

How to
check or select
good
CHURCHES
or
MINISTRIES



Bernard F. Dreyer & Pamela Cook Dreyer

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Unless otherwise mentioned the Bible Verses are from the New King James Version - NKJV. Verses are in *dark grey italic* in the text to facilitate their identification and some key sections are **bold** or **bold** for emphasis.

Links are in **Bold Dark Blue**.

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Introduction



Introduction

How does a Christian check or select a good Church or Ministry? This is an extremely important question that will affect your life and your family for years to come. This short Booklet is an introductory answer to that question. The facts are based on Scriptures and are explained in an easy manner for everybody to understand.

The only motive of the authors in writing this Booklet is their sincere desire to bring some light on some of the questions connected with your Christian walk, and in particular the Church you already attend or want to attend, or the Ministries you want to support. What messages are they teaching or preaching? Are they pure or laced with deceptions?

But most importantly, it is about you: who you are and who you want to be as a Christian.

When in a passage one or more Verses are significant we have added when possible Verses before and after to keep the meaning of the passage in context.

The authors have simplified as much as it is possible keeping in mind that **IT IS NOT COMPLICATED**. That is the name and the motto of their video series on [iktusNET](#):



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Validity of the Bible & the Importance of Studying It



Validity of the Bible & the Importance of Studying It

The Bible is where we have the foundation for the Christian faith. It must be understood that the Bible is the only valid source for our faith. Anything that contradicts the Bible should be rejected. Having an understanding of the Christian life from the New Testament (the Covenant we live in today) is key to understanding if what you are participating in is based on the Bible. This will be explained in greater detail later in this Booklet on how important this is regarding false doctrines.

Second Timothy is a book worth reading. It clearly mentions that the Bible is inspired by God. It was written to encourage Timothy, a Pastor who would face persecution, on how to walk free from deception and walk in victory.

2 Timothy 3: 15-16

*15 And that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 **All Scripture is given by inspiration of God**, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness*

2 Timothy 2: 15-18

*15 **Be diligent to present yourself approved to God**, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 16 But shun profane and idle babblings, for they will increase to more **ungodliness**. 17 And their message will spread like cancer. Hymenaeus and Philetus are of this sort, 18 **who have strayed concerning the truth**, saying that the resurrection is already past; and they overthrow the faith of some.*

Validity of the Bible & the Importance of Studying It

This is pretty clear. You can rightly divide the truth yourself. Verses 16-18 gives an example of false doctrine, reveals what false doctrine will produce, and named the people teaching a certain false doctrine.

Look at the importance of knowing God's word and how precious it is. It's wonderful that you can know it for yourself.

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What does the Bible say about who you are in Christ?



What does the Bible say about who you are in Christ?

Again, knowledge of God's word is important, especially as it relates to what happened when you accepted Christ in your lives and became born again. Who you are in Christ and what you have through Christ is another subject where a lot of false doctrine has been taught over the centuries.

2 Corinthians 5: 17

*17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creation**; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

You have a new nature when you are born again. This means that the sin nature, or old man, you had before accepting Christ is no longer within you. A new nature like Christ came in.

Romans 8: 1-5

*1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the spirit. 2 For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. 3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the spirit. 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but **those who live according to the spirit, the things of the Spirit.***

It should be noted that spirit with a lowercase "s" in this passage refers to your new nature. Spirit with a capital "S" refers to the Holy Spirit. This passage of scripture tells us that the spirit - aka new nature - is pure and that you should live according to it. The flesh in this context is the soul (mind, will, emotions, intellect), not the old sin nature. The fight is between your soul and your new nature. There is no longer a sin nature within a Christian.

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How to Walk in Who You Are



How to Walk in Who You Are

In order to experience what the Lord has provided for you, you must renew your minds to what the Bible says you have as born again Christians.

Romans 12: 1-3

*1 We beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And **do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. 3 For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*

When you were born again, you became brand new on the inside. However the soul (mind, will, emotions, intellect) needs to be renewed to what the Lord has spoken and to learn how to think like God does.

2 Corinthians 10: 3-6

*3 For though **we walk in the flesh**, we do not war according to the flesh. 4 **For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds**, 5 casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, 6 and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled.*

This does NOT mean that your soul is evil. This is where you learn how to live in this natural world. You do not receive education or knowledge through your spirit - aka new nature. It is through your soul.

How to Walk in Who You Are

However it does mean that you will gain more spiritual knowledge and revelation as you learn more about His Word in the Bible. Your new nature - aka spirit man - aka inner man - is strengthened but it is your soul that decides if you will live according to your new nature or not. Your spirit does not make that choice.

One way to learn more about the Word and about the Lord is through the training of the Holy Spirit your teacher.

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The Function of the Holy Spirit in the Life of a Christian



The Function of the Holy Spirit in the Life of a Christian

The Holy Spirit was sent by Christ to be your teacher when He went to sit at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

John 14: 26

*26 But the **Helper**, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, **He will teach you all things**, and bring to your remembrance all things that We said to you.*

The word translated “Helper” in the Verse is “Paraclete” which means advocate, counselor, or one called alongside to help. Paraclete comes from the Koine Greek word **παράκλητος** (paráklētos), that can signify one called alongside to help, one who consoles or comforts, one who encourages or uplifts; hence refreshes, and/or one who intercedes on your behalf.

John 16: 13

*13 However, when He, the **Spirit of truth**, has come, **He will guide you into all truth**; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.*

The Spirit of Truth in context is the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost depending on the translation of the Bible being used. Notice that it says that He will guided you into all Truth and He will tell you things to come. This can happen through listening to a message but it can also happen directly as you learn how to recognize when the Holy Spirit is speaking.

1 John 2: 20

*20 But you have **an anointing from the Holy One**, and you know all things*

The Function of the Holy Spirit in the Life of a Christian

1 John 2: 27

*27 But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; **but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him.***

The anointing that teaches you is truth and does not lie. You can know from that anointing if you are hearing teachings that are not the truth. You must know this fact and have confidence about this in order to correctly determine if you are dealing with a teacher that is teaching false doctrine.

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Activate the Holy Spirit by Praying in Tongues



Activate the Holy Spirit by Praying in Tongues

First Corinthians Chapter 14 speaks about different types of tongues. A number of Verses mention speaking in tongues also known as the prayer language.

1 Corinthians 14: 1-14

*1 Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. 2 For **he who speaks in a tongue** does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries. 3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. 4 **He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself**, but he who prophesies edifies the church. 5 We wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.*

6 But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall We profit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching?

7 Even things without life, whether flute or harp, when they make a sound, unless they make a distinction in the sounds, how will it be known what is piped or played? 8 For if the trumpet makes an uncertain sound, who will prepare for battle? 9 So likewise you, unless you utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.

10 There are, it may be, so many kinds of languages in the world, and none of them is without significance. 11 Therefore, if I do not know the meaning of the language, I shall be a foreigner to him who speaks, and he who speaks will be a foreigner to me. 12 Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel.

*13 Therefore let him who speaks in a tongue pray that he may interpret. 14 For **if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays**, but my understanding is unfruitful.*

Activate the Holy Spirit by Praying in Tongues

Verse 2 says “*For **he who speaks in a tongue** does not speak to men but to God.*” The mysteries are not a mystery to God. They are mysteries related to your lives. Sometimes you may know what you are praying as you continue to respond to His leading.

Verse 14 says something very important: “***For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful.***”

Romans 8: 26-28

*26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the **Spirit Himself makes intercession** for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.*

28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

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You have Authority over the Devil and Demonic Powers



You have Authority over the Devil and Demonic Powers

The Bible says that those that believe have the authority over the devil and demonic powers. You do not have to be afraid of demonic powers. They should run from you.

James 4: 6-7

*6 But He gives more grace. Therefore He says: "God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble." 7 **Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.***

Mark 16: 16-18

*16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will follow those who believe: **In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues;** 18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."*

These Verses tell you what happens when a believer believes, one of them being that they will cast out devils. Another is that they will speak with new tongues. This is referring to the prayer language - aka praying in tongues - aka praying in the Spirit.

John 14: 12-14

*12 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and **greater works than these he will do**, because I go to My Father. 13 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.*

This is Jesus speaking to us. We strongly suggest that you study the life of Jesus in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Pay close attention to the things He did. You have the same capacity to do the same if you believe.

You have Authority over the Devil and Demonic Powers

John 6: 28-29

28 Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?” 29 Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”

Demons will try and threaten and scare you if they sense that you do not believe that you have the authority over them. Learn these scriptures until you are sure of the fact you have authority over them as much as you are sure of your salvation. If this is not done demons will cause a lot of trouble for you and your family. Believe what the words says about your authority and cast them out of your life.

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False Doctrines and False Teachers / Prophets



False Doctrines and False Teachers / Prophets

There are many false teachers and false prophets that are teaching false doctrines for their own financial gain and increasing their sphere of influence. They have no interest in caring for anyone but themselves. You will be able to identify them through knowledge of the word and revelation knowledge which agrees with the word.

Ezekiel chapter 34 in the Old Testament speaks about the **Irresponsible Shepherds** and **God, the True Shepherd** (see **Appendix 1** for the text). Read the entire chapter very carefully. The parallels found in this chapter of Ezekiel to what is happening today in the Body of Christ is frighteningly accurate regarding many prominent Bible teachers and prophets in our day.

The New Testament of the Bible has many passages of Scripture that clearly talk about the existence of false teachers and false prophets, how they will behave, how God feels about them and what their end will be. Here are just a few of them.

Mark 13: 22

*22 For **false christs and false prophets** will rise and show signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.*

2 Peter 2: 1-3

*1 But there were also **false prophets** among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. 3 By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.*

1 John 4: 1

*1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because **many false prophets** have gone out into the world. Matthew 7: 15-20*

*15 “Beware of **false prophets**, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. 16 You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?*

17 Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Therefore by their fruits you will know them.

If you are to beware of false prophets and false teachers you must examine what teachers teach according to Scripture in order to identify which prophets and teachers are false. You must know his Word and use it without fear or shame.

Matthew 24: 4-5, 11

*4 And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed **that no one deceives you**. 5 For many will come in My name, saying, ‘We am the Christ,’ and will **deceive many**.*

*11 Then many **false prophets** will rise up and deceive many.*

John 10: 1-18

1 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2 But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4 And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. 5 Yet they

False Doctrines and False Teachers / Prophets

will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” 6 Jesus used this illustration, but they did not understand the things which He spoke to them.

*7 Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. 8 All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. 9 I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. 10 **The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy.** I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.*

11 “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd gives His life for the sheep. 12 But a hireling, he who is not the shepherd, one who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees; and the wolf catches the sheep and scatters them. 13 The hireling flees because he is a hireling and does not care about the sheep. 14 I am the good shepherd; and I know My sheep, and am known by My own. 15 As the Father knows Me, even so I know the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. 16 And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear My voice; and there will be one flock and one shepherd.

17 “Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. 18 No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.”

Many times when this is quoted they say that the thief is the devil. That is true in actuality because that is his nature. However in context the thief are the hirelings - aka false ministers or false teachers. If you read in detail the complete passage (John 10: 1-18) you can see the comparison between a false minister and how they treat the people and Jesus the Good Shepherd.

Ephesians 4: 11-15

*11 And He Himself gave some to be **apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers**, 12 for the **equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ**, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the **trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting**, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—*

That passage illustrates what true pastors, ministers or teachers are called to do: equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.

Revelation 2: 12-29 describes in detail the **Compromising Church** and the **Corrupt Church** (see **Appendix 2** for the text of the passage). Read the text carefully.

The passage of Revelation describes in detail the compromising church and the corrupt church. Both of these churches were doing good things according to Scripture. However both of them also embraced false doctrines. It includes the characteristics of the Jezebel spirit, speaks about the church in Thyatira and what happened when they tolerated Jezebel.

The Jezebel spirit manifests a lot when false doctrine is being taught. It does not matter what good things a ministry does. The Jezebel spirit will wreck havoc and destroy.

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Typical Deceptions from the Pulpit



Typical Deceptions from the Pulpit

Be warned: Deception normally does not manifest itself full blown initially. It comes subtly and increases with time. It is usually mixed with truth designed to get you to accept the deception along with the truth. Don't be fooled by this.

There are many ways deception manifests. Here are some you might have heard taught or read over many years. Read them in light of the Scriptures we have mentioned earlier in this Booklet.

Do not be critical of a minister or a teaching because you are becoming a Pharisee

Another version of this is that if you criticize what you hear or see you are being attacked by the spirit of religion which does not want you to experience "all that God has for you". They will tell you that you are using the Word out of context to discredit the work of God.

What many do not realize is that the preacher is falsely accusing you because you are obeying the Word. They do this because they want to exalt themselves as the revealer of Truth to you when the Bible clearly says that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth. This is being done because the teacher is full of pride.

More than likely the false teacher will teach these types of teachings after being challenged with God's word by many people. They have no Biblical support for the teaching so they try to guilt people for doing what the Bible says do, that is, to study the word and righteously judge false teachings. They want to suck you into their deception for their own gain, especially increased exposure to feed their pride and financial gain.

The Lord has given me a special revelation for you

Even if it does not line up with Scripture they will tell you to just catch what they are trying to say and not nit pick at the unscriptural details in their message. The message may also include verbiage about not being critical of what is being said and accusing you of being a Pharisee as

Typical Deceptions from the Pulpit

mentioned earlier. Bottom line: If the revelation does not line up with God's word reject it outright. You have every right to according to Scripture.

If you decide to ask or challenge the teacher about this be prepared to be ignored or receive their wrath. If you are ignored or receive wrath from them that shows that the teacher has no interest in you understanding what is being revealed.

By these reactions they are saying that you are too dumb and need them to help you along. This is totally contrary to Scripture. Their goal is not to prepare you for works of service as the Scripture says in **Ephesians 4**. Their sole motivation is to get you to feed their egos and fill their pockets with cash. This is not a godly teacher.

If is not a 'heaven or hell' issue, just dismiss it and don't worry about it being wrong

This sounds really good. However the Bible says that all scripture is God breathed. It does not say to dismiss anything. If a teacher clearly states that it is their opinion, that is one thing. However if the teacher is teaching something that clearly contradicts what the Bible says it must be rejected and called what it is, false doctrine.

Note: Teachers that teach anything, religious or secular, love for their students to understand what they are teaching. A good teacher will take any sincere question and attempt to explain something in a different way to make sure their student understands what they are teaching. Good teachers that see they taught something wrong will correct what they said and where they made the error. For example if a minister teaches something wrong during a service according to Scripture, they will correct it during the next service and apologize for the error. The previous two points in this section show some characteristics of bad teachers.

Protecting the Anointing

This concept has been a very popular one over the years. It is usually mentioned during a financial appeal to raise money for airplanes or other private, exclusive forms of transportation. They say they need these modes of transportation in order to ‘protect the anointing’.

If you really think about ‘protecting the anointing’, this idea makes no sense at all biblically speaking. Many places in the Bible where the anointing is mentioned talk about how it destroys yokes, sets people free, heals the sick, raises the dead, etc. How are you going to do this under the anointing when you are hiding in your private jet ‘protecting the anointing’? It does not need to be protected but released as His representatives on the earth.

Here is another thing to consider. If the concept was valid you need to make sure that:

- Every product they use must be made by Christians.
- Every company they do business with must be owned by Christians (including every shareholder) AND every employee in that company must be a Christian.
- Every company only does business with companies wholly owned by Christians and every employee in those companies must be Christian.
- You never ever deal with non-Christians under any circumstances for any reason.

You can see that this is impossible to do. You also do not see a single Verse in the Bible that says that the anointing must be protected. This approach sounds spiritual while extorting your money for their financial gain and to feed their egos.

Do not Touch God's Anointed or Do His Prophets No Harm

The Verse quoted is **Psalm 105:15**. This was written before Christ died for us making a way to have direct access with Our Father. During that time only certain people were anointed by God. They were the only voice that God had in the earth until Christ made a way for all of us to have direct access to God Our Father.

Every Christian is anointed according to Scripture. If you are bold enough you can tell a preacher that you are anointed and they better not touch you. You will immediately see their motivation for doing that teaching.

These threatening teachings more than likely start when a teacher has been criticized a lot for their false teachings. It is not a teaching from the Lord but a teaching fueled by their anger and rage.

You are accused of using logic or reasoning

If you question what a teacher is saying you are accused of using logic or reasoning. The Bible says in **2 Timothy 2:15** to *'be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth'*. The King James Version of the Bible says 'to study to show yourself approved unto God'.

They will say that using your brain is against God forgetting the fact that God gave you the mind to reason and think. It is your mind that decides what you will do or not do. A teacher saying this wants you to become a zombie and just obey what they say like a robot. The brain is not evil. You do not need to have a lobotomy performed to have faith in God or His word.

Please, when going to Church or attending a ministry service do not leave your brain at the door. Renew your mind with the Word according to **Romans 12:1-3**.

Typical Deceptions from the Pulpit

Note: Another version of this is the idea that secular education is evil and that the only education you need is from the Bible or teachings from your Church. This would be laughable except for the fact that many Christians believe this and handicap themselves, sometimes for their entire lives. They can be taken advantage of by anyone who wants to use their ignorance against them. They are especially vulnerable to the financial extortionists - aka prosperity teachers.

The teacher gives you an outrageously long list of things you must do to receive something from God

This can relate to anything (getting married, finances, healing, being free from demonic attack, etc.). The list they give you is not in the Bible. Here are some examples of this.

Getting Married

- You are not married because 'you are not ready'.
- Don't look at 'how the Lord has blessed others to be married'. You have to love the Lord alone before He will bring your mate to you.
- Most (and maybe all) teachings about Ruth and Boaz related to being single, especially the one where they talk about Ruth gleaning in the fields and Boaz found her. The context is that women should serve faithfully in their local church and their Boaz will find her.
- You don't have to do anything because 'God will orchestrate your romance'.

Finances - Healing - Salvation

- God cannot give you finances until you give finances to the man of God.
- There is a special anointing right now to give to 'receive your financial harvest'.
- I'm called by God to be a financial deliverer.

Typical Deceptions from the Pulpit

- You must sow a seed to meet your need. Remember you do not barter with God. It is nowhere in the Bible.
- If you desire God to do “x” (i.e. see your family members saved, healing in your body, facing bankruptcy, marriage restoration, etc.), release your faith by giving “y\$” now! The amount usually related to a Chapter or Verse number from the Old Testament where the chapter numbers are high: e.g. Psalms 119 which has 176 Verses. They will never mention Jude, otherwise they will only ask for \$1.
- You need to sow into another person’s ministry before God will help you with yours.
- You are cursed by God if you do not tithe.
- You will lose your healing from God if you rob God by not tithing.
- You must give to the man of God. It does not matter if they throw the money down the toilet. God commands you to give.

Freedom from Demonic Attack

- You must repent for all of the sins of your family line (the generational curse) as well as your own.
- You must travel to a special deliverance ministry to be set free.
- You must complete a 12-week deliverance class before we can cast out the demon(s) in you.

Review the Verses mentioned in the section “How to Walk in Who We Are”.

Study the Bible and see how romances happened. There is one time where God told a prophet in the Old Testament to marry a prostitute as a prophetic picture of the rebellion of Israel against God. Other than that people fell in love and decided to marry. The Holy Spirit will lead you in the decision

Typical Deceptions from the Pulpit

making process. Sometimes the Holy Spirit may tell a person about a future decision the person will make regarding who they might marry. However you decide who you marry. God does not make people get marry or choose who they marry.

Study the New Testament and see what the Bible actually says about how you receive any blessing from God. You will find that in every case the only thing you need to do is to believe on who the Father has sent and believe His word.

Search out Verses in the New Testament regarding demonic powers and how they were dealt with. The Bible says in the last chapter of Mark that believers will cast out demons. Use your authority over demonic powers while being submitted to God to stop them from bothering you.

The Bible is full of errors, mistakes, contradictions or myths and fables

This may be stated after the teacher says that God has given him or her a special revelation to reveal the truth to you. Never mind that the Bible says that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Truth and that He will teach you all things and show you things to come. We will mention again that the Bible says that All Scripture is God breathed. How can God make mistakes?

The teachers say that an angel appeared to them and taught them something

The only things in Scripture that angels did were to help fight on behalf of God's people or send a message. There is not a single place in the Bible where angels taught doctrine.

Note: If you hear a teacher stating that 'The Lord' or 'The Holy Spirit' taught something and it is false doctrine, more than likely they are getting the false doctrine from a masquerading demon telling them it is 'The Lord'.

You have to submit to ‘godly authority’

They incessantly teach about authority and how you will not progress in God unless you submit to ‘godly authority’, meaning them. You are forbidden to question anything they do or say. If you dare question them you are sternly accused of being rebellious against God and His chosen ones in authority. Sometimes you are made an example publicly in order to humiliate you to keep you in line.

We are obviously not promoting having a rebellious attitude against obeying ministers in general. However leaders as described above will falsely accuse people of being rebellious if they sincerely question something, especially regarding if the request is against the Bible or spiritually abusive in nature. They will use the ‘touch not God’s anointed’ Verse against them.

Never heard a Verse about who you are in Christ

You never hear any Verses or rarely hear Verses taught about who you are in Christ. They always reference Old Testament Scriptures where receiving from God was always tied to the preacher. This is no longer true in the New Testament in the present age of Grace. Again if you question this you are branded as rebellious against God or guilty of greasy grace.

Framing your relationship with God through another leader

We want to make this point very clearly. If you are listening to anyone that frames your relationship with God through another leader - aka them, they are using some Verses out of context to feed their egos and fill their pocketbooks. They are chewing you up and spitting you out, the total opposite of what ministers of the gospels are charged to do in Ephesians 4: 11-15 (see the text in the chapter False Doctrines and False Teachers/Prophets).

The teacher does not accept being challenged

One way they ‘nicely’ try to avoid being challenged is they will say something like this: There is no one perfect but Jesus. We all are wrong somewhere so let’s agree to disagree and not talk about it. The teacher is really saying ‘I don’t want to hear anything you have to say against what I teach’. You can quickly see if this is true if the minister afterwards keeps saying they have a special revelation from the Lord for YOU and/or I’m right about this during their teachings. If you pay close attention to how this is worded they are saying it is okay for you to accept false doctrine since the teacher may be wrong. The Bible says otherwise in multiple sections of Scripture.

If you challenge or contradict what the teacher says, especially referencing God’s precious word, he or she may get really hostile and almost violent towards you. You could have approached them with all the love of God you could muster up but it does not matter. They are angry because they realize that they cannot rule over you, cannot deceive you and more importantly they know that you know the Bible. They cannot succeed without having people follow them that are ignorant about God’s word. You are a threat to their ‘ministry’, regardless of if they are intentionally trying to deceive you or not.

If they do not directly respond, the next message they preach or their next newsletter is an accusatory one directed at you. They do this without mentioning your name but will include something in the message that is a direct quote from you. Those false teachers are too cowardly to come to you because they absolutely hate the Word and do not want to hear it under any circumstances. At the same time they dare to tell you that they have a revelation from God that you better accept or else.

They are trying to neutralize your effectiveness just in case you speak to others in the congregation. The teacher may accuse you of being a witch or one that is trying to split the ministry. They will do

Typical Deceptions from the Pulpit

anything to scare others from listening to you or from checking out their false teachings by the Bible.

The teacher constantly says that they are right in a message regardless of the spiritual inaccuracy of their teaching

They never say or admit that they can be wrong. You are dealing with teachers that are full of themselves and have a messiah complex.

This is when they are trying to say that they have a special revelation for you they have received from Jesus or angels that you must accept or else. Ripe pickings for demons to inflate their egos. More than likely they have had encounters with demons masquerading as angels of light. Demons love to play with those that are full of pride and love self exaltation.

You will be cursed by God if you do not receive what they are saying

Another version of this is if you reject 'the truth being taught here' and decide to leave the devil will get you and devour you.

Basically you better listen to what they are saying or else you will suffer damnation of some kind. They often use the Verse 25 from Hebrews 10 that says "not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together" out of context. They are using fear to keep you in their sheep pen to nourish them instead of them nourishing you. The correct context of the Book of Hebrews is discussed later in this Booklet.

Typical Deceptions from the Pulpit

Gold dust, glory jewels, feathers, etc.

Beware if you have attended services where you saw gold dust, glory jewels, feathers or anything like that. These are either lying signs and wonders or trickery. It is not in the Bible, so the manifestations are not from God. How will you judge God if in a service gold dust shows up and all the people who came in a wheelchair return home in a wheelchair? Is He a compassionate God? No! This is not the God of the Bible.

These lying signs and wonders or tricks are there to make people think they have power and distract them from the fact that they are not manifesting God's power as described in the Bible. At best these things happen when ministries want to have larger crowds attending, meaning more cash in their pockets. At its worst they are happening because the leaders cannot discern the difference between God's power and demonic manifestations.

Encounters with demons

If you experience any kind of supernatural experience that the Bible clearly speaks against you are having encounters with demons.

If you 'get healed' or 'get set free from demons' and then experience more oppression, there is a good chance you are having encounters with demons. They tell you that you have to travel thousands of miles to be set free from demon powers.

If you notice that a significant number of people in your fellowship or their relatives are dying or experiencing horrible calamities within a short period of time, there is a good chance that the spirit of Jezebel is in your midst. For example the promoter of the gold dust madness and her chief 'evangelist' both died of cancer within 2 years or less. So sad!

Basically these teachers are telling you that they are better Christians than you when the Bible says that God is no respecter of persons. Since they are better, more enlightened Christians, they can tell you what to do and demand that you be teachable, meaning accept everything they say without question.

These people are the most unteachable people you will ever meet. They are judging people guilty of being unteachable when they are guilty of that themselves. The Bible speak harshly about what happens to people that condemn people about things they are guilty of themselves. Their end is not a good one.

Hierarchical system of spiritual knowledge and revelation

None of the Verses we have mentioned in this Booklet say anything about a hierarchical system of spiritual knowledge and revelation. In fact they say just the opposite. It is clear that Christ died in order to reconcile you to God Your Father. Jesus Christ sent the Holy Spirit (Holy Ghost) to be your Teacher and revealer of the Truth. The Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Truth. Anyone that teaches that you need them to gain revelation from God, mark them as a false teacher.

How to check or select good
CHURCHES or MINISTRIES

Leaving a Bad Church or Ministry



Leaving a Bad Church or Ministry

You do not need to stay in a bad Church or support a bad ministry and pray for them hoping they will change. You can get out of that madness and still pray for them. The Bible says to beware of and run from false teachers.

Have you experienced any of the deceptions we mentioned?

If you have experienced anything like this, especially if the frequency of these things have increased as time goes on, you really need to leave that Church or ministry. Things will only get worse until they have their eyes opened. The longer you stay, the more you could be neutralized spiritually.

An example you may have heard about in science class is about how frogs will behave when you put them in a pan of water on a stove burner. Normally a frog, when jumping in really hot water, will immediately jump out of the water. However if you put a frog in cold water and slowly heat up the water the frog will stay there because it's slowly getting used to the temperature. That will continue until the water gets so hot that it has cooked the frog.

This is what can happen to Christians who sit and listen to false doctrine, even after they realize it is false. The Bible instructs you to run from false teachers.

You may have noticed that we have mentioned only one scripture reference from the Old Testament - **Ezekiel chapter 34** - regarding false shepherds. We did this on purpose since we are in the age of grace as New Testament believers.

Experience of one of the author of this Booklet.

One of the authors of this Booklet experienced this years ago. Here is what happened:

“This was my error.... I sincerely felt that I was to stay and pray for them. When I left two prior congregations I was so beat up and incredibly discouraged which is not normal for me. I sincerely asked the Lord why that happened. I knew that God had nothing to do with this. I had messed up somewhere.

Leaving a Bad Church or Ministry

After hearing a teacher read Verses similar to ones mentioned in this Booklet about false prophets I realized that I was beat up because there is no Biblical support to stay in the midst of false doctrine and pray. I knew these Verses. I could have quoted them but had forgotten them. The enemy made sure of that. I learned from what I walked through and how I got out. This is what I'm doing today and glad to do it.'

If you see that you are a part of a bad Church or ministry and decide to leave, do not allow condemnation to fester within you. You may feel humiliated or angry when you realize that you wasted time and energy believing lies that came from those that said they were ministers of the gospel.

We all have not understood something and have believed something wrong. Thank God we have the Holy Spirit as our Teacher. If we did not need teaching the Holy Spirit did not need to come. Don't feel bad for not knowing something. Now you have learned things you have not known before. That is being teachable.

After you have left... what might happen?

Even though you may have left the ministry it may take a bit of time being away before the sting of what happened to you leaves for good. That is when you have healed from that experience. People can learn from what you walked through and how you got out.

Unfortunately you may experience false accusation and shunning from people you care about when you attempt to tell them what you know from God's word about what is going on. Remember they have been told, like maybe you were, about not questioning anything because they were going to miss God. Just leave them in the hands of the Lord and continue to pray as led for them.

What do you do next?

If you have left a bad Church or ministry or plan on leaving one, do not feel like you have to get involved with another ministry immediately. Take your time to check and select the right ones and do not be intimidated by the following Verse being thrown at you.

Hebrews 10: 25

25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

This Verse has been used over and over to scare Christians into staying in congregations regardless of if they are Biblically based or not. Trust that the Holy Spirit as your Teacher will indeed lead you into more and more Truth and will lead you into what you need to continue to grow in Him and enjoy your Father.

Note: The book of Hebrews was written to Jews that have become Christians. They were facing severe persecution from their families and friends. Many were excommunicated from their families. Many were no longer allowed to further their education or may have lost their livelihood. They were being pressured to renounce Christ and go back under the law and back to the synagogue. In this context this Verse was exhorting these precious Christians to not quit the fellowship with other Christians or the body of Christ. They would be going back to a system that no longer exists as far as being a valid path to God or for salvation.

How to check or select good
CHURCHES or MINISTRIES

How to Check or Select A Good Church or Ministry



How to Check or Select A Good Church or Ministry

Note: In this section we will use the term ‘**ministry**’ generically when referring to churches and para-church ministries. This term also includes ministries on TV, radio and the Internet that you might consider supporting financially. What we state below applies to all of them.

It was suggested earlier that you should not feel rushed to become a part of another ministry. Take your time and seek the Lord. This is especially true if you have recently left a bad ministry. You may need time to recover in your soul before getting involved again. Allow the Holy Spirit to lead you where and when you should become a part of another ministry. When you feel it is time, it is important that you do your due diligence in evaluating and researching that ministry. One of the best ways you can do this is to check out their website if they have one.

Most, if not all, ministry websites have an About Us or Who We Are section that introduces the ministry leadership. They usually have a What We Believe section which gives a high level description of their foundational beliefs. If they have an online store it would be good to check out the materials that they sell, including materials of ministers that are not a part of the ministry you are researching.

Another section that you can check out is their Online Media section. Hopefully they have some online media that is free to access. If they offer live streaming watch a few of their services to see how they conduct their services and what they teach. If they don't have this if possible attend a few of their services. You can do a similar check of their newsletters if they are available online.

You will be able to determine if their doctrine is Bible based and in context. The points included in this Booklet can be a starting point for a checklist as they cover several common areas where false doctrine is taught. However the Holy Spirit may point out other things that we have not included.

How to Check or Select A Good Church or Ministry

You can also check for more information from the Better Business Bureau in the US and Canada or its equivalent in the country where the ministry headquarters is located. You will see if they have a lot of complaints about how they run their ministry, especially how they are handling their contributions.

You can do online searches using Google or your favorite online search web tool to see what reporting has been done about the ministry.

After you have done your research we strongly suggest that you pray until you hear from the Lord clearly before getting involved with that ministry. No ministry is perfect but a good ministry should be run and based on Scripture.

How to check or select good **CHURCHES** or **MINISTRIES**

Conclusion



Conclusion

In this Booklet we described how the spirit of religion causes deception that can hurt and traumatize Christians. Hopefully you will be able to use the content of this Booklet to be better able to discern if you are listening to messages from Churches or Ministries that are based on God's Word or not.

The Lord has already set you free from sin and hell. The more you gain knowledge of that through the renewing of your minds, the less you will be sucked into religion, deception and bondage. We hope and pray that this Booklet has brought new light to your Christian faith and values.

What is impossible with man is possible with God

Should you need to understand better the **Plan God has for your life, pray in the Holy Ghost.** He is your teacher and will give you directions.



Feel free to reproduce this Booklet as is and share it with your family and friends.

How to check or select good **CHURCHES** or **MINISTRIES**

Appendix 1 - Ezekiel 34



Ezekiel 34

Irresponsible Shepherds

1 And the word of the Lord came to me, saying, 2 “Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel, prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God to the shepherds: “Woe to the shepherds of Israel who feed themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flocks? 3 You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool; you slaughter the fatlings, but you do not feed the flock. 4 The weak you have not strengthened, nor have you healed those who were sick, nor bound up the broken, nor brought back what was driven away, nor sought what was lost; but with force and cruelty you have ruled them. 5 So they were scattered because there was no shepherd; and they became food for all the beasts of the field when they were scattered. 6 My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and on every high hill; yes, My flock was scattered over the whole face of the earth, and no one was seeking or searching for them.”

7 ‘Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: 8 “As I live,” says the Lord God, “surely because My flock became a prey, and My flock became food for every beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, nor did My shepherds search for My flock, but the shepherds fed themselves and did not feed My flock”— 9 therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the Lord! 10 Thus says the Lord God: “Behold, I am against the shepherds, and I will require My flock at their hand; I will cause them to cease feeding the sheep, and the shepherds shall feed themselves no more; for I will deliver My flock from their mouths, that they may no longer be food for them.”

God, the True Shepherd

11 'For thus says the Lord God: "Indeed I Myself will search for My sheep and seek them out. 12 As a shepherd seeks out his flock on the day he is among his scattered sheep, so will I seek out My sheep and deliver them from all the places where they were scattered on a cloudy and dark day. 13 And I will bring them out from the peoples and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land; I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, in the valleys and in all the inhabited places of the country. 14 I will feed them in good pasture, and their fold shall be on the high mountains of Israel. There they shall lie down in a good fold and feed in rich pasture on the mountains of Israel. 15 I will feed My flock, and I will make them lie down," says the Lord God. 16 "I will seek what was lost and bring back what was driven away, bind up the broken and strengthen what was sick; but I will destroy the fat and the strong, and feed them in judgment."

17 'And as for you, O My flock, thus says the Lord God: "Behold, I shall judge between sheep and sheep, between rams and goats. 18 Is it too little for you to have eaten up the good pasture, that you must tread down with your feet the residue of your pasture—and to have drunk of the clear waters, that you must foul the residue with your feet? 19 And as for My flock, they eat what you have trampled with your feet, and they drink what you have fouled with your feet."

20 'Therefore thus says the Lord God to them: "Behold, I Myself will judge between the fat and the lean sheep. 21 Because you have pushed with side and shoulder, butted all the weak ones with your horns, and scattered them abroad, 22 therefore I will save My flock, and they shall no longer be a prey; and I will judge between sheep and sheep. 23 We will establish one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them—My servant David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd. 24 And I, the Lord, will be their God, and My servant David a prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken."

Appendix 1 - Ezekiel 34

25 “I will make a covenant of peace with them, and cause wild beasts to cease from the land; and they will dwell safely in the wilderness and sleep in the woods. 26 I will make them and the places all around My hill a blessing; and I will cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing. 27 Then the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them. 28 And they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and no one shall make them afraid. 29 I will raise up for them a garden of renown, and they shall no longer be consumed with hunger in the land, nor bear the shame of the Gentiles anymore. 30 Thus they shall know that I, the Lord their God, am with them, and they, the house of Israel, are My people,” says the Lord God.’

31 “You are My flock, the flock of My pasture; you are men, and I am your God,” says the Lord God.

How to check or select good
CHURCHES or MINISTRIES

Appendix 2 - Revelation 2: 12-29



Revelation 2: 12-29

The Compromising Church

12 *“And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write,*

‘These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: 13 “I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. 14 But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. 15 Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. 16 Repent, or else We will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.

17 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.””

The Corrupt Church

18 *“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write,*

‘These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: 19 “I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works,

Appendix 2 - Revelation 2: 12-29

the last are more than the first. 20 Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. 21 And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. 22 Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. 23 I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

24 “Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden. 25 But hold fast what you have till I come. 26 And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—

27 ‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron;

They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’—as I also have received from My Father; 28 and We will give him the morning star.

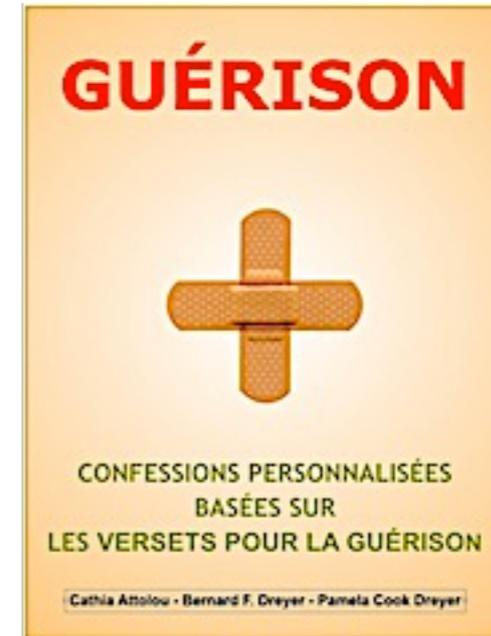
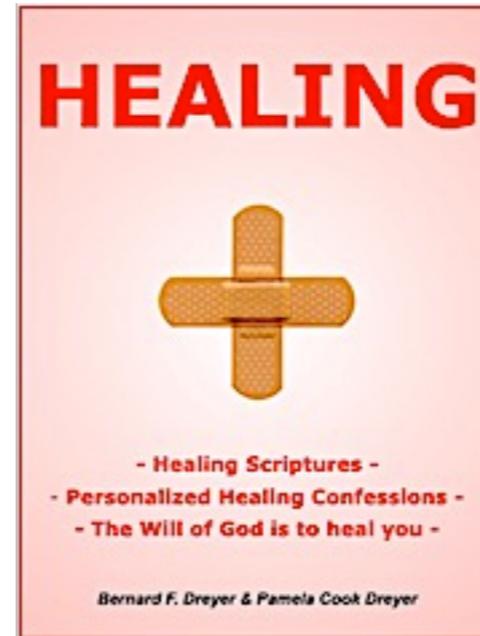
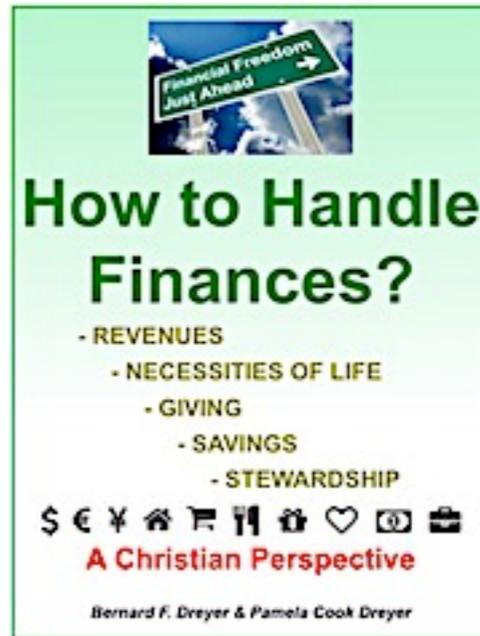
29 “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”’

How to check or select good
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Appendix 3 - FREE Digital Booklets



Appendix 3 - FREE Digital Booklets



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