

BIBLICAL VIEW OF HOW TO DISCOVER TRUTH

INTRODUCTION

All Biblical evaluations of the latter days are in perfect agreement. There will be almost universal religious and doctrinal confusion. How are we to make any sense of all this?

1. EXPECT ERROR.

- a. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (1 Timothy 4:1).
- b. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers. . . . Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth" (2 Timothy 3:1,2,5-7).

2. HUMAN LEADERSHIP IS UNTRUSTWORTHY.

- a. Practically every religion counsels its adherents to follow the leader. But how can we know which leaders are right or wrong? No false prophet will ever wave a red flag with yellow lettering proclaiming his true nature. Playing "follow the leader" in the religious realm has lethal consequences.
- b. How to detect a false prophet.
 - (1) The predictive test. "And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deuteronomy 18:21,22).
 - (2) The doctrinal test. "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet. . ." (Deuteronomy 13:1-3).
- c. An eternal disaster awaits all who follow false prophets. ". . .If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch" (Matthew 15:14).

3. TRUTH IS BASED ON OBJECTIVE FACTS RATHER THAN SUBJECTIVE FEELINGS OR EXPERIENCES.

- a. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21).
- b. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9).
- c. Eve was deceived by her senses when she ". . .saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise. . ." (Genesis 3:6).
- d. Even profound spiritual experiences can be misleading. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1).
- e. Tragically, many "answers to prayer" are nothing more than subjective feelings. Let us suppose we ask representatives from ten different religions to pray about the truthfulness of their respective beliefs. What will be the result of this sincere attempt to discover truth? They will all testify that God has most assuredly answered their prayers in the affirmative. But how can we know which if any really received an answer from God?
- f. God has not left us to our own feelings or the testimonies of other equally human and, therefore, fallible sources. Instead, He has spoken to us in His written Word, the Bible.
 - (1) "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: for this is the witness of God which he hath testified of his son. . . . These things have I written [emphasis mine] unto you. . .that ye may know that ye have eternal life. . ." (1 John 5:9,13).
 - (2) "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isaiah 8:20).
 - (3) "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

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