

MARKS OF FALSE PROPHETS AND TEACHERS
2 PETER 2:1-3; DEUTERONOMY 13:1-4; 18:15, 18-22

Introduction

We live in a day where **FALSE PROPHETS** are abundant and are leading many people astray. **Peter** writes here about the **marks or characteristics of FALSE PROPHETS and TEACHERS** that we should not only avoid but we should expose for their *pernicious (destructive, ruinous)* ways!

How can we **discern** if someone is exhibiting the traits of a **FALSE PROPHET** or **FALSE TEACHER** so that we can avoid them? Well the main way is to:

LOOK AT WHAT THE TRUE SOURCE OF THEIR MESSAGE IS!
(i.e. Is it the **BIBLE** or is it something else?)

Some folks use their own HUMAN REASONING as their source.

(e.g. *Mark 2:5-8*, is the story of when Christ healed the man with palsy who was carried by four men and was let down through the roof.)

Proverbs 14:12 & 16:25—“There is a way that **seemeth right** unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”

Some folks use their religious background and teaching as their source.

(e.g. Look at *Mark 7:1-13* where **Scribes and Pharisees** questioned **CHRIST** about **HIS** disciples eating without what the **Scribes and Pharisees** method of properly washing their hands.)

Some folks use extra-Biblical sources as their source.

Extra-Biblical means “*outside of the Bible.*”

Mormons use *The Book of Mormon* as well as other writings of their so-called Mormon prophets. (*Galatians 1:8*)

Seventh Day Adventist use the writings of *Ellen G. White!*

Jehovah’s Witnesses use the writings of their so-called prophets as well as their own false translation of the **Bible!**

Some Charismatics use visions and dreams! (e.g. *My personal experience*)

Many other false prophets claim that they have received **extra-Biblical revelation** and that the **extra-Biblical revelation** is **inspired by God** and should be on a equal plane with the **Bible**. **WRONG!**

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Deuteronomy 4:2—“Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the **LORD your God** which I command you.”

Proverbs 30:5-6—“Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. 6 Add thou not unto his words lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.”

Here are some questions to ask when faced with a prophet, preacher, or teacher?

I. IS THE BIBLE THE TRUE SOURCE OF THEIR AUTHORITY? (*2 Timothy 3:16-17; 4:2-4*)

One of “*The Baptist Distinctives*” that sets us apart from others is that we believe **the Bible is the Final Authority for our faith and practice!**

Hebrews 4:12—“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

Look at *Acts 17:16-23*, where **Luke** wrote of **Paul’s encounter at Athens with some philosophers on Mars’ hill.**

We **ought not** to be looking for “*something new*” when we hear **preaching and teaching!** We should be looking to hear “*sound doctrine*”!

What makes for “*sound doctrine*”? Does it line up with the **Bible**? **If it does, then it is “sound doctrine”, if it does not then it is not!**

Paul wrote these words to the **Philippian** believers:

Philippians 3:1—“Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write **the same things** to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.”

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IS THE BIBLE THE TRUE SOURCE OF THEIR AUTHORITY?*

II. DO THEY PRACTICE SOUND PRINCIPLES IN THEIR INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE?

2 Timothy 2:15—“Study to shew theyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

1. Watch Out For Inaccurate Quotations!

When a **Biblical** text is referred to but is either not quoted in the way the text appears in the **Bible** or is wrongly attributed.

2. Watch Out For Twisted Translation!

When the **Biblical** text is retranslated, not in accordance with sound **Greek** scholarship, but to fit a preconceived teaching of a cult. (e.g. *Jehovah’s Witness* translation of their **Bible**)

3. Watch Out For A Biblical Hook!

When a text of **Scripture** is quoted primarily as a device to grasp the attention of readers or listeners and then followed by a teaching which is so **nonbiblical**, that it would appear far more dubious to most people had it not been preceded by a reference to **Scripture**.

4. Watch Out For The Context!

- a. Consider The Immediate Context!
- b. Consider The Secondary Context!
- c. Consider The Broad Context!
- d. Consider The Topical Context!
- e. Consider The Doctrinal Context!

5. Watch Out For Wrong Definitions!

Cults often use some of our terminology while have their own different meaning of that terminology

6. Watch Out, Watch Out, Watch Out!!!

Correct **Bible Interpretation** DOES Matter!!!

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III. DOES THEIR MESSAGE CONFLICT WITH THE WHOLE OF SCRIPTURE?

The supreme rule of **proper Bible interpretation**—and I can’t emphasize this enough—is to **“INTERPRET SCRIPTURE WITH SCRIPTURE!”**

Scripture is its OWN interpreter and its BEST interpreter!

A passage of the **Bible** should be **interpreted by first comparing it with other parts of the Bible!** And, **ALL TEACHING** should be subjected to **Biblical scrutiny!**

CHRIST said in *John 5:39*—“**Search the scriptures**; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”

2 Peter 1:20—“Knowing this first, that **no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation**. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

A “**private interpretation**” can be one in which a **Scripture passage is isolated or “kept private” from, and interpreted without any reference to the rest of Scripture. WE MUST COMPARE SCRIPTURE WITH SCRIPTURE!**

Look at what **Paul** said in *1 Corinthians 2:12-14*.

A “**private interpretation**” can be one whereby **the interpreter himself establishes the meaning of a Scripture according to his own definition.**

“**Private**” means “**pertaining to self, that is, one’s own.**”

If a teaching does not line up with **Scripture**, then **IT IS HERESY!**

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Conclusion

CHRIST linked lining up with the **WORD OF GOD** with being a true disciple. *John 8:31*—“*If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*”

Look out for **ANYONE** who is at conflict with the **truth of Scripture!** They are not true disciples of the **LORD!** They don't have anything that will make anyone free!

Have you been freed from your sin by receiving the **Truth of the Gospel?**

1) It is a fact that we are all sinners! That's a Biblical reality!

2) We all deserve the second death! That is also a Biblical reality!

3) On top of that, there is nothing that any of us can do to save ourselves from the wages of sin! Yet another Biblical reality!

4) CHRIST died for the sins of the whole world according to Scripture! He was buried in a borrowed tomb and three days later He arose bodily from that tomb evermore to live! Amen, to another Biblical reality!

5) So Salvation is freely offered to anyone and everyone who will turn from their sin of unbelief and trust solely and fully in what Christ has done for them! And that my friend is the greatest Biblical reality! Amen!

If you haven't believed on the Gospel unto salvation, please do so today!

If you are saved, get into the **BIBLE** and get into **Church** at every chance that is given for you to get grounded in the **Scripture!**

Don't be deceived by smooth talking **FALSE PROPHETS** and **TEACHERS!** And don't go looking for something new, because somebody will give it to you! Look for that which is tried and true! (i.e. **The WORD OF GOD!**)