

## We are all tempted to extremes

- Some people think everyone is a heretic / false teacher
  - They draw such a small circle that they've got to stand on one foot
  - While the Bible commands us to be discerning, it also commands us to be gracious and not pugnacious
  - We see Christians in the Bible who got things wrong, but they weren't heretics destined for Hell
    - Apollos - Acts 18:24-28
    - Peter - Gal. 2:11-14
  - We must learn the difference in someone who is a false teacher (non-Xian), and someone who is mistaken or ignorant
  - We must also learn the difference in primary, secondary, and tertiary matters
    - Not all differences / errors are a matter of Heaven and Hell
    - Me and John have disagreements, but we can serve on the same elder board
    - Me and another person may have differences, but that only means we don't go to the same Church
    - Me and another person may have differences, and that means one of us is a Christian and the other deceived
- While this concern is real, it isn't as dangerous as the other extreme that more people are tempted toward
  - If this crowd is wrong, Heaven will be more filled than they think
  - If the other extreme is wrong, people will falsely believe they are going to Heaven and end up in Hell

- The other extreme I am talking about involves those who think no one is a heretic / false teacher
  - This is the group I am more concerned with
  - These are the people who are against anyone being called a false teacher, heretic, non-Christian
  - They take everyone at their word when they say they are a Christian
  - Sure, they recognize differences, but we all have things wrong, so who am I to judge???
  - A word on judging...
    - Matt. 7:1 - Don't judge with pharisaical judgment (see: 6:2, 5, 16)
    - John 7:24 - Do judge with righteous judgment
    - 1 Cor. 5:1-13 - Judge the "so-called" brother
    - 1 John 4:1 - Test the spirits
  - You must remember that the Bible GUARANTEES false teachers will come
    - 2 Pet. 2:1
  - Not only does the Bible promise false teachers will come, but Jesus made it clear that the way leading to life is NARROW, and FEW find it, and it is HARD
    - MANY are on the WIDE path that is EASY
  - You must also remember that you have been commanded how to handle false teachers
    - It is not obedient for you to sin on this extreme simply because you don't want to sin on the other extreme
  - Lastly, I want to awaken you to your potential danger...
    - If you affirm someone as a Christian or a Christian teacher when they aren't, you are:
      - Confusing the world
      - Falsely assuring them and destroying hope that they'll repent
      - Lacking love on your part
      - Dishonoring God by calling a child of the Devil one of His children

So this is why this study is important

- Some of us need to learn that there are more Christians than us
  - CBC does NOT have a monopoly on Heaven
- Others of us need to learn that not all professors are possessors
  - False teachers are real and eternally dangerous
- This study will help all of us have more discernment when it comes to true and false teachers

Since we have clearly seen that false teachers will come and we must deal with them the way God commands, the next question we have to answer is...

How to we identify them?

The reason we start with this question is because of what false teachers are by nature...

- They are deceivers / liars
- Their tactic is not to put on a sign that says "FALSE TEACHER"
- They want to present themselves as genuine
- Matt. 7:15 - In sheep's clothing
- 2 Cor. 11:13 - As angels of light
- 2 Pet. 2:1-3 - Secretly bringing in destructive heresies
- Jude 4 - They creep in
- They **APPEAR** to speak for God<sup>1</sup> - Jer. 14:14-15; Matt. 7:22
- They **APPEAR** to be people from your own religious circles<sup>2</sup> - 2 Pet. 2:1; Jude 1:4
- They **APPEAR** to be actually convincing<sup>3</sup> - Deut. 13:1-3; Matt. 24:24; Rom. 16:18
- They **APPEAR** to to believe that they're authentic/divinely appointed<sup>4</sup> - Ezk. 13:6; Matt. 7:22
- Knowing these things, it seems impossible to identify the false from the true
  - They appear the same for the most part
  - We must learn to look PAST appearances and get to the reality that God sees
    - God has NOT left us helpless when it comes to this...

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<sup>1</sup> Jer. 14:14-15; 23:16, 25-26; 27:14-15; 29:8-9, 21, 31; Ezk. 22:28; Mt. 7:5, 22; 2 Cor. 11:12-15

<sup>2</sup> Deut. 13:6-8; Acts 20:29-30; 1 Tim. 3:6-7; 6:9-10; 2 Pet. 2:1; 1 John 2:19; Jude 1:4

<sup>3</sup> Deut. 13:1-3; Matt. 24:24; Rom. 16:18; Col. 2:4, 8; 2 Thess. 2:9-10; 2 Tim. 4:3

<sup>4</sup> Jer. 28:15-16; Ezk. 13:6; Mt. 7:22

So here are the 7 main types of false teachers you will encounter in this life...

1. **The Heretic**<sup>5 6</sup> - Rom. 16:17; 2 John 9

- Arius - Jesus is not God
- Pelagius - We don't need God's grace
- Joseph Smith - Mormonism

2. **The Charlatan**<sup>7 8</sup> - 1 Tim. 6:9-10; 2 Pet. 2:3, 15

- Fake claims
  - Heaven tourism books
    - Malarkey used by his dad
  - Todd Bentley - Lakeland, FL revival without a single verified miracle
    - Caught lying about a resurrection in a Houston hospital

3. **The Prophet**<sup>9</sup> - Jeremiah 14:14; 1 Tim. 4:1

- They do receive visions and dreams, but it is their own imagination lying to them
- Benny Hinn
  - Claimed to have video of Jesus walking around in one of his meetings. When asked to show the video, his staff said it had been "misplaced."
  - Claimed God told him by divine revelation that there are nine members in the Godhead.
  - On Dec. 31, 1989, Hinn went into a trance and said God was giving him (in real time) prophecies about major events that would occur before the end of the next decade. Hinn predicted the total collapse of the American economy within a decade. He declared that during the 1990s the East Coast would be ravaged by earthquakes; a female would be elected as president; Fidel Castro would die in office; a "short man dictator" would arise; the rapture of the church would occur; and the homosexual community of America would be destroyed by fire "in '94 or '95, no later than that."
  - Also a charlatan - Claimed that an image of Jesus appeared on the wall of his church and "stayed for eight weeks." Hinn says, "Even the people who studied the Shroud of Turin came to see this image. ...the mouth [of Jesus] would move, the Lord's mouth would move...but His mouth would only move as I was preaching."

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<sup>5</sup> Jude 3; 1 Tim. 1:10-11; 2 Tim. 1:13-14; 1 Tim. 4:6; 2 John 9; 1 Tim. 6:3

<sup>6</sup> They don't follow in the doctrine of the prophets and Apostles - Isa. 8:19-20; Jer. 28:8-9; Rom. 16:17; 2 Cor. 11:4; Gal. 1:6-8; 1 Tim. 1:3; 6:3-4; 2 Tim. 2:17-18; 1 John 2:22-24; 4:2-6; 2 John 1:7-10

<sup>7</sup> 2 Pet. 2:3, 14; 1 Tim. 6:5

<sup>8</sup> They use their position to get: Money - Jer. 6:13; 8:10; 1 Tim. 6:5, 9-10; Titus 1:11; 2 Pet. 2:3, 15; Sex - Jer. 23:11, 14; 2 Pet. 2:10, 13-14; Jude 1:8; Followers - Ezk. 13:18; Acts 20:30

<sup>9</sup> They actually have dreams/visions but these dreams/visions are lies from their own imaginations or satan or from each other - Lam. 2:14; Isa. 9:15; Jer. 14:14; 20:6; 23:16, 26; 27:9-10, 14-16; 29:8-9, 21, 31; Ezk. 13:2-9, 17; 22:28; Zech. 13:2-6; 2 Pet. 2:3; Jer. 2:8; 1 Tim. 4:1; Jer. 23:30

4. **The Abuser**<sup>10 11</sup> - 2 Tim. 3:6

- Spiritual and physical abuse
- The Catholic Church
- Cults of Christianity
  - Cults of cults

5. **The Divider**<sup>12</sup> - Rom. 16:17; Jude 18-20

- We are supposed to unite around the truth
  - When that is attacked or perverted, divisions are necessary
- Modern day example of Andy Stanley
  - Ken Ham called him a false teacher
  - One response: “Very disheartening to see further division,” Chad Loflin (@Chad Loflin) wrote on Twitter. “@AndyStanley is simply reaching to the skeptics of certain areas of biblical teaching. Our hope is in the resurrection as established by OT, but the New Covenant can stand alone! Make a difference instead of making a point.”

6. **The Tickler**<sup>13 14</sup> - 2 Tim. 4:3-4

- Jer. 6:13-14; 2 Tim. 4:3-4
- Joel Osteen

7. **The Speculator** - 1 Tim. 6:20-21

- Rob Bell
- Harold Camping

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<sup>10</sup> Jude 4; 2 Pet. 2:2

<sup>11</sup> The use smooth talking to prey on the naive and weak - Jer. 5:28; Rom. 16:18; 2 Tim. 3:6; 2 Pet. 2:14

<sup>12</sup> They stimulate quarrels, division, and trouble - Rom. 16:17; 1 Tim. 1:4; 6:4-5; Jude 1:19

<sup>13</sup> They are widely welcomed by the unregenerate world / those who despise the word of the Lord - Jer. 23:17; Ezk. 12:21-25; Lk. 6:26; 2 Tim. 4:3-4; 2 Pet. 2:2; 1 John 4:4-5

<sup>14</sup> They're numerous - 1 Ki. 18:18-19; 22:6-12; 1 John 4:1; 2 John 1:7

How are we told to respond to them?

1. What was Israel to do?

- Deut. 13:5 - But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death...
- Deut. 18:20 - But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die
- 1 Ki. 18:40 - And Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape." And they seized them. And Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and slaughtered them there
- Jer. 28:15-17 - And Jeremiah the prophet said to the prophet Hananiah, "Listen, Hananiah, the Lord has not sent you, and you have made this people trust in a lie. Therefore thus says the Lord: 'Behold, I will remove you from the face of the earth. This year you shall die, because you have uttered rebellion against the Lord.'" In that same year, in the seventh month, the prophet Hananiah died.
- This is NOT the case under the New Covenant

2. What did Jesus do?

- Matt. 23:13, 15, 16, 17, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 33

3. What did the Apostles do?

- Gal. 5:12

4. What must the Church do?

1. **Elders** Must:

- SILENCE them
  - Titus 1:9-11 - He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it. For there are many who are insubordinate, empty talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision party. They must be silenced, since they are upsetting whole families by teaching for shameful gain what they ought not to teach.
- Get RID of them
  - Titus 3:9-11 - But avoid foolish controversies, genealogies, dissensions, and quarrels about the law, for they are unprofitable and worthless. As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.
- Kindly, patiently, and gently CORRECT them while PRAYING for their repentance
  - 2 Tim. 2:24-25 - And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth
- DISASSOCIATE with them -
  - 2 Thess. 3:14 - If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed

## 2. **Members Must:**

- Do not LISTEN to them
  - Matt. 24:25-26 - See, I have told you beforehand. So, if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the wilderness,' do not go out. If they say, 'Look, he is in the inner rooms,' do not believe it.
- Treat them as UNBELIEVERS
  - Gal. 1:8-9 - But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed
- AVOID them
  - Rom. 16:17-19 - I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught; avoid them. For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive. For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil
- DISASSOCIATE with them
  - 2 John 1:10-11 - If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.

## Summary of this quarter

Week 1 - What is a False Teacher?

Week 2 - The Judaizers - Do We Come To God Through The Law?

Week 3 - Marcion - Is The OT God The Same As The NT God?

Week 4 - Arius - Is Jesus God?

Week 5 - Pelagius - Do We Need Grace?

Week 6 - Word Of Faith / New Apostolic Reformation

Week 7 - Joyce Meyer / Benny Hinn

Week 8 - Brian Houston / Hillsong

Week 9 - Bill Johnson / Bethel