

The Impersonation Game

Are the populations of the world being set up for a worldwide hoax?

Will you be a victim?
Is there a way to detect the impostor?

by George Vandeman

Everybody loves a good impersonation - for entertainment. But when the game is played for keeps, when the goal is not comedy but credibility, and you're the victim - with your destiny involved - that's something else!

Did you know that a master impersonator is about to stage a worldwide hoax?
And that almost everybody will fall for it?

One morning in the latter part of August 1965 - in Seattle, Washington - a young woman awoke about 2:00 A.M. She was frightened to discover that she could not move or make a sound. Her window was open.

Suddenly, as she watched, a dull gray object about the size of a football appeared. It hovered over the carpet near her bed. Then three tripod legs lowered from the object, and it settled to the floor. And then, believe it or not, a small ramp descended from it, and five or six tiny people came down the ramp and appeared to be repairing the object. They wore tight-fitting clothing. When the job was finished, they climbed up the ramp again, and the object took off and

sailed out the window. Then she was able to move.

She says it happened. She is certain she was wide awake. The case was carefully investigated.

You don't believe it happened? Good. That helps me make my point. What if it happened to you?

You aren't the gullible type? You aren't easily fooled? You don't believe in UFOs or psychic phenomena or anything like that?

Then you are just the one I'm worried about!

You see, I am not vouching for the accuracy of the story I just told you, or any other wild story. But sooner or later, whoever you are, *something* may happen to you that you didn't believe could. Something you have smiled at. Something you have scoffed at. Something you don't believe could happen to anybody - much less you. And disarmed, thrown off guard by the ridiculous nature of some of the stories you have heard, you may be caught unprepared!

You are going to see strange things

You and I are caught in the vortex of a controversy that is about to wind up. It's a controversy between good and evil, between God and the enemy of God. The Scriptures make it clear that Satan, the enemy of God, the brilliant angel who was cast out of heaven, is a deceiver. Deception is his strategy. And the frightening thing is that, according to the Word of God, almost everybody on earth will fall for his deceptions. Almost everybody will be taken in!

This conflict, I say, is about to wind up. And if you live through these last days, you are going to see some strange things. You are going to be confused. You are going to have your faith shaken until its teeth fall out, if you aren't careful.

Before this is over, you will confront a deception that has been precisely tailored to your particular weaknesses and sensitivities. It will be a custom-made hoax that takes into account your personal temperament and background, your preconceived opinions. It will be the very thing best calculated to sweep you off your feet.

Strike where you are vulnerable

You see, the enemy knows, from a lifetime of observation, where you are vulnerable. And that's where he will strike. He will shatter your faith in God and in the Scriptures all in one blow, if he can. And when your faith in God and in the Scriptures is gone, you are absolutely defenseless!

I don't know just what this ultimate hoax will be in your case. It might be an apparition in the night. It might be a convincing message from the unseen world. It might be something strange in the sky. It might be a telephone call - seemingly from a loved one who has died. It might be a visitor who says he is from the planet Venus.

And right in the forefront of it all, a key strategy, will be the impersonation game. False claims of identity. And not for entertainment!

Who is doing the impersonating?

Who is doing the impersonating? And who is being impersonated? For the answers we turn to the Word of God. And there may be some surprises in store!

Says the apostle Paul, "Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" 2 Corinthians 11:14.

Listen. Satan is the great impersonator, the master impersonator. You may have

though he was a horrible-looking creature with horns and a tail and a pitchfork. But how many people would he deceive looking like that? He can do much better changed into an angel of light. He once was an angel, you know. He still is. A fallen angel. A rebel angel. A deceiver. but he hasn't lost his brilliant intellect. And he hasn't lost his supernatural power!

Brotherhood of impersonators

Who else is active in the impersonation game? The verse just before the one we have read says, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ" 2 Corinthians 11:13.

So we can expect to meet up with people claiming to be apostles when they are not.

And remember what Jesus said about these last days: "And many false prophets shall arise, and shall deceive many" Matthew 24:11.

The impersonation team is headed, then, by Satan, who can disguise himself at will. And men under his control will masquerade as apostles and as prophets.

But that's only the beginning. Satan is not limited to the use of people as his helpers. Remember that when Satan was cast out of heaven, his angels - the angels that joined him in rebellion - were cast out with him. We read: "And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down - that ancient serpent called the devil or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him" Revelation 12:7-9, NIV.

Verse three suggests that a third of the angels of heaven rebelled.

So Satan has an uncounted host of helpers. All the fallen angels. Angels turned demons. But still with their brilliant minds. And listen - here's the key - *every one of them still with supernatural power!*

Demons can work miracles

It may never have occurred to you that devils - demons - evil spirits - can work miracles. But they can. Listen to this: "For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles" Revelation 16:14.

Working miracles. Not magic. Not silly little tricks that wouldn't deceive anybody.
Miracles!

The book of Revelation speaks of a power that will work under the direction of Satan in these last days. And it says of that power, "It worked great miracles, even making fire come down from heaven to earth before men's eyes. By the miracles it was allowed to perform. . .it deluded the inhabitants of the earth" Revelation 13:13,14 NEB.

Who was deluded? Just a few? No. The inhabitants of the earth. Almost everybody!

So Satan can work miracles. His helpers in the spirit world can work miracles. And he can give men the power to work miracles whenever he chooses!

One more scripture: "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders." 2 Thessalonians 2:9.

Lying wonders! Miracles that lie! Falsehood backed up by the supernatural!

Do you see what is happening? Do you see what we're up against?

When we cannot trust our senses

Evidently we will soon reach a time, if we aren't in it already, when we cannot trust our senses. A time when we cannot believe what our eyes and our ears tell us. A time when miracles will lie. A time when we need some more reliable yardstick than our own judgment. A time when the counterfeit will so closely resemble the genuine that it will be impossible to distinguish just where error diverges from truth - except by the Written Word of God.

How effective will this program of deception, this bombardment of the supernatural, this flood of miracles that lie - how effective will it all be? How many will fall for it? Jesus told us. He said, "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." Matthew 24:24.

Almost deceive God's own people. And why aren't they deceived? Because of their knowledge of the Scriptures. Because the Scriptures tell them how to spot a counterfeit. They haven't any special immunity. If they didn't go to the trouble to read the Bible, they would be just as gullible as the rest. But the information in the Bible is free to all. Anybody can read it who will!

Who is being impersonated?

We have found out, then, who is doing the impersonating. But who is being impersonated? Prophets are. Apostles of Christ are. Who else? Whom do all these fallen angels in the spirit world impersonate?

Here's a sample. A friend of mine over in Scotland was making some Christian calls one day. But at one door she was greeted with cold and almost icy reserve. The lady wanted nothing to do with religion. But after a few moments she warmed up and told her visitor why.

It seems that during the war she had received word from the government that her husband was missing in action. Many months went by with no word, and she concluded that he surely must be dead. Her friends suggested that she might find comfort by visiting a seance and trying to make contact with him.

This she did. She recognized the voice of her husband. They talked over many personal things. Other visits followed. But one day her husband, alive and well, walked through the front door of their home. He had never been dead, or even seriously wounded!

It had all been a hoax. A lying spirit, taking advantage of her loneliness, had impersonated her husband. No wonder she was bitter!

Is this sort of thing rare? No. It is very, very common. It happens every day. Evil spirits are constantly impersonating those who have died - and sometimes those who haven't died. And believe me, they are experts. With their thousands of years of experience it is no trick for them to imitate a voice convincingly. And with their supernatural power it is not difficult at all to create an apparition that strikingly resembles the face of a loved one who has died. And materializing ash trays and book ends and trumpets with which to dupe people into believing their lies - this is all in a day's work.

Why are millions fooled?

But what is it that fools millions? What is it that really convinces the mediums and those who visit them that they are talking with people who have died? It's the *nature of the information* the spirits offer. They demonstrate a familiarity with family and friends. They seem to know all the family secrets. They know where Uncle Henry hid his will, and where Aunt Sue lost her ring, and how your grandmother did her hair. They can easily tell you where you've been, and where you're planning to go. They know things that nobody else would know. And that's

what people consider solid proof. That's how people are fooled. That's how people are duped!

If the information checks out. That seems to be the only criterion of genuineness. No other test is applied. If the information checks out, even some of it, then it must be genuine. There is no thought of checking these spirit messages by some dependable standard - such as the Bible. To thousands of sincere minds the thought has never occurred that *something can be supernatural and still not be from God*. It has never occurred to them that a miracle can be a fraud. Countless messages from the spirit world are accepted simply because "no one else would know that."

Millions are deceived because they don't know what is going on. They haven't bothered to find out. They wouldn't have to read the psychic literature to be informed. In fact, that's the place to find misinformation. If they would only read their Bibles, they would know that we are surrounded in the invisible world by a host of fallen angels whose one goal is to trick us and trap us, deceive us and destroy us. These evil angels are watching us all the time. They were watching our grandparents all the time. How could they help but know the family secrets?

What Satan's propaganda is based on

Do you see what is going on? It's all a part of Satan's master plan to sweep the world into his control. His propaganda machine was set in motion the day he said to Eve, "Did God say you would die? Well, you won't." That's where it all started. and that propaganda line worked so well that he has never abandoned it. Today millions upon millions believe it. Spiritism is founded upon it. It's the basis of nearly all psychic phenomena. And at the bottom of it all is the line first peddled in Eden - the idea that men don't really die when they die.

But why is Satan so interested in distorting the facts about death? Why hasn't he

chosen some other strategy, something else to lie about? Think it through. Watch how smoothly it works for him. You see, if you can be led to believe that men are immortal, that they don't really die when they die, then you can easily be sold the idea that the dead can communicate with us. And if you believe in communication with the dead, the fallen angel has a direct line to your soul. Because all he has to do is impersonate some loved one who has died - and get you to do anything he wants you to do!

Is the world being conditioned?

And now consider this possibility. If evil spirits can impersonate dead people, why couldn't they just as easily impersonate people from other planets? Little green men repairing UFOs? Or blue-suited men kidnapping people in the night and taking them aboard their strange ships?

Is it possible that we are being conditioned for a monstrous deception that will sweep the world? One tailored to the mood of this space-minded generation? Surely this subtle but powerful softening of the minds of men is not without purpose. Where is it all leading?

In May 1967 a man named Knud Weiking, in Denmark, began receiving some telepathic flashes, including a number of predictions that came true. He was then instructed to build a lead-lined bomb shelter and prepare for a real holocaust on December 24, 1967. The bomb shelter was built.

In the meantime, mediums and psychics and UFO contactees throughout the world were all receiving identical messages. These messages were all phrased in the same way, no matter in what language. All carried the same warning. There would definitely be an unprecedented event on December 24. The stage was all set for doomsday. Christmas Eve would be it!

The Danish cult locked themselves in their bomb shelter that night and waited for the end of the world. But nothing happened. The next day the American press ridiculed the frightened Danes.

It seems that Mr. Weiking, however, had received a message that explained it all. The message said: "I told you two thousand years ago that a time would be given and even so I would not come. If you had read your Bible a little more carefully, you would have borne in mind the story of the bridegroom who did not come at the time he was expected. Be watchful so that you are not found without oil in your lamps. I have told you I will come with suddenness, and I shall be coming soon!"

So this is it. This is where it is all leading. And why not? The enemy of God has impersonated lesser personalities - dead people, space people, and all the rest. Why not go for the big one? Why not impersonate Christ Himself? The Christian world is looking for the second coming of Jesus Christ to this earth. It's being talked about more than ever before. Why not engineer a second coming of his own, with all the celestial trappings available to him - and have the whole world at his feet? That's what the enemy of God has been after all along. He wants one thing above all else - worship. And he's determined to get it!

Yes, the members of the Danish cult locked themselves in their bomb shelter and waited. But nothing happened. evidently it was just a dry run! Just a rehearsal! But with a worldwide network of sensitives participating!

Hints of a worldwide extravaganza

Again and again in the predictions of the psychics there are telltale indications of where the psychic procession is heading - hints of what Satan is up to. Unquestionably he is planning some sort of end-of-the-world extravaganza in which he will play the leading role.

In one instance it was predicted that North America would split in two. The Atlantic coast would split into the sea. England and France and Russia would suffer a similar fate. But a few people would be rescued by spaceships.

Spaceships keep turning up in these predictions. UFOs seem to be involved. Spaceships - and Christ!

Is it too difficult to see what the enemy has in mind? And listen. Satan may let some follower stand in for him in these rehearsals, these dry runs. But you can be sure that when he's ready for his all-out, worldwide hoax, he'll be in the starring position himself. That's what it's all about!

Jesus plainly warned us that He would be impersonated in the last days. He said, "At that time if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or, 'There he is!' do not believe it. For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect - if that were possible. See, I have told you ahead of time. So if anyone tells you, 'There he is, out in the desert,' do not go out; or, 'Here he is, in the inner rooms,' do not believe it." Matthew 24:23-26, NIV

Don't believe it! Don't go out! Don't bother to go and look! That's the counsel of the Word of God. And that's the only safe counsel!

Evidently this is no crude or clumsy delusion. This is no trick. This is something big. Something big enough to deceive almost everybody. Everybody who doesn't read the Scriptures to see *how* the real Christ will come. Because it's right there in the Bible, available to us all. If we don't bother to read it, then it's our own fault if we are fooled!

Who will be safe?

According to the Written Word of God, when the real Christ descends the blazing skies, the event will be visible from east to west, as visible as the lightning.

According to the Scriptures, every eye in the world will be watching as he comes close to the earth, calls the dead to life, and catches His people up to meet Him - without His feet ever touching the earth. It won't be an isolated event. Everybody will know what 's happening!

Satan, before that day, will pull off his spectacular deception, his counterfeit second coming. But if we know the Scriptures, we don't need to be deceived. Because God will permit Satan to go a long way with his tricks and his games. But he will never permit him to duplicate the *way* in which the Son of God returns to this earth!

I have no information whatever as to just how the enemy will try to pull off his second-coming stunt. I do not know that a spaceship of any kind will be involved in this final hoax. But if not, then why all the buildup? Why the decades, and even centuries, of orientation to the idea of ships from out there? Why the ready network of sensitives and contactees with their part already rehearsed? It seems incredible to me that all this, so prominent in the preparation, should be left out when the show runs for real!

The world today is a pushover for a space-related deception. And it's a pushover for the appearance of a counterfeit Christ - for anyone that seems able to solve the world problems that are getting out of hand. There would be no trouble getting a following. The cults, ready to believe anything that smacks of the supernatural, are already in the bag. And those who have scoffed at the prophets and the saucers and the ghosts are just as easily snared. Because their scoffing has left them unprepared for anything supernatural. They find out too late that devils can work miracles after all!

Who then is safe? Not very many. Only those who have read the Scriptures - and learned to trust the Scriptures more than their eyes and their ears!

One discerning writer, many years ago, described the day of the final hoax.

Listen:

"As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. . . . Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air, 'Christ has come! Christ has come!' the people prostrate themselves in adoration before him, while he lifts up his hands and pronounces a blessing upon them, as Christ blessed His disciples when He was upon the earth. His voice is soft and subdued, yet full of melody. In gentle, compassionate tones he presents some of the same gracious, heavenly truths which the Saviour uttered; he heals the diseases of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the [law of God]. . . . This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion."

There he stands, this being of dazzling brightness. If you ask your eyes, who is it? Jesus. If you ask your ears, who is it? Jesus. If you ask your feelings, who is it? Jesus.

And so almost all will bow down before a master impersonator, victims of the final hoax. God forbid that you or I should be among them!

Friends, I commend to you the Word of God. Read it. Read it for your lives!

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About the Author: George Vandeman, founder and speaker of the *It Is Written* telecast, is the author of numerous books and articles including *The Impersonation Game* from which this article was taken. His *It Is Written* ministry extended over three decades beginning in 1959 until his death in 1994. His refreshing style of speaking and writing, his deep regard for the Bible, his kindness and conviction of personality, and his empathy and rapport with the reading and viewing audience are characteristics by which he was known.