

False Teachers Part One

When we understand that the Bible is God's Word, He gave us the Bible so we would know how to get to Heaven, and we understand from God's teachings in His Word there is only one way into Heaven, we have come a long way. The Bible teaches us to **NOT** change or alter the word of God. **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. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.", and **Revelation 22:18-19** "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book." We can easily see from these scriptures God does not want His Word changed by anyone, and it is sinful when someone does. A false teacher is someone that does try to change the Word of God. Sometimes people teach different doctrines than that which is found in the Bible by accident. Such a person can hopefully be better taught and change their ways. Some people know they are teaching false doctrine and don't care. Their goal might be money, fame, power, or something else, however, they do not care about your soul. Either type of false teacher will send themselves and anyone following them to Hell, if they do not repent. That is why it is so important for each and every one of us to search the scriptures and be sure what we are being taught is correct. As we are taught by God in **Acts 17:11** "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Because after all you and I are responsible for our own souls and where they go as the Bible teaches in **Philippians 2:12** "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." In this two-part lesson we will explore and hopefully come to a better understanding of the serious danger to people's souls false teaching is. Because there is so much information to cover on this topic it will be broken down into two parts.

The Old Testament teaches against false teaching

Job 36:4 "For truly my words shall not be false: he that is perfect in knowledge is with thee."

We will not be false if we truly follow God. God has shared the Bible with us, which is our only path to salvation. When we get off God's path, we are wrong, and if we teach others contrary to God's will we are false with our words.

Psalms 119:101-104 "I have refrained my feet from every evil way, that I might keep thy word. I have not departed from thy judgments: for thou hast taught me. How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth! Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way." Any way other than God's way is a false way. If we teach others falsely, and lead them down a false path, we are false teachers.

Teaching the Truth is important

John 8:31-32 “Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, 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.” Notice Jesus talked about “the truth” not “a truth”. There is no my truth, or your truth, there is only the Truth. Only following the Truth can we be free of sin. Every other path is false and leads to destruction eternally. We must continue in Jesus words, the Bible, not some man-made false doctrine.

John 17:17 “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.” God’s Word, the Bible, is the Truth which shows us the way to Heaven. No other truth, or path to Heaven exists. All other “truths”, are in fact false and will lead us to Hell. I become a false teacher when I am teaching anything contrary to the Word of God.

2 Thessalonians 2:10 “And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” If you don’t receive the truth, which is taught in the Bible, you do not have salvation, which God wants you to have. We must use the Scriptures to be sure what is taught from the pulpit is actually in accordance with the Bible.

2 Timothy 4:1-4 “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.” Paul, through God’s inspiration, warns us that some people will not teach the Truth. They might have their own agenda for money, power, influence, etc., and not care about your salvation. Sometimes someone is teaching false doctrine out of ignorance, but is still dangerous. False teachers, on purpose or on accident, will lead themselves and others to Hell with their false doctrine. God wants us to look into the Scriptures ourselves, and be sure what we learn matches His Word.

1 Peter 1:22-23 “Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently: Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” Peter, through God’s inspiration, tells us we purify our souls by obeying the Truth. Once again, there is only one truth. If we do not obey the Truth, we cannot have our souls purified and we miss Heaven. A False teacher will teach you something other than what we find in the Bible, and it will not lead you to Heaven.

Warnings about false teachers

Matthew 7:15-20 “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. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.” The Bible warns that some false teachers will

come around pretending to be something they are not. Most false teachers are not going to announce to you what they are, but rather they will pretend to be something that is not threatening the Truth. Presenting their false doctrine in a friendly sounding package makes it far easier to sneak into a congregation, and begin making subtle changes before members of a congregation understand what is happening. This is why as members of a congregation we must know the Bible and what it teaches. We must look to the Scriptures to verify what is taught and not rely on someone else's knowledge. A false teacher will bring forth corruption to a congregation that does not stop them.

Matthew 24:4-5 “And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.” Jesus Himself has warned us that some people will pretend to teach the Truth, but they are liars and charlatans. Faithful Christians must be on the lookout for, and stop false teachers. If a false teacher is merely misinformed hopefully, they will be receptive to better instructions. Clearly, Christians want to try and save the soul of a false teacher like they do anyone else. However, if a false teacher will not repent and change, they cannot be allowed to continue to teach error in a sound congregation.

Matthew 24:24 “For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Sadly, some false teachers want nothing more than to deceive you, and take you off of the path of being a faithful Christian, and bend you to whatever their will is. Remember Christians serve the will of God not some man.

Acts 20:28-31 “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.” The church belongs to Jesus, and He alone is its Head. Jesus bought the church with his blood. If Christians are not vigilant from time-to-time people will come around and want to move the church away from the New Testament doctrine of Christ. It is up to vigilant faithful Christians to not allow that to happen.

1 Corinthians 16:9-10 “For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries. Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.” Paul warns us, as Christians, we will have adversaries. We must be prepared.

2 Corinthians 11:3-4 “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. 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.” Paul again warns us there is only one gospel of Christ. There are not even two gospels let alone 100s of different ones. Be sure what is being taught is correct by checking it out with the Bible.

2 Corinthians 11:13 “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.” False teachers will lie to you while pretending to teach the Truth. We must use the Bible to verify what is being taught and not allow ourselves to be deceived.

Ephesians 4:14 “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive” The more time we spend with the Bible, the more knowledge we gain. The greater our knowledge the less likely it is that someone can deceive us with a false doctrine. It is our individual responsibility as Christian to grow in knowledge.

Ephesians 5:6-7 “Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them.” Do we really think the Bible would warn us so often about false teachers if it were not going to be a danger? Again we are warned, do not take part in the doctrine of false teachers. If we do we become children of disobedience.

1 Timothy 1:3-4 “As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine, Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.” Even back in the first century A.D. Paul was warning against any doctrine being taught, other than Christ’s one true doctrine. Do we truly believe when we drive down the street and see all the signs of different places of worship, that they are all teaching the same thing? Don’t we need to investigate our place of worship and be sure it teaches what the Bible does? Anything that is taught that differs from the Gospel of Christ is a fable, and will cause people to lose their souls.

2 Timothy 3:13 “But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.” Sadly, some people just don’t care if they are teaching the Truth or not. Some people will try and deceive you into believing a false doctrine. We must study the Bible so we can recognize false teachers and stop them, by either teaching them and converting them if possible, or if that does not work not allowing them to teach in Christ’s congregations.

Hebrews 13:9 “Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein.” The writer of Hebrews tells us it is our responsibility to not let ourselves be deceived by false doctrines. Yes, it is wonderful to have elders or a preacher root out false doctrines, and they should, but it is up to every member to know what Christ teaches and what is false doctrine.

2 Peter 2:1-3 “But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.” Peter is warning us that some people will lead us astray with their teachings that do not come from God or His Bible, if we let

them. We are even told that some people will be swept away with false teachings, which sadly leads to destruction. Friends the Bible would not warn us so many times about the dangerous nature of false teachers and false doctrine, if it did not matter what we believed or what we taught. If just anything was okay as long as we believed in Jesus and were good people why would the Bible warn us so many times about false teachers?

1 John 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.” and **2 John 7** “For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.” John also warns us we must try what we are taught from the pulpit and in Bible class and make sure it is true. (It should also be noted that the term antichrist includes any that teach contrary to Christ’s teaching. Thus, there is not one super powerful being called antichrist, but rather, all false teachers are antichrists and are merely ordinary people.)

Jude 4 “For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.” Please beware, most of the time false teachers will enter the congregation subtly, and slowly try to spread their false doctrine. It is very unlikely they will announce themselves as one that wants to pervert the Gospel. This is why we must be prepared so we will recognize false teaching quickly and not allow it to fester in the Lord’s congregations.

Characteristics of false teachers

Acts 20:28-31 “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.” Even back in the first century A.D. Christians were already being warned of false teachers. We are reminded that the church, (which is the people not the building), was bought by Christ, with His own blood. There can be no doubt that the church belongs to Christ. These first century warnings apply to us today just as much as they did to the early Christians. God has given us His teachings in the form of the inspired Bible. We need to follow God’s Word and never follow a man, let alone one that contradicts His Word. We will be tested by false teachers with various motives and we must not let them harm Jesus’s flock. We should try and convert false teachers if we can, but we can not let them continue to teach error because it will eventually harm the church.

2 Corinthians 11:13 “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.” Any one that claims to be from God but teaches something other than His Word is a false teacher, therefore they are not from God. (Today we have God’s completed and inspired Word in the Bible. So we will have no more revelations from God beyond what He has given us in the Bible. **1 Corinthians 13:8-10** “Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether

there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.”) Any teacher that contradicts God’s Word is clearly not teaching His Word and will lead you to Hell if you follow them. False teachers will often claim to be teaching God’s Word, or even claim to represent God in some way. It does not matter who a false teacher claims to be when they are teaching contrary to the Word of God, we know what they are teaching is error. Follow God and not a man. We have to be watchful because sadly false teachers still exist.

1 Timothy 6:3-5 “If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself.” Once someone begins teaching something other than what we find in God’s Word, they are a false teacher. If they are teaching error in ignorance, we must try to teach them better. However whether false teaching is in ignorance or on purpose we can not let it continue, or we will allow the congregation to become corrupt. We are commanded to withdraw from someone that will not stop teaching error.

2 Timothy 3:5-7 “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.” False teachers will often be clever and only subtly introduce error into a congregation so that it is harder to detect them. So as Christians, we must be vigilant and know if what is being taught is the Truth or not.

Titus 1:9-14 “Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. 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 always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith; Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth.” We must be guided by God’s Word only, and stop any teaching that is contrary to it in Jesus’s pulpits.

Due to the length of information on this topic the lesson False Teachers Part One will conclude at this point. The next lesson False Teachers Part Two will continue and conclude this lesson topic.