and that is why they were willing to die for Him! Men have had thousands of years to find the body of Christ, and yet no one ever has, because He is who He claimed to be—the Son of God. However, if one chooses to believe that Jesus was simply some Jewish carpenter's son whose goal was to start a man-made religion and gather a following that would lead to His death, let the reader be warned that he has been fooled.

Dear reader, don't be fooled by Satan! God is real, the Bible is His Word, and Jesus is His Son! The Bible reveals God's will to man, and thus we know that we have all acted contrary to God's will, which is called “sin” (1 Jn. 3:4). Our relationship with God has been sundered by our sins, which have made us worthy of death (Isa. 59:1, 2; Rom. 6:23); therefore, we need a Savior! Jesus, God's divine Son, left Heaven to come to earth and give Himself as an atoning sacrifice for us, so we could be saved (Matt. 26:28; 2 Cor. 8:9; Heb. 10:10). He hung on the cross of death where we belong, and suffered the shame we deserve. This was man's only hope.

Although Jesus paid the price for sin, there are still conditions we must meet to please God and contact His blood to be saved (Matt. 7:21; Rom. 6:16-18; 1 Pet. 1:22). God has said that He will only save those who: 1) believe in His Son (Jn. 8:24); 2) change their minds and decide to live in obedience to God (repentance—Matt. 4:17; Heb. 5:9); 3) confess their faith in Jesus before others (Matt. 10:32); 4) be immersed in water in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16); and 5) live faithfully by the teachings of Christ's New Testament, repenting and confessing any sins subsequent to baptism in prayer (Acts 8:13-24; 1 Jn. 1:6-10; 2:1-6). Please consider the evidence of God's existence and His love for us all, and choose to live for Him today and forever!