

How to Judge Cults

How to Deal With False Doctrine

Matthew 7:15,16

I. Introduction (Matthew 7:15,16)

- A. I often wonder how many Christians really care what is taught anymore. They don't want to be bothered with Bible versions, different doctrines, as long as people are "_____"
- B. But Jesus said, Beware of Wolves in Sheep's clothing.
 Matt 7:15,16 *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits.*
1. People get sucked into cults all the time – even Christian people! These warnings I am about to read were not spoken to the unbeliever – but to the Christian – the Christ follower!
 2. Mat 16:6 Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees. Leaven is _____ – LIES!
 3. Col 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.
 4. 2Pe 3:17 Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.
 5. 1Pet 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:
- C. So, what are we to do with all the wolves? And how do we stay vigilant?
1. Judge _____ first. Judge OUR Church first.
 - a. Matt. 7:1 Judge not, that ye be not judged. **For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged:** and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.
 - b. Notice that if we judge the teachings of others by the same standard that we judge ourselves, then we can judge righteous judgment. The perfect standard of judgment is the word of God.
 - c. That is just what we have done already, looking at the characteristics of the First Century Pattern for all churches in the past two weeks:
 - 1) When you HAVE those markers, clearly laid out, and a church matches those things, then you have a good church
 - a) It is Primarily About Jesus Christ?
 - b) Is it a Bible Only Church?
 - c) Is it a New Testament Kind of Church?
 - d) Is it an Accountable Church?
 - e) Is it a Separate Church?
 - f) Is it a Simple Church?
 - g) Is it a Preaching/Teaching Church?
 - h) Is it a Soul-Winning Church?
 - i) Is it a Church Planting Church?
 - j) Is it a Serving Church?
 - k) Is it a Faithful Church?
 - 2) If a church had broken down the walls laid down by God's word, and started going in their own direction, you have the makings of a future cult, if it is not already one!
 2. Then Judge _____ judgment
 - a. John 7:24 Judge not according to the appearance, but **judge righteous judgment.**

- b. 1Cor. 2:15 But **he that is spiritual judgeth all things**, yet he himself is judged of no man.
 - c. 1Cor. 4:4 For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but **he that judgeth me is the Lord.**
 - d. 1Cor. 6:2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and **if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?** Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to **judge between his brethren?**
3. According to ONE judge – the _____
- a. John 12:48 He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, **hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.**
 - b. Gal 1:6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:
 - c. Gal 1:7 Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.
 - d. Gal 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.
 - e. Gal 1:9 As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.
- D. So, we will attempt to follow the direction of the scriptures regarding the CULTS. We will judge them **by the Bible**. We will find that there is “no light in them” (Isa. 8:20), because, “they speak not according to this word”.

II. Message

A. _____ – Put them on trial (1John 4:1)

1. 1John 4:1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but **try the spirits whether they are of God:** because many false prophets are gone out into the world.
2. Just because you like, or agree with what a religion or church teaches, means nothing!
 - a. 2Co 11:2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.
 - b. 2Co 11:3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.
 - c. 2Co 11:4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.
 - d. THAT IS, “IF” you don’t test everything you hear!
3. So, Examine:
 - a. The _____ that they say – what they teach – compare thoroughly with the whole Bible (Acts 17:10-12)
 - 1) Listen – pay attention to them – to what they are SAYING. Not to the warm feeling you may get... That’s how you get free of Rock Music – by paying attention to the PROGRAMMING of the words and the music
 - 2) Notice all the Gobbledygook, airy-fairy, magical, meaningless words
 - 3) Take notice of all the Repetitious words
 - 4) Look for plain words

- b. The _____ they use
- 1) Man-based authority – headquarters, powerful speakers
 - 2) Popularity
 - 3) Or, Proven words of God that are absolute
- c. The _____ of their beliefs
- 1) People changed for the better
 - 2) Marriages restored
 - 3) Minds restored
 - 4) Wayward children returned
 - 5) Stolen money repaid
 - 6) Real Joy, in the midst of hardships
 - 7) Love for the Bible, and Jesus supremely, and serving, etc!

B. _____ THEM AND _____ THEM (Romans 16:17)

1. Rom. 16:17 Now I beseech you, brethren, **mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.** For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.
2. Don't treat them like the plague, but don't go out of your way to spend time with them.
3. Make sure other believers know the dangers of a cult that may be becoming popular

C. HAVE _____ WITH THEM; REPROVE THEM (Ephesians 5:11)

1. Eph. 5:11 And **have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.**
2. You can have PLENTY of fellowship with just joe soaps. But people who are bound in the following things need to be stayed away from
 - a. Mariolatry
 - b. Worshipping dead people, or talking to them
 - c. Casting spells and incantations
 - d. Hypnosis
 - e. Séances
 - f. Satanic worship

D. _____ THEM (Titus 1:10)

1. Titus 1:10 For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are alway liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. This witness is true. Wherefore **rebuke them sharply**, that they may be sound in the faith;
2. False doctrine is serious! Just as serious as driving on the wrong side of the road! So point it out! Especially if it is being taught by "Christian" leaders
 - a. Like Paul did to Peter (Gal 2:11-16)
 - b. What else do you think it means when the Bible says rebuke in 2Tim 4:2-4???

E. _____ FROM THEM (2Thessalonians 3:6)

1. 2Ths. 3:6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye **withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly**, and not after the tradition which he received of us.
2. They need you to tell them the truth, but they need you to not be their friend, and made to feel like it doesn't matter what they are doing, or believing.

F. DON'T _____ THEM; BID THEM NOT GOD SPEED (2John 1:9)

1. 2John 9 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.
2. If they come to your house to try and persuade you, tell them no thank you, and only talk to them at the door. Invite them to church, but don't give them loads of your time.

G. _____ THEM (Titus 3:8)

1. Titus 3:8 This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men. But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition **reject**; Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

H. _____ FROM AMONG THEM; BE _____ (2Corinthians 6:14-18)

1. 2Cor. 6:14-18 Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore **come out from among them, and be ye separate**, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

III. Conclusion

A. DO NOT...

1. _____ them verbally, or physically, creating walls to communication. They have a persecution complex inherited from the cult, believing that all non-members are agents of Satan. Don't feed the complex! Have a curious yet cautious attitude, striving to get them to see things from another perspective (not necessarily yours).
2. _____ the Bible (the most common mistake).
 - a. Teach it. Honour it. Use it wisely! (2Tim 2:24-26)
 - b. People's problem is not lack of knowledge, but the inability to process it correctly! Modern people have to be taught how to process the facts consistently, and before you can teach them, you need to gain their confidence and respect.
 - c. So, a barrier erected by your own ego (i.e., the need to be right, to prove them wrong, etc.) will almost always prevent this from ever happening, necessitating the need for outside intervention.

B. DO...

1. _____ yourself in the area of cult mind control techniques, through books and seminars. Talk to former members of any group, as cult techniques are all quite similar. Be wise - you may only have one chance.
 2. Enlist the help of _____.
 3. _____ for them. Ask God that if it be their time to get out, He will grant you the wisdom and circumstances to accomplish the intervention, and that if it turns out they are not yet ready, that He grant them the circumstances necessary to prepare them for disillusionment with the group and the desire for something better. Ask for patience and wisdom for yourself as well!
 4. _____ engage them. Humbly. Lifting up Jesus, and the perfection of the Bible, as our only source of what is true and right!
- C. Next Week, I will show you some of the 'Marks' of a Cult (So YOU can know one when you see one). How to tell that a church, or a religion is not only different, but dangerous!