

Will the Real Messiah Please Stand Up?

To Tell the Truth is one of those perennial game shows that resurrects every few years. Three people claim to be the same individual, and panelists try to determine who is really that person by asking a series of questions. I'd like to offer you my own edition of To Tell the Truth. (cue music)

- "My name is David Shayler, and I am the Messiah."
- "My name is Vissarion, and I am the Messiah."
- "My name is Moses Hlongwane, and I am the Messiah."

Here are some facts about three men. I'll let you decide who seems the most "messiah-ish."

David Shayler

Location: England
Previous Career: Former MI5 whistleblower
Interesting Tidbit: His alter ego is Dolores

Vissarion

Location: Siberia
Previous Career: Former traffic cop
Interesting Tidbit: Leads the Church of the Last Testament, runs an off-the-grid utopian village

Moses Hlongwane

Location: South Africa
Previous Career: Jewelry salesman
Interesting Tidbit: The "end of days" began when he got married.

Two things about these wannabe Messiahs raise up doubts me.

First, I see nothing in their character and lifestyle that is reflective of the character of Jesus. I have not met these men and I can only base my conclusion on what I've read, but they're just not lining up.

Second—and this is the basis for my doubts about them—Jesus said that when He returns, it's going to be huge. No baby in a manger like his first coming. Not stuck away in a remote Siberian village. There will be nothing subtle of Christ's return!

"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the peoples of the earth will mourn; and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 He will send out his angels with a loud trumpet, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other" (Matt. 24:3-31).

These men claim to be Jesus—the Messiah—but it seems quite clear they have never read His words. Or they've been selective in the passages they read. I don't just want to single out these three men. Throughout history we've had scores of people claiming to be the Messiah. Yet in Matthew 24, Jesus told us men just like these would pop up.

"If anyone tells you then, 'See, here is the Messiah!' or, 'Over here!' do not believe it" (v. 23).

I'm thankful I don't have to search through websites for stories of the Messiah, wandering where He might appear. I don't have to watch the news for any announcements. When Jesus comes, I'll know it. You'll know it. The whole world will know it.

Instead of searching the news, let's search our hearts. Let's ensure we're living lives that honor Him, lives that serve Him by serving others, and lives that love Him by living those He has placed in our path.

"Blessed is that servant whom the master finds doing his job when he comes" (v. 46).