

Tools and Mechanics of Discernment

W. Mark Wattenford
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The Tools and Mechanics of Discernment

By: W. Mark Wattenford

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INTRODUCTION

I wasn't a full blown hippie, but I was there, bare-footed and long haired with three to four hundred others like myself in a place now known as Maranatha Village; alias Calvary Chapel before the tent. What was so strong on my heart then is still strong on my heart now. That is discernment. I sensed a danger then that we would be tested in ways that would require having discernment to escape. That is what happened. There came an explosion of so many ideas and doctrines that it boggled my mind; Prosperity, Name It and Claim It, Speak It, Seed Faith, Holiness, Positive Confession, Possibility Thinking... all kinds of movements. My heart cried out that the Body of Christ should seek and be taught discernment. In twenty years I have only heard discernment mentioned, but I have not heard anyone teach it. Now, with the New Age doctrines, of which there are thousands of facets that have mixed with Christianity; the cry of my heart was even greater, "Dear God, in the name of Jesus, give your people discernment." Having learned discernment I became familiar with many tools by which discernment reveals itself. I finally felt recently led to teach a class on discernment. It was not to be a class "about" discernment, but rather a class of revealing the tools involved that would result in those in the class attaining discernment. I drove confidently down to the Christian bookstore to get the best book I could find on the subject with which to teach. To my utter amazement, as far as the store manager and I could determine

from his ordering catalogs, there was no such book. I looked at those thousands of books produced in the last twenty years (not to mention the music) and there was not one book on discernment. It was a shock! There were hundreds and thousands of false doctrines and ideas everywhere. I could not find one book that taught the tools of discernment. My heart's cry was then made tenfold. I pleaded with God to guide me, teach me, show me, and to give me the words to write a book on discernment I could teach with. I have witnessed that so many churches have adopted as their discernment "If you don't understand it, or if it is something you are afraid of, or uncomfortable with, then throw it out." I have seen true Christians with a true word from the Lord ridiculed and thrown or driven out of their churches because discernment was not applied or the command to "test the spirit" obeyed. I have not found one person yet who is ready and knowledgeable on how to go about testing the spirit. If I awoke one morning and found that my arm felt funny I would not just cut it off because I thought it didn't feel right. I would go have it "tested" and if it proved healthy then I would be whole and would need to get use to the new feeling. If it proved to have an ailment then I would apply whatever medication prescribed to make it better, but only if the arm worsens and does not get better and threatens the health and life of the rest of the body would I then amputate. We have come to, not only shoot our wounded, but to amputate healthy members of the body just for appearing different than what we say the Body of Christ should look and feel like. Christ created the Body and knows what it should look and feel like. Those instructions are written out in scripture to use to test the spirit and not

our feelings. Many churches are uncomfortable with healing ministries, but they have not tested the spirit as God commanded. They just don't allow healing in their church because "It feels funny".

This is amputation of the Body of Christ. I fear God looks down from Heaven at his body and it looks as though it had been autopsied with so many factions of Christianity, each with their own ideas, cutting off those members which do not conform to their mental picture of what the Body of Christ should be. You really don't have to study and learn every doctrine there is in the world to discern them. They will either be of Christ or Satan. Satan consistently leaves a "set of fingerprints" on all the doctrines he produces. So discernment here is learning to find the fingerprints. You can tell by the fingerprint who has committed the crime. You can fill in the details from there. Discernment will enable you to recognize the enemy in whatever form he presents himself. Since Satan is the enemy and there are not a large variety of different enemies you will come to learn that in every religion, concept, idea, doctrine, etc. there emerges a "genetic fingerprint" which is the same throughout them all. Something may look good, but look for the fingerprints. Satan will try to say, "Never mind the fingerprints, if it works, use it". -So that you may know better where I am coming from I will state my beliefs. And I will emphasize that I hold them above my experiences and my visions because they are scriptural. My experiences and visions I may not fully understand and will not hold them above or in place of what scripture teaches. Yet I believe also that it is my obligation to share them as I believe God gave them to me for encouragement and for the

edification of other members of the Body of Christ that would be edified and blessed by them. Since this is a book of discernment, I will offer myself as the "guinea pig" to test the spirit on. First you should test what I say about discernment with scripture and since I plan on adding some accounts and visions I have had to this book you can, and should, put them to the test as well. As yet I have not found a church that would lend the time to even hear them and, to my grief, even those whom I long respected and would have thought otherwise of were not open to them either. O well, how frail we are! Once we find our spiritual niche we don't like to have it bothered. They listen only to themselves or just to the leaders in the church. This, I think, is well referred to by Dave Hunt as "Guruisms". I like the term, because it is so descriptive and precise. It fits. That is where credibility and even infallibility is assigned to the leaders of the church and the rest of the church are just suppose to follow and obey. It is sort of like the caste system. "How dare we say we have a word from the Lord"! How dare they throw the spirit of Christ out of their church because it was uncomfortable for them and they did not test the spirit as commanded and find that it was Him. It seems to me the Pharisees did that very thing in having Christ crucified.

I BELIEVE:

That Jesus Christ came in the flesh as all man and all God and died on Calvary as payment for our sins. That there is nothing by works we can add to this accomplished work of Grace by Christ so that, "none may boast". That he was born of a virgin and that he arose from the dead on the third day as God the Father's proclamation that Jesus is the

Christ and that his sacrifice was complete and acceptable unto God the Father. That he ascended into Heaven and is seated at the right hand of God and that he shall return to this earth "In like manner as he ascended into Heaven". This book is an accumulation of tools and "wisdoms". Chapters will not be used, but simply the tool name will be given followed by an explanation of its mechanics. It is my sincere prayer that Jesus give you discernment by the Holy Spirit and that in some way the words herein may sharpen your ability to "rightly divide the word according to truth." II Tim.2:15 Sincerely: Your Brother In Christ Jesus - W. Mark Wattenford

DISCERN:

To distinguish clearly.

DISCERNMENT:

Power or faculty of judging.

SWAYED:

In I Kings 13 and Nehemiah 6 we find a couple of stories where the prophet had a clear direct word from the Lord to do something. Then others came "In the name of the Lord", saying, "Thus saith the Lord." And then told them something contrary to what the Lord had told them in the first place. There is the lesson here that when we have clearly heard from the Lord to be ready to withstand those who would come with a contrary statement. Here is where you really have to be sure what you heard wasn't wrong and that the Lord then isn't trying to send you rather correction through that other person.

DELUSION PROPHECY:

Jeremiah 23:25-27 "I have heard what the prophets say who prophecy lies in my name. They say, "I had a dream! I had a dream!" How long will this continue in the hearts of these lying prophets, who prophecy the delusions of their own minds ? They think the dreams they tell one another will make my people forget my name, just as their fathers forgot my name through Baal worship." Here, to forget the name of God reminds me of the New Agers who say, "Jesus, Buddha, The Force . . . it's all the same." Call Him whatever you like." You need to look out for people who have a lot of dreams. Although I believe God speaks through dreams we need to monitor ourselves to watch out for what dreams may be causing us to do or believe. I see lots of prophecy that comes from the "delusions of the mind".

LEARNING DIVERSIONS:

Are any processes involved with diversion to other studies that become primary rather than supplemental to the Bible. Examples here would be the Book of Mormon, the Watchtower Magazine, Catholic Church History, and others or just traditions themselves. Anytime the source of authority shifts from the Bible to other writings is a sign of the presence of false doctrine. This is not to be confused with good commentaries done by scholars to help us understand the context of those things which we read in the Bible as opposed to such things as the Watchtower which claims that if you read the Bible only you will lose your understanding within two years, but that you can read the Watchtower magazine only and not need the Bible and you will be, (quote) "kept in the light".

IMPACT:

God makes an interesting distinction in the Bible. He says that when He speaks, his words carry impact (Jer.23:29) as opposed to the words of false prophets who use lies, deceit, and trickery to convince. When someone is prophesying and you do not feel the presence of the Holy Spirit bearing witness and giving that "impact", but rather, you are being persuaded with "artful reasoning" you need to beware. If you are saved and have the Holy Spirit this impact should occur. If you are not saved and have the Holy Spirit then you are just out of the game either way.

LEADS INTO SIN:

Although something may be preached in the name of Jesus, He said that if it led people into sin it was not from him. Joseph Smith, Jim Jones, the Rev. Moon, and a host of others had doctrines which led the followers into sexual and other sins. I personally have a problem with the "prosperity doctrines" that lead people into the sin of greed and want. This is what is referred to as to real meaning of using the Lord's name in vain and not so much in the way as we think of in swearing.

DOES NOT EXPOSE SIN:

Lamentations 2:14 = "The visions of your prophets were false and worthless; they did not expose your sin to ward off your captivity. The oracles they gave you were false and misleading." So this is a clue concerning "prophets" that do not address the issue of sin in people's lives. Jean Dixon, who predicts horse races and the like, does not address the issue of sin and of salvation through Jesus Christ. She is not a prophet of God according to the Bible. We can bring up the New Age movement again with its doctrines of

“situational ethics”. Situational ethics, in my book, is “conscience assassination”, as in I Tim 4:2 in the “searing of the conscience”. Sin is not addressed. It is, therefore, determined to be the product of a false prophet. We must be careful where we find sin being “minimized”. Conversely we must look out for those doctrines which so emphasizes sin over God’s Grace to save and deliver that you find yourself dealing with a “works cult”. Sin does not come in shades of gray as situational ethics seems to imply. And in its extreme form truly implies there is no such thing as wrong at all. Sin is BLACK in Gods book... period!

FULFILLED PROPHECY IS NOT PROOF OF SOUND DOCTRINE:

Deuteronomy 13:1,,3 = “If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a miraculous sign or wonder, and if the sign or wonder of which he has spoken takes place, and he says, “Let us follow other gods”(gods you have not known) “and let us worship them,” you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. “The Lord your God is testing you to find out whether you love Him with all your heart and with all your soul” So now we find here that if a prediction comes true it is not full verification that the prophet is a true prophet. People have often used the verse that says if the prophecy comes true then they are a true prophet, but they have left out this qualifying verse. This is why the Jean Dixons of Christendom have gotten by with what they should not have; speaking falsely for and on behalf of God.

GOOD NEWS PROPHECY MAY BE BAD NEWS:

Jeremiah 14:11,,16 = “Then the Lord said to me,’ Do not pray for the well-being of

this people. Although they fast, I will not listen to their cry; though they offer burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Instead, I will destroy them with the sword, famine and plague.” “But I said, ‘Ah, Sovereign Lord, the prophets keep telling them, ‘You will not see the sword or suffer famine. Indeed, I will give you lasting peace in this place.’” Then the Lord said to me, ‘The prophets are prophesying lies in my name. I have not sent them or appointed them or spoken to them. They are prophesying to you false visions, divinations, idolatries and the delusions of their own minds. Therefore this is what the Lord says about the prophets who are prophesying in my name: I did not send them, yet they are saying, ‘No sword or famine will touch this land.’ Those same prophets will perish by sword and famine. And the people they are prophesying to will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and sword. There will be no one to bury them or their wives, their sons or their daughters. I will pour out on them the calamity they deserve.” It is hard to convince me that with the corruption America has entered into the “prophecies” I hear that America will keep her prosperity and her peace are true prophecies. We need to lend ear to this example from Jeremiah and ask ourselves if, indeed, we do not fit the same scenario. With millions of babies killed every year, with perversion, homosexuality, sadism, masochism, drugs, alcoholism, child killers being set free and criminals getting off left and right by the satanic twisting of the law... should America retain her protection and blessing from God? NOT WITHOUT REPENTANCE!

A YOKE IS NO JOKE:

In Jeremiah 28 we read again a prophecy that God would take the yoke of wood and break it. This was a false prophecy and God's reply was, "For that I will replace the yoke of wood with a yoke of iron." I believe that if we do not address the issue of sin and go on prophesying that God will continue to bless and keep this nation and deliver it whether we repent or not, we are in line for this same rebuke. Jeremiah 28:8 says, "Do not let the prophets and diviners among you deceive you."

PROPHECY PARAPHERNALIA:

These are used in divination practices. It is the use of items in aiding in the telling of the future such as crystal balls, tea leaves, tarot cards, "Wee Gee!" boards, and a myriad of other items. It is this use of "things" in fortune telling that is a major clue to its origin as being false and from the enemy. The receiving; or attempt at receiving knowledge supernaturally separate from getting it from God through prayer, the word of God, and the unction of the Holy Spirit is Forbidden. "Polishing up your ESP", is not advised.

A DIME A DOZEN:

Anytime there is money being charged for prophecy or services that supposedly are from God, then it is a sign it is false or of a cult or the like. When money is involved you can be sure it won't be even worth a dime a dozen. Let us not confuse this with the Bible bookstores and say that everything there should be free. I refer to those, like Balem, who charged for prophecy and, even these days, those who say, "Send in X amount of money and God will heal you." GARBAGE!

CHAPTER TWO

TRACK RECORD:

In many of the false prophets I have encountered, there seems to be a track record of instability. If someone is giving your group a prophecy and you are looking for ways to discern it, look to their track record. What is their life style like? I don't mean isolated circumstances wherein we are all susceptible to falling down once in a while, but rather a consistent life style of instability. People have made a big mistake, I believe, in painting a picture of John the Baptist and others as though they were some eccentric grasshopper, ~~we~~ eating weirdoes. This is then what the weirdoes of our day use as a tool to add credibility to their own actions. I do not believe that if we were to meet those such as John the Baptist that he would come off any less than having a very presence of mind and I feel we would find him to be more than a capable human being. If we were to meet John the Baptist today I believe he would be a very sensible and sane person. In circumstances where we are not familiar with who is giving a "supposed" word from God, I believe God provides a word of knowledge through them much like the case of Jesus with the woman at the well (John 4:18) as credentials that the other things Jesus would say would also be true. I believe it is harder for a false prophet to give a word of knowledge than it is to give a prophecy that comes true. By probabilities he can guess some things, but the facts of someone's life are far too complex for a false prophet to achieve through probability guessing. In those cases where false prophets attempt this they give facts of a person's life that are too vague and unspecific. That is one of the major characteristics of false

prophets, doctrines and cults as well as the use of unclear statements, vagueness and generalities. Jesus did not do that here. He specifically stated how many husbands she had and that the one she now had she was not really married to. That is specific and if it is coming from God it should be specific. If it is not... take that word and shove it!

VAGUENESS:

A word of knowledge from God will be precise and not vague or illusive or in riddles. This again, is a sign of the false prophet. Examples that can be given are Nostradamus, Edgar Cayce, Jean Dixons, and the entire barrage of National Enquirer palm readers, psychics, and horoscopers.

BIRTHING DISCERNMENT:

The study of any subject will give discernment about and in that subject. (assuming the information studied is correct). Wisdom gives birth to discernment. Studying Proverbs will give discernment about a lot of things. That is why God gave us Proverbs, so that we might gain what I call "Natural Discernment" or "Learned Discernment". This discernment is the result of study. The other form of discernment is "Supernatural Discernment" and is the result of and is caused by the unction of the Holy Spirit revealing truth not as a result of having learned or studied. So then, study will produce a natural discernment and supernatural discernment is a gift from God.

DIRECTING OTHERS:

You will find that false prophets, teachers or leaders like to involve themselves in directing the lives of others. It is likely the result of a Messianic Complex. When you have someone setting himself up saying,

"Listen to me and let me guide you", instead of directing people to go to God and to pray to Him and to read their Bibles, they are leading people in the wrong direction. They are the blind leading the blind. Conversely, when you hear a teacher emphasizing not to just take his word for what he is saying but to go to the Bible and God and check it out then it is more likely that person is a safe person to be around. I am nobody's authority for anything. Check out everything I say with the Bible.

ONENESS IN THE SPIRIT:

We are to be one in the Spirit as opposed to oneness in the alignment of scripture in proving personal interpretations. To group together as one based on personal views of scripture is not scriptural. We can have differences of opinion, but to use those as a basis for having a "oneness" with those sharing the same opinion and shutting out those that do not share the opinion is not from God and is the very germination process which creates false prophets, doctrines, cults and denominations to begin with.

WE ARE THE ONLY TRUE CHURCH - SYNDROME:

There really is only one true church and that is the church God says it is, not what man says. It is typical of a cult to say they are the only true church. This enables them to isolate their members from the outside where they may come into contact with what is really true and thus threatening the survival of the cult as a cult. For a cult to survive it is important that it isolates itself from the truth, for the truth would be its downfall. Christianity, in its pure form, is not at odds with science or common sense and does not fear being linked with these facets. It is my belief that when science

and the Bible seem not to agree it is the result of our own misinterpretation of our own science or even our own concept of what we think the Bible says. The Bible said the world was round. Science use to say the world was flat. The Word of God is in harmony with science. And even where they may not be in harmony it is God's prerogative to break the laws of science in his scheme of things, as is found in Joshua 10:13. He made the rules and laws of science in the first place and having that "copyright" has the right to alter and rearrange them anytime he chooses. "SCIENCE" IS MERELY THE STUDY OF WHAT GOD SAYS ARE THE RULES... FOR NOW.

GOOD NEWS EQUALS GOOD NEWS:

This means that the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ always refers to and means the act of Jesus in giving his life for us on the cross. False doctrines and cults are pushing all kinds of junk in its place, referring to their pet ideas and "revelations" as the Good News. The good news is not that the Kingdom of Heaven supposedly came in 1914 and you just can't see it. The good news is not that God lives on a planet called "Colob" with his 900 wives and 400 concubines. The good news is not that we are gods and can tap into "the force" within us. The Good News is that Jesus died for us to pay for our sins before God the Father.

THE BAD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST:

Since the Word of God tells us we are not to debate and dispute the Bible this can also be a tool for discernment. When someone is trying to use the Bible to prove their own or their church's personal point of view or interpretation, it can be a sign of falsehood. It is healthy to discuss and to aggressively seek to "rightly divide The Word according to

truth", but people who go door to door trying to argue their point is not a ministry of the good news of Jesus Christ. It is a ministry of trying to prove personal points of view. They attempt to get people to believe or accept concepts that do not relate to salvation before trying to get people to receive salvation. Think of how selfish and self-centered that really is. People are less concerned here that others are going to Hell than they are about proving some petty viewpoint. If a person is not saved it is going to do no good to prove to them whether Christ died on a stake or a cross, whether music should be played in church or not. Watch out for persons too aggressive to minister "proof" to their point rather than trying to give people Jesus. It can be very easy if you break it down. Is the person trying to get others to accept a concept or to accept Jesus? Mind you, as individuals we get off on good discussions and need to test scripture with scripture with each other to see and to learn how they line up, but when an entire church's foundation is built on and involved in proving a "non-salvation critical" point it is not of Christ. When Christ said he would shake up everything to shake loose what was not rooted in him he was referring to these churches built, not upon Christ crucified for our sins, but on some personal viewpoint. Line up their viewpoints with the importance of the crucifixion and its relevance to it and that will shed light and right perspective to all subjects.

NOBODY LOVES ME - I MUST BE A PROPHET:

Read Gen. 4:7. "If you do well, will you not be accepted?" Too many take rejection as evidence they are a prophet. We are not our own witness to the

ministry God gives us, but God and others will witness to it.

UNWILLINGNESS TO SUBMIT:

There is a high correlation between someone who is not submitting to authority (or to having their spirit tested) and those living in delusions, false prophecies and bad doctrines. The truth is its own defense and fears no court. Those caught in these realms do not, have not and will not submit to an authority structure. I remind you here we are not to submit ourselves to a structure that sets itself up as or implies itself to be infallible. These people have a kind of pride in saying they "only answer to God and not unto Man". They state their delusions as revelations from God and do not ask for other members of the Body of Christ who have discernment to help them put their "revelations" to the test. When someone begins to put their revelations to the test, as we are told to do in I John 4:1, they often just flit off to the next church where they think they can gain credibility. I have had many false visions and I say very soberly that they were more real than is the world around us, but they did not stand the testing of the spirit, and had to be thrown out. Because something seems emphatically real does not make it true. This is why it is so hard to deliver people in these areas because it requires them to turn their back on an experience that is so real. There are visions I have had that I know are true. I am willing to have them tested. This should be the approach of any who have had such experiences for their own safety if nothing else. Too many people have not submitted to the testing of the spirit. What I think is more appalling is that there is so rarely a church or body of believers set up and prepared to do so. The church in about

99% of the time, if not more, does not test the spirit of a revelation that has been received; they merely do not allow them in the church. If it happens in the body and it is something they don't like they just throw it out and the person with it, but to take time to "test the spirit" to see whether it is from the Lord or not, forget it! It isn't happening. Why do you think the Church of Christ has gotten as crapped up as it has?

CHAPTER THREE

AVOIDANCE OF THOSE WHO MAY HAVE DISCERNMENT:

People who are living in a delusion have a natural instinct in avoiding those who have discernment. In this way you can tell who they are by who they stay away from.

PROVERBS 28:5

Evil men understand not judgment, but they that seek the Lord understand all things

THE FEAR OF THE LORD:

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom which in turn will produce discernment.

OPEN YOUR MIND TILL YOUR BRAINS FALL OUT:

One of the tricks of the New Age is to be so open minded that the result is the destruction of discernment. Right and wrong become dependent upon personal viewpoint only, rather than God's viewpoint and authority. Situations can become indiscernible if not viewed through the eyes of God.

HIS WORD AGAINST YOURS:

Another tool for discernment is to always be aware as to when someone is giving God's opinion or their own. Look out for God's Word being used to "prove" personal opinions. God's Word is used to prove God's Word.

CONSCIENCE:

Our conscience is the inherent discernment God provides to us all. "My conscience is bothering me", is my discernment trying to protect me from the results of my doing wrong.

RESPECTABLE SIN RATHER THAN REPENTANCE:

We may discern the right way to go but, because of sin, fail to follow. This is the dilemma of the New Age. They want to follow what the flesh dictates and instead of being accountable for purposely following sin they simply make sin acceptable and respected. Therefore, that which a society may deem acceptable and respected may be discernibly a sin.

ALTERED STATES:

As I have stated previously people with poor self-images and even self-hatred may seek a way within "religion" to establish a new identity. I call this the "religiously altered identity" or "the altered state". It is, in its effects, a counterfeit for being born again. The identity here is one the person himself has created and not God. An altered state can become so solidified that it takes a miracle of God to get the person to realize who he really is and to receive Christ in a healthy manner. It is my opinion that those in ministry who tend to gravitate toward the limelight are, in truth, suffering from an altered state. I do feel many may be born again people,

but suffering continued effects of the "former man".

DEFINITION:

Submission = cessation of against-ness

WHITE WASH:

"Getting spiritual" is the result of not letting God handle our sins, but rather it is us setting up a false image of ourselves so we can cope with our sins. This is what Pharisees are made of. For the true child of God we want to learn how to appropriate forgiveness for ourselves. .not white wash.

HOLINESS MOVEMENTS:

These are movements that assert as their goal the ridding of all sin in their life. This is somewhat admirable, but nevertheless impossible. This ends up in the lifting up of one's own righteousness. It must be the lifting up of Christ's righteousness for our sake to be real" revival. To achieve the goal of a holiness movement it would be necessary to commit suicide as sin is recorded in the flesh and cannot be changed through our efforts, works or acts. The getting of a glorified body would need to be achieved to arrive at a holiness state.

RX = MC² :

This is the universe that exists as the result of drug induced reality. Drugs will produce false prophecy and visions. This is an unfortunate and wide spread phenomenon in Christendom. It is, to a large, degree due to prescription drugs. One of the greatest culprits in my evaluation is valium (which my brother used to refer to as "Believers Booze"). So, in dealing with someone who is getting "revelations" from God try to get a little history on whatever chemicals may be floating around in their system. Chemical

imbalances in the body without necessarily being on drugs can result in this condition as well. Ask about the person's health; how it has been and how it currently is. I must further confess, I myself take valium for a serious muscular disorder, but I have researched this thoroughly and have found that in a major number of valium users there is a present ongoing spiritual delusional states that accompanies it. For that reason I have had to be well on my toes, more than the average, to check and double check anything I feel I heard from the Lord.

WALKING NOT IN FAITH - BUT TAKING ON THE SHIELD OF HYPER SPACE:

When a person is adversely affected by the guilt of his sins and does not put them successfully under the blood of Jesus Christ he may become a "Hyper-Spiritual". Because of his extreme desire to escape this weight and fear of God's punishment he must rise to an equal or greater force of spirituality to that of the weight he feels of his own sins. Relief is not in receiving forgiveness, but rather in becoming "spiritual". True spirituality lacks the "showmanship" and outward appearance of so many we see today. "Hyper-Spirituals" often see themselves and those around them as prophets and apostles and the like. I believe emphatically that these offices do exist today and are functioning on the earth, because I have seen them for myself. But the true ones are more likely to go unseen or unnoticed than those who put themselves in the limelight. Most "Hyper-Spirituals" have two feet firmly planted in the air. True spirituality will be mixed with a normal and practical nature. However, at times, in our walk of faith God may ask us to do some seemingly impractical things, but these incidents

are the exceptions and not the norm. "Hyper,,¼Spirituals" walk in an impractical realm on almost a constant basis.

STRANGE FIRE:

This is the "working up" of emotions. Although the experience of the presence of God may evoke strong emotions of various types it is the working up of emotions as verification of the presence of God which is wrong. I believe in the free flow of emotions as God touches lives in or out of church and would not wish to stifle such feelings. However, they are not in themselves verification of anything and should not be used as the vehicle in which to attempt to transport ourselves closer to God. In other words, emotions are not tools to get closer to God. . .they are the result of it. So, is one having strong emotions because God is present; or is one exhibiting strong emotions as a means of trying to establish that God is present?

IDENTICALITY:

This is a word I have coined to mean anything which is made to look like the real thing in terms of being Christian, but lacks the very Spirit of Christ itself.

COLOSSIANS 2:8

"See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophies." An example of hollow and deceptive philosophy is whether Christ died on a cross or a stake. . .who cares. . .as long as He gave his life for me I don't care if he did it by jumping off the Matterhorn at Disneyland.

PHILOSOPHY IS:

Man's attempt at producing truth without (and very commonly so) necessarily using any part of truth to do

so. They should focus on the study of "Feel-Lost-Or-Free".

CHAPTER FOUR

NATURAL DISCERNMENT:

Is the result of study and experience.

TRUTH - THE GREAT ESCAPE:

For a lie to take hold it must deny or rearrange the truth. If one has not learned what truth has to say about something then the lie can take captives. So, the more we know about what Christ said about everything the more Natural Discernment we will have and the less chance lies will have in taking us captive.

THE NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED TO PROTECT THE GUILTY:

False doctrines want to hook you into their thing so they don't want to use a bunch of new words. They want to use the words you are familiar with to give you the feeling they are on your side and that you are really one of them. So, in discernment it is not so common to be aware of new words, but rather to beware of familiar words and phrases that have changed definitions. False doctrines redefine words and terms and twist them to support their false doctrines. The term "Savior" coming from a J.W. does not carry the same meaning as they do when we say "Christ is Savior". It becomes necessary then, to get very inquisitive and precise as to what these people mean when they say things like "saved". Saved from what? Saved by what? Saved for what? You will encounter agitation when you do this as darkness is always agitated when light begins to uncover it. Learn how to dig for information. Never assume their use of words is the same as yours. You will find

plenty of victories just in making them define the terms as they mean them.

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING
IS TO KEEP THE MOST IMPORTANT THING
THE MOST IMPORTANT THING

And that is that the lost might become saved. When other ideas are being perpetuated as being as important as this I place them in the suspect category.

II TIMOTHY 3:1-5

"Stay away from these in the last days": lovers of self-covetous boasters proud blasphemers disobedient to parents unthankful unholy without natural affection truce breakers false accusers incontinent fierce despisers of those who do good traitors heady high minded lovers of pleasure more than of God having a form of godliness, but denying the power sounds like a very relevant portrait of today's society.

SCRIPTURAL EXAMPLES:

Try to back up doctrinal points with scriptural examples. Statements like, "you cannot get into heaven unless you are baptized" doesn't hold water (pun) in view of the thief on the cross who was saved in the last moments of his life next to Jesus. People don't believe in death experiences because they say the Bible says it is appointed unto man once to die. Then what about Lazarus? Angels do not wear brown turtle neck shirts as is reported by Roland Buck in his book "Angels on Assignment". Then why does the Bible say to watch who we entertain for some have entertained angels unaware. If we were unaware we were entertaining angels then I would assume they would be dressed and looked like an everyday person. If everyone showed up in a brilliant white robe we surely would be aware that he was either an angel or a

nut. Make sure that as a scripture is used it remains in harmony with other scriptures first and second with the test of logics and deductive reasoning.

CHECK IT ONCE AND CHECK IT TWICE:

It is scriptural to verify something by two or three witnesses. The reason for John the Baptist's ministry was for this purpose, to be a witness to Christ as the Messiah. If we think we have a word of direction from God in a matter, but we are unsure, we can ask God to give us verification by two or three other sources. The Bible says that by two or three witnesses a thing shall be established.

THE WITNESS OF CIRCUMSTANCE:

God is the God of circumstances. This is not just a neat saying. It is right out of the Bible. He will open doors to those things He sends us. I am fond of Chuck Smith's saying that "Where God guides, God provides." Where circumstance does not back up a belief it can be suspect. Where some quit their jobs saying God is calling them into full time ministry and their family starts to go hungry because of it then the circumstance does not verify the belief. Where a person is truly called of God you will witness the provisions from God come into play. When the snake bit Paul and he did not die that was circumstance verifying that those things Paul was doing and saying were true. Had he not been called of God I believe he would have died from the bite. And now there are "Christian Snake Handler Cults" in the U.S. Backward logic again! They handle poisonous snakes to falsely establish they are called of God rather than as Paul who being called of God was able to handle snakes. Besides, Paul didn't go looking for snakes. These people do. They do so very cautiously

and many of them have died trying. Again, we do have to walk in faith as to those things that God has told us, but as we take steps by faith those things are cleared ahead of us. It is when we take a step toward a closed door or even strive to push it open and it does not open we need to step back and reevaluate. Worse yet God allows us to push some doors open we should not have to teach us a lesson. In the Bible they used circumstances as a tool of discernment to pick those who should be elders and workers in the church. If their own house was not in order and under control they were not picked, because circumstances would indicate that they were incapable of administration in the church since their own homes were in a mess.

TRUTH CAN EQUAL FALSE:

"A false prophet will always foretell wrongly" is a scripturally false statement. A false prophet is capable of predicting things and having them come true, but if he leads people away from Christ into other doctrines and other gods he is a false prophet.

BACK SCRATCHING PROPHECIES:

I call these the "If you'll scratch my back I'll scratch yours" prophecies. These prophecies require that we perform something in order for the prophecy to come true. In this form it cannot by definition be a prophecy... a covenant maybe. The Mormon Church had a prophecy that the Lord would return when the last Indian baby was adopted by Mormons. This made the biblical prophecy that Christ would return contingent on whether or not all the Indian babies got adopted. Circumstances such as this could coincide with Christ's return, but cannot be termed as the cause for his return as is

the case with "back scratching prophecies". The "Kingdom Now" doctrines believe Christ will return when we have subdued the earth for his return... making, again, the return of Christ contingent on whether we subdue it for him or not. This is a particularly dangerous doctrine, I believe, as it can lead to a Nazi mentality in attempting to take over the world so Christ will return. I believe prophecy is just that... prophecy. There is nothing we can or cannot do to fulfill it. Prophecy means it will come to pass despite anything and because God said it would and that is that. Satan speaks in the ears of many in this way to get them wandering off, trying to fulfill some idiotic directive that is, in some weird way, a catalyst required by God before God can fulfill his end of the deal. So, anytime you hear someone saying the Lord will do this and that if you do this and that as prophecy it is false. This is also a very prevalent phenomenon in Christianity today. In this game you find God changing his mind a lot about things or rearranging his plans often. Since these prophecies have their origination from the delusions of someone's mind they keep having to rearrange the requirements to perpetuate it further otherwise it simply falls apart.

CLUE WORDS:

Urgency, evasive, avoiding, prophecies of personal success and/or fame, works... are just a few terms to look for in the false prophet. They are often urgent about what they say God told them. They can be evasive about what their goals are or what they are up to (hence communes spring up such as Jim Jones') They will very often have prophecies of their coming success and/or fame and they may be heavily involved in works.

A=A DOCTRINES:

Here is where facts or scriptures, which may be true in themselves, are used in such a way as to draw a false conclusion. Let us say that all Greeks have black curly hair. That would be the first "A" statement. Then the process says that all people with black curly hair are Greeks. That is the "=A" statement and is the false statement. Lots of off key doctrines and ideas are born in this fashion. The prosperity doctrines were hatched in this way. God wants to bless us (that is the "A" statement) therefore it is God's will that we be rich (that is the "=A" statement) and is false. The real failure here is assuming that what God wants is synonymous with His will. The news is God's desire for us and his will for us are not synonymous. It may be my desire to give my son a car as a gift, but if he drives like a fool it will not be my will to do so. So, no matter how much he bugs me for the car because he knows I would like to give him one he does not get it (it would not be my will to give it to him) as long as he drives like a fool. So, what God would like for us may not be what is going to be his will for us. God's will for us is what he uses to try raise us to get us to the point of maturity where he can then do more of what he desires to do. As parents we know that what we want to do with our children and what we end up having to do with or children are two very different categories. Just because I know my son will someday shave doesn't mean that when he is two and says, "Me want to play with razor", that I give him one.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUBPOENA SCRIPTURE:

Some people call up scripture to verify their pet beliefs as though they were

-serving a subpoena to someone to testify on their behalf. It is great to search the scriptures to see if those things we believe are true. Many, however, get on a band wagon about some new idea, be it prosperity, kingdom now, post mid or pre-trib and wield the scripture in a million different ways to prove their points. Let us remember to use scripture to prove Jesus above all else for that is the reason the Bible was written.

NON-DOERS:

Simply, in discernment, if a person is not a doer of the Word he is not saved. Now some are going to get obsessive here and leave no room for our frail human nature and the fact that we cannot live a perfect life as long as we are in the flesh. However, I see those who come to church and seem to be so oblivious to doing what the Bible says that it floors me. Many are just there for the social events. I hear them talk of partying and getting drunk and going to bed with each other. Actually whenever you hear people speak of sin in their life with such aloofness it is debatable that they have been born again. If they had the Holy Spirit in them it would surely grieve them and they would feel it. Maybe that is the difference I see. It is not that we, who have the Holy Spirit, are free from sin, but it is that when we do sin we feel the grieving of the Spirit of God within us. People who are non-doers of the word as separate from those Christians who have sinned seem to be without this effect whatsoever. Watch them do things that you would be convicted of if you were to do them and see that they do not become convicted at all. This is a scary place to be I think for the Bible says he chastises who He loves. Being chastised of the Lord is in a strange way a sign of the assurance of our salvation. In the

past I remember getting angry at God for chastising me for something others were doing without getting chastised at all. I wanted God to give me the same consideration he was giving those other people in not spanking them. Then the Lord spoke to me and told me he did not spank them because they weren't his to spank. Then I realized I did not want the same consideration I thought I wanted. Better to have a sore rear going into heaven than a fine one on my way to hell.

UNACCOUNTABILITY:

People who are off track are unaccountable to other people or, if they are basic "followers", will be accountable only to an "infallible figure".

INFALLIBLE FIGURES:

There was only one infallible figure that has ever lived on this planet and that was (and now is) Jesus Christ. Since He is alive today He is the infallible figure we should all turn to. There are no other infallible figures among men. To teach otherwise is a cult practice and nothing more. It does not have to be a person either as it may be represented as a source such as the Watchtower Magazine. As far as some examples of humans deemed infallible there was Jim Jones, the reverend Moon, and Joseph Smith and so on. Now as I say these names most will agree, because we came to know them as such obvious nuts, but now let me add here that neither is the pope infallible. Some fur is going to get rubbed the wrong way in me saying that. The reason for that is such a wide spread acceptance of the Catholic religion and a wide spread respect for the pope even of those who are not religious at all. I mean not to be personally attacking Catholics, but there is simply no such thing as an infallible

figure among men and any such belief throughout history resulted in ruin. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." „ Romans 3:23. and "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." I John 1:8 .

SPECIAL REVELATIONS:

Whenever something or someone begins to rise above the authority of scripture or even seeks to take its place you have a condition of falsehood. The enemy constantly seeks to replace, get rid of, or twist the scriptures. The Book of Mormon, Watchtower, church history, traditions, and so on. Just look for things that are added to or are in place of the Bible.

SUBSTITUTES:

This is anything or action which takes the place of a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. Some examples are repetitious prayers, chanting, visualizations, T.M., and a myriad of religious articles supposing to have spiritual power in them which include everything from the Mormon underwear to the Catholic rosary and even to the Pentecostal prayer handkerchiefs that are given out by the millions trying to mimic what was done by the Holy Spirit through Peter.

FEAR MOTIVATION:

God does not give us the spirit of fear. There are many forms of fear motivations and cults are not the only ones using this tactic. There is fear motivation to keep you from attending other churches, because you will go to hell if you do. I grew up being raised by my mother and my grandmother alternately. My mother was Baptist and my grandmother was Lutheran. When I

lived with my grandmother she would tell me I would go to hell if I continued to go to the Baptist church. When I was with my mother she would let it be known that my soul was in jeopardy if I got hooked into the Lutheran church. When the two of them got together on the matter was when I was in my latter teens and decided to go Pentecostal. That, they both agreed, would make me go crazy or kill me for sure. Fear motivation is quite destructive. We have many forms of it in authentic Christian realms such as, "you need to send in \$100 now or this ministry will go under by the end of the week". My advice is to guard against any fear motivations you run into other than the fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom.

DEITY OF CHRIST DENIED:

This is one of the very fundamental needs for cults to do. They must negate the deity of Christ for the sake of their own survival. They will say Christ was a great teacher or a great prophet or a lot of other seemingly complimentary terms, but then take away the title of who He really was; the Son of God and the only Son of God as verified by his resurrection from death by God the Father.

ONLY ONES WITH THE TRUTH:

Cults need to employ this concept to exist as it is the means by which they corral their followers. For a lie to remain and to be perpetuated it must keep people from seeking where truth may be found.

ISOLATIONISM:

This is usually used in conjunction with the fear motivations. It seeks to isolate members from friends, relatives and the rest of the world that may potentially be a channel of truth to the person being

isolated. And here we find we don't have to be in a cult at all to recognize that Satan is at work all the time to isolate us from each other and then pumps junkie thoughts into our heads. The implication in a cult in isolating a person is to keep them from harm and "those unbelievers" that are not part of the cult. The truth is it keeps the person from the truth. As Christians what we need to be kept from is sin.

CONCEALMENTS:

Secret rituals, secret knowledge, secret prophecies. Just look for elitisms in various forms.

IDOLATRY:

From holy cows to the worship of saints, from rabbits feet and horse shoes to Buddha, from the following of infallible men to the chasing after the almighty dollar; it is all idolatry. Wherever your treasure is there your heart will be also. The heart is always found at the feet of that which it worships.

CLUES LIST:

1. rituals and traditions
2. divinations
3. necromancy
4. seers
5. Guruisms
6. manic depressive
7. prophecy changes
8. deity of Christ denied
9. only ones with the truth
10. the Bible + (or no Bible at all)
11. altered terms and definitions
12. spiritual experiences becoming weightier than scripture
13. Trinity denied
14. dos and don'ts lists
15. stressed elitisms
16. fear motivations
17. love lack

18. isolationisms
19. concealments
20. idol figures
21. being the source of truth (and discouraging seeking elsewhere)
22. revelation authorities and sources
23. sexual improprieties
24. rebellion etc.

CHAPTER SIX

NON-PERTINENT SUPERNATURAL PHENOMENA:

This is any supernatural manifestations that are non-pertinent to the perpetuation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. An example here would be Jean Dixon predicting a horse race. This has nothing to do with the perpetuation of the Gospel of Christ and therefore falls into the suspect category. I must interject here my belief that I think God from time to time performs some astounding things around and through individuals that are supernatural that are not necessarily tagged as obviously Christian, but they happen with those who are also not historically occultly involved. I refer here to such things as are definitely occult produced. Miracles occur all over as God so chooses, but a key again here is that they "occur" as opposed to the occult practice of "producing" them. When it comes to prophecy if it does not perpetuate Jesus in some way it is not from God as the purpose of prophecy from God is to, in some way, draw men unto salvation through Jesus Christ.

DISCREDITS OR MALIGNS:

Many seem to have a ministry of discrediting or maligning the truth and/or the vessels of truth. We should not

confuse this with those who are seekers of the truth and are posing sincere questions. Nor should we throw out our responsibility in rebuking those who are doing wrong for fear we are maligning them. There are those who are not rebuking for the sake of trying to change someone for the better, but rather they are in the business of pointing a continual finger at the wrongs of other Christians and ministries.

REBELLION:

"Is as the sin of witchcraft" I Sam.15:23. I heard one star of a rock group say, "we are not into Satan worship, just into rebellion". In God's eyes they are synonymous. Satan was and still is the father of rebellion.

SEXUAL HYPER-SPACE:

It is quite common to find a link in the hyper-spiritual and aberrational sexual drives. I often ponder the thought that it may be the guilt of the aberrational sexual drives that drives one into a hyper-spiritual state. At any rate I have found these conditions commonly together. The person may or may not have such sexual drives under control in varying degrees, but none the less they are present.

TO JUDGE OR NOT TO JUDGE:

Don't let the enemy or others discredit the use of discernment labeling it as being judgmental. You will learn that controllers will often label it that so they can continue to control and not be found out.

SELF WILLED:

A person who will not take instruction is one who follows his own will. Again, don't confuse having a healthy will power with being self-willed. A self-willed

person is out to get what he wants. There are those who use Christianity and Christians to get what they want. They will even fake taking instruction and counseling to achieve what they want.

WHATEVER ATTRACTS FLIES CAN'T BE THAT GREAT:

"you-know-what" draws flies. So if you can't tell if something is "you-know-what" by looking at it you can know that it is "you-know-what" by what it attracts. If you are hearing a doctrine you cannot readily discern look to see who it is attracting. If it is attracting every nut in the world then it is not a church it is a fruit factory. A good church may, and should, attract the nuts, but it should be involved in getting them sane. It should not help to perpetuate their insanity.

PROVERBS 24:3 & 4

"Through wisdom is a house built and by understanding is it established and by knowledge shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches."

DISCERNMENT'S OCCUPATIONAL HAZARD:

A hazard to look out for in having discernment is the developing of a critical nature. You can end up in a ministry that revolves around pointing out what is wrong with everything else. Let us remember Proverbs 12:6 "The wicked accuse, the godly defend".

GOOD AT WHAT YOU AREN'T:

This has to do with focusing so much on stating what you are not that you fail to communicate to others what you are. "I don't believe in denominations. I don't believe in praying to Mary. I don't believe in sprinkling. I don't believe in post tribulation rapture. I don't believe in prophets are for today. I don't believe in

healings for today." We have a responsibility that if we are going to state what things we do not believe; we should make clear what things we do believe. If we do not then we have truly sabotaged ourselves and what we should stand for and have failed to preach the Gospel.

PROVERBS 12:15

"A fool thinks he needs no advice, but a wise man listens to others."

PROVERBS 12:18

"There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health."

PROVERBS 12:20

"Deceit is in the heart of them that imagine evil: but to the counselors of peace is joy."

JOY:

Joy is not the absence of problems. You cannot have true joy if it is dependent upon circumstances. A person who qualifies his joy on the condition of his circumstances will begin to plan evil to acquire or maintain those circumstances he equates with keeping his joy. When someone's joy is linked with circumstances and you take away their control of those circumstances they will become angry. This is really what controllers are made of. They are people attempting to achieve joy by controlling their circumstances believing that will bring about this goal. I know that some things I write in this book some will say, "What does that have to do with discernment?" In what we are talking about here you can evaluate your own or someone else's anger and find that it may be the result of qualifying joy with the condition of circumstances. We need to practice not doing that. There is one

circumstance that Jesus said would bring joy. That is the circumstance of giving. It is more blessed to give than to receive.

PROVERBS 14:25

"A true witness delivereth souls, but a deceitful witness speaketh lies."

PROVERBS 14:29

"He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly."

PROVERBS 14:33

"Wisdom is enshrined in the hearts of men of common sense; but it must shout loudly before fools will hear it."

PROVERBS 15:12

"A scorner loveth not one that reproveth him: neither will he go unto the wise."

PROVERBS 15:21

"Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom."

PROVERBS 15:27

Says that a troubled house may be the result of greed.

PROVERBS 16:18

"Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall."

ENABLING:

Do not allow scripture to be used on you which will result in turning you into an enabler. Scripture used which results in evil having more or continued freedom is from the enemy such as letting murderers go free under the guise of "showing mercy" when they are not repentant. We need to show mercy toward the next victim that murderer may kill and keep him in prison.

CHAPTER SEVEN

LAUNCHING PADS:

Some use fellowships (church, Bible studies, 12 step groups, etc.) as a launching pad for their own religious activities. They are basically there to be seen and to be on their own soap box. They are looking for some leadership identity to wear to negate the poor self-image they have. If they are allowed to lead they will lead the group into all kinds of strange ideas and doctrines. They need our prayers and our love to help them come to the realization that God loves them and takes them as they are so that they may be healed or begin their healing. The admonition here is to protect your group from being used as a launching pad. They seek established groups to launch from as they know they cannot get off the ground on their own.

THE RICH LITTLE SYNDROME:

A person with a poor self-image "in hiding" may use mimicry, impersonations, etc. to create an alter identity with others that he feels gives him security and significance in the group. He may feel he has nothing to offer in being himself and therefore becomes somebody else. Help him to be himself so he can be healed.

THE BUTLER DIDN'T DO IT:

Situational ethics is the systematic assassination of the conscience.

HOW TO "PROPHET" FROM A POOR SELF IMAGE:

False prophets arise from poor self-images. It is the catapulting of oneself away from an undesired or unaccepted self into something perceived as greatly desirable . . . a prophet of God. In this the person can now take even rejection as

the image of being a prophet of God over rides the effect of rejection. In extreme cases some false prophets seek to achieve rejection as a perverted form of proving they are a prophet of God. J.W.s are very involved with the love of being rejected as they teach it adds a great deal to their rewards they will get in heaven. Indeed, I have seen many of them purposely provoke situations where it became necessary to throw them out of the house, for which they then achieve a sense of acceptance of God by the act of being rejected by men.

HATCHING GRANOLA:

Depression, prolonged or severe, may result in delusive visions and spiritual experiences. This can bring a person into a "hyper-spiritual" state. Hence, the birth of various fruits, flakes and nuts. A word of caution here again as God often meets us at our darkest hours, we should not presume that because one has been under a great deal of stress that it negates an experience as having been from God. You can tell the difference in this way. The person under great stress that has had a visitation from God will be stabilized by the experience. A depression induced vision or experience, though it may bring the person well out of depression, will cause him to relate things in further irrational terms. The person may be elated by the content of the delusion and quite well out of the depression, for they may have "heard from God", and that God is going to bless them or make them great in some way. "God" told them to write a book and it will reach "millions" for Jesus (or in Carl Sagan terms, "billions and billions" for Jesus). I use this term to illustrate the delusive nature of this event. It is simply delusions of grandeur. These unfortunate people see themselves as so important to

God's Kingdom that Satan himself has to come and battle with them almost daily, yet at the same time they will assert they are meek and unimportant.

LUKE 11:41

"Give of what alms you have and all things are clean unto you."

LUKE 11:42

"You tithe (obey laws), but pass over judgment and the love of God."

DEUT. 13:3

Proves us; whether we love to be religious more than just loving God.

CLUE:

Did you ever hear the Holy Spirit say, "Thus sayeth Billy Graham", or "Thus sayeth the president?" That tells you that Jesus Christ and the Bible is our authority.

MODERN PSYCHOLOGY:

Teaches that it is bad to resist your urges. My brother became severely ill with ulcers and colitis. He was put under the care of psychiatrists who told him he needed to start drinking and chasing women and to let his anger out by swearing more. This to me sounds like a fulfillment of the prophecy that in the end times they will call evil good and good evil. Resisting such things now is looked down on as an evil thing as it will "damage your character". You could somewhat hear the disgust in my brothers voice for them when they asked him if he ever heard voices and his reply was "yes". They became immediately intent on this answer and asked when it was that he heard these "voices". His reply . . . "when people talk to me". Counseling is not without benefit, but you need to watch out for some of the

conclusions that are drawn from such sessions. Statistically a person who has had a nervous breakdown and does not get help has a better chance of becoming well after a year than does the person who is "treated". That is not a joke. That is a statistical reality.

BAD VENDORS:

The Bible says not to seek those with familiar spirits and wizards. This is the acquiring of knowledge by other means than by prayer, the unction of the Holy Spirit and the counsel of God through His written word and his anointed and appointed vessels. Many of you will say, "Oh, I don't seek after those things." What about checking out your horoscope as you are reading through the paper? Christians need to quit flirting with the occult.

ISAIAH 28:7

Priest and prophet have erred through strong drink. So, another problem contributing to the rise of false doctrines is the abuse of alcohol by those who have made themselves our leaders.

TRYING TO MOLD DRIED CLAY:

You would not spend long trying to shape clay that has dried. For the same reason we can waste our time on those who do not wish to change or will not put to use the wise counsel that is provided for them. There are people in the church who just string other Christians along convincing them that they will use the directions and advice being provided them. They make others work very hard at trying to help them, yet they continue to participate in the same lifestyles they have had all along. The world is full of people who would appreciate our help and would profit by it. But these others are tools of the enemy to waste our time

and keep us from helping those who would use the help and are capable of positive changes and willing to do so. It is a matter of building up that which is able and willing to be built up.

DEFINITION:

Beguile = to deceive by trickery. (A=A) or subtlety which means with delicate, clever, ingenious, intricate, or fine distinctions.

BUZZWORDS:

Listen for those who use "buzzwords". Buzzwords are used as bait to get you interested in the pitch and then without noticing you get poisoned. A good example of this is the two buzzwords "Christian Scientist". They are neither Christian nor scientist. One cannot be a scientist who insists on the application of a lie in the presence of obvious and undeniable truth. Buzzwords are used to get you thinking good about something that, underneath, is bad. They are used to establish in one's mind an immediate credibility without having to divulge the real facts. People who collect money on the streets such as the "Moonies" who say, "Would you like to give to a "Christian" "youth" "drug rehabilitation" "program" are just using a nice string of buzzwords. My, how could anyone be against something with such a positive sounding title as that? I saw a panhandler collecting (for himself only) \$700 to \$800 per week passing a hat in the subways for "The Council Against Hunger In America". He admitted the money was for himself to buy cocaine. Don't swallow buzzwords. Find out who people are before giving to their causes or worse yet joining them. What do they stand for and believe and what are their goals?

POSSESSION CHECK LIST:

I have seen a lot of "pseudo-possession" in Christian realms followed by "pseudo-exorcisms" or "pseudo-deliverances". I will write further on the subject later in this book. For now I will give a simple check list of things that are usually present in the case of real demonic possession. Some, and in extreme cases all, of the following should be manifested in an actual possession: If none of these signs are present or questionable the likelihood a real possession is not validated. The issue is probably one of mental or emotional illness.

1. supernatural knowledge
2. a foul odor
3. speaking in a previously unlearned language
4. (not to be referred to or confused with "speaking in tongues")
5. aversion to the reference of the Blood of Jesus Christ
6. voice change
7. supernatural strength
8. self-inflicted wounds
9. agitations at the mention of Christ
10. and in very dramatic cases actual physical transformations

CHAPTER EIGHT

Q.C. ON THE ASSEMBLY LINE:

In trying to discern whether a preacher or evangelist or what have you is o.k. look to see what kind of crowd he draws and then what kind of person is the ministry itself producing. I watch some of these prosperity churches draw in unstable people and what they produce with them is greedy unstable people. It is fine to attract the "crazies" of the world

as long as your message and your teaching is helping to make them less crazy. In a lot of ways I see that the "crazies" are not attracted to a stable church because they sense that there they will not be encouraged to stay crazy. They wish to have fellowship on these terms, "If you won't make me get well I won't make you get well". It is ministering hemlock to the already poisoned. I do not trust any church that does not instruct their people to search the scriptures on their own. I do not trust a church that does not want or allow their people to think and to question for themselves. I do not trust a church that wants their people to accept just the answers they are given by the church and their leaders. A person who tends to let others do his thinking for him is but a tender morsel to be devoured by the enemy, a user or some cult. If God did not mean for us to think and to question things for ourselves he would have given brains just to the priests and to the rest of us empty heads.

COLOSSIANS 2:23

Doctrines of denial only make men proud. So much for not eating meat or being a celibate and all that stuff. Many things of denial are simply good for you physically, but they do not add anything to you spiritually.

TO HELP OR NOT TO HELP:

False teachers foster more questions than they do answers and confusion often results, but "The godly are to edify through spiritual gifts". You should walk away from church feeling lifted up and better even if you were convicted toward repentance of something. (conviction without repentance, however, may not leave you with a good feeling. Not to confuse self-inflicted guilt with the

conviction which comes from the Holy Spirit either.) False teaching breeds heaviness and burden, not conviction.

JANGLER:

The Bible refers to the noise false teachers make as "jangling". So, this is what I call a person who is ministering something other than that which builds up and edifies the Body of Christ for that is the purpose of the real gifts as given by God. So, these people are "Janglers".

I TIMOTHY 4:3

Refers to one of the signs of a false teacher as forbidding to marry and the abstaining from meats.

§SPIRITUAL:

Financial gaining is sometimes a clue of false ministries. Some are very bold about it and others are very subtle about it. I feel sad at this that the good and anointed ministers of God sometimes suffer because of the charlatans that are out there. I wish to pose a question here. Is there such a thing as "ministry as a business"? To minister is to "give". If there is a profit being made than what is being given? Then, would not the profit they make off their "ministry" be their full reward? What more should a person expect to receive in the life to come in the way of rewards if he has lived by the profits of a ministry in this life? If one receives a reward in the life to come I would think it would be for something he had "given" in this life. Should a person receive a reward besides already having gotten profits? A church and ministry needs to run and it takes money to do so and the good ones should be supported and the good ministers should be supported. That is not what I refer to here. I am making a distinction between being supported in ministry and turning

into a business for profit. I truly believe Christianity today is filled with people in it for the making of money alone. Christianity today is profuse with entrepreneurs.

WHAT'S A MANNA WITH YOU?

False prophets and teachers are wells without water, clouds without rain and give promises that do not lead to fulfillment and satisfaction. The "manna" they give you to eat you walk away as hungry as you came. If a ministry is not feeding you... get out of it and get somewhere that will give you food.

RUSTLING IN THE BUSHES:

This is a term I use to refer to knowing something is wrong, but not knowing exactly what it is. This is a common sensation among those that are feeling, learning and sensing the spirit and gift of discernment. Someone comes into your group and you have a feeling something just isn't right. That is the "rustling in the bushes". Pay very close and continuous attention to this feeling until you can put a finger on what it is. If you ignore it and let it go, things may happen and you may find out too late to change some damage that may result. I am sure there were some who worked at PTL who felt this "rustling in the bushes", but it was either ignored or they weren't in a position to do anything about it. I remember turning on the TV while with another person who had a strong sense of discernment and this had been the first they had ever seen of Jim and Tammy. This person related to me in detail what they discerned was in their life and 3 years later those very things came to the surface.

TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES:

It is better to be honest and thought to be a jerk than to be one of these spiritual

wonders that are leading the members of Christ into all kinds of foolishness.

MINISTRY WORSHIP:

Ministry itself becomes an idol to many. The test of our position is to ask, "Who are we without our ministry?" I know of a music director who fell apart when he lost his "ministry in music". If it is a ministry from God it is then not yours to lose. I am sure there is a reasonable sense of loss as one may lose a position in ministry in the sense of missing what one enjoys doing, but the line drawn here is between that and where one is treating it as idolatry.

REMEMBER THE ALAMO:

Acceptance of someone is not license for them to run amuck in an area God has given you charge over. Define the area God has given you charge over and protect it. As examples if this, besides just the fruits, flakes and nuts that get out of hand that need controlled, are the many Christian musicians and singers that are running amuck in the area of prophecy and evangelism. So many are not satisfied being the part of the body God made them to be. They seek to be several parts at once if not the entire body itself. And while they are charading as a prophet the one who is truly called by God as a prophet is squeezed out of the picture and kept from saying what God has given him to say. These Christian entertainers use the limelight they have gained to muscle out other members of the body from doing what God has also called them to do and we are left with the musicians and singers trying to provide for us the entire full course meal our spirits require from God. This is why so many also do not even believe in prophets and apostles for today because they have been so squeezed out for so

long by these types doing the whole show that now we have come to believe that is the scriptural way things are supposed to be.

DOCTRINES OF HELL-TH

The idea that it is God's will that everyone be healthy doesn't jive scripturally for me. As I said before, what God may want may not be his will. I believe God wants us all to be healthy. I believe He is concerned with the health of our soul first. Sometimes a physical sickness can get many of us to a spiritual healthy state that we may not have achieved otherwise. I still think it is one of Gods tools for getting the attention of his children, for causing us to grow, and as a form of chastisement and as a form of judgment to the unsaved. I think, and the Bible supports this, that at times it is God's will for us to go through a physical illness wherein the purpose is for God to establish his will and to prove his glory. Was it God's will that Lazarus not die? Christ made it very clear that it was his own wish that Lazarus not have to die, but at the same time made it very clear that it was the Father's will for Lazarus to die that God's glory may be manifest. And Jesus was submitting to this will of his Father. In the purest stretch of this doctrine that God wants us totally healthy than I would believe it should be attainable never to have to die. Ah! - Here is another thought, "it is appointed unto man once to die". Whose will established that verse? It's from the Bible. Who wrote the Bible? Is dying being healthy? God called Nebuchadnezzar his servant yet God struck Nebuchadnezzar with lunacy for seven years because of his pride. Some of this preaching takes on the assumption that having the Holy Spirit is equivalent to having immunities. Faith

and our own responsibility enter into the picture. It is not only what God wants, but how we are or are not responding to those things he wishes for us.

CHAPTER NINE

THE GOSSIP INTERLUDE:

This is the prayer request brought up before a prayer group that has nothing to do with being a prayer request and everything to do with being a gossip interlude. "Oh, pray for sister Judy, her husband has run off with his secretary and is living in such sin . . .blah . . .blah . . .blah . . .blah.

TRUMPET BLOWING PRAYER REQUESTS:

Some, in asking for prayer, do it more as a declaration than as a prayer request. "Please pray for me I may have cancer", may be stated more for recognition, attention and the getting of sympathy than as an actual desire for a prayer of healing. Indeed, I have known many who would refuse healing in order to keep their sickness as a tool to control others and have others rally around them. This is a control mechanism to get others to cater to them and to give them attention.

THE STRONG POINTS ARE THE WEAK POINTS:

Our strong characteristics also tend to be the areas in which we fail the most, or have our weakest points. A person that is analytical as a strong point may also be failing because he may analyze things to the degree they get nothing done. They think about the possibilities of so many different ways to decide on something that they never make decisions on which way to proceed. It is generally a stronger point with women that they are more

naturally prone toward spiritual things because of their sensitive and intuitive nature. However, they are also more apt to be the prey of enemy forces in the spirit because of that as well. The ratio of women to men in the field of the occult far surpasses that of men. TV commercials for psychics, astrologers, palm readers and on and on seem to be 90% women. So, in discernment again if you want to learn how to focus on where a problem may arise look to what the strengths are and therein is an inherent place of weakness.

COMMON SENSE:

Common sense is discernment. We cannot pray away or rebuke something we ourselves should take action upon. Hence the serenity prayer that God Grant us the wisdom to know when we should. Common sense does not require prayer time or an audible voice from the Lord telling us what to do. Common sense does not need two or three witnesses to proceed with an action we should take. If you see a drowning child in a pool you do not go to God in prayer to seek his will about whether you should rescue the child or not. Nor do you try find two or three witnesses to verify your conviction that you think you should jump in to save him. Obviously by the time we would be done fooling around with this kind of decision making it will be too late and the child will be dead. I have painted here an absurd picture yet in many things this is exactly how I see Christians making many decisions about things. They can be witness to a neighbor beating his child and wonder if they should call the police or get involved. We are sometimes tripped up on the verse in scripture which reads," we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against things in the spirit", so I watch people "dis-involve"

themselves from circumstances such as picking up the phone and calling the police when they see a child being beaten. Or a wife is a Christian, but her husband is a drunk and comes home every night and beats her and she wonders if she is supposed to stay with him and pray. So we go to our prayer closets and rebuke the child abuser and the drunk "in the spirit". I don't think this is altogether wrong in praying and fighting against these things in the spirit. I just think we have left out some steps that we ourselves should be taking. It is much like standing at the edge of the pool in which a child is drowning and rebuking the water in the name of Jesus for drowning the child. . . "stop that water . . . stop that water in the name of Jesus I command you to quit drowning that child". I think this is one reason we have such a corrupted government anymore and one which is no longer able to figure out right and wrong. Instead of being involved as Christians and saying what will be allowed and what will not we have let twisted lawyers and judges take over while we stood in our prayer closets trying to rebuke it from happening. I believe it is going to happen anyway as the world gets closer to the return of Jesus, but I pray we are not counted among the "enablers" that is part of bringing it about.

ALCOHOL:

The Lord says that it is not what goes into a man that defiles him, but what comes out of him. So, then, alcohol itself is not a sin nor is drinking it, but it is "what comes out of you in particular when you drink". If there is evil in the heart it is much more likely to come out in a drunken state. If one is motivated towards sin when he drinks (or when he does anything else for that matter) then

he should not. I see how some people when they get around certain people will "drink till drunk the wine of gossip and backbiting". Think about that one. But, the subject here is alcohol. When the Lord was speaking to me about drinking one time and talking about how things in the heart come out when drinking he made, what was to me, a great joke and yet a very pertinent statement. This is not meant to be irreverent or disrespectful of the Lord either. If drinking affected him as it does us in releasing things in our hearts then in theory he, being filled with holiness in his heart, would become more expressive of that holiness as he drank. However with us it is different as we have sin floating around in ours just waiting for a chance to pop out as the restraints are lowered, which is what alcohol does. Unless your heart is right in all ways you take this chance when you drink. We, as Christians are always trying to restrain the old nature of sin in our life to walk as we should and to deliberately weaken the mechanism which enables us to restrain it by drinking is simply taking chances. Some can do it, but there are far too many that can't.

BODY LANGUAGE:

I believe this is a form of useful discernment. I do think the secular world carries their interpretations to the extreme.

TO BE LIFTED UP OR SHOT DOWN:

A true ministry will be encouraging.
A false ministry will be demanding.

THE THREE CATEGORIES YOU WILL DISCERN ARE:

The truth
The truth twisted.
And the outright lie.

HOPES CLUE:

Another tool in determining the value of a supposed spiritual doctrine is to find if its hopes are in any way built upon earthly things.

THE BUILDER AND THE DESTROYER:

The builder is Christ and the destroyer is Satan. Just watch people to see which category they fit into and you will know whose they are. Simply those working for Satan will be tearing things down and those of God's people will (I should say "should") be building and edifying up the body of believers and even non-believers.

RUN-AMUCKERS:

"The Lord shall use the simple to confound the wise" and "The Lord's people are a peculiar people", is not a license to act like an idiot in the name of Jesus.

CIRCUMSTANCES:

Is a tool for discernment; for, where God guides God provides.

PUTTING OUT A FLEECE:

A fleece should be just difficult enough to recognize God's hand in it when it happens and not so impossible so as to tempt God. It should not be so simple that God's hand is not recognized as being the cause when it occurs. A fleece can be used when a decision needs to be made which is beyond our experience or common sense to make.

HEART, A TACT:

When we closely study what our own hearts are capable of, we begin to recognize what others are up to. I have found there is a direct ratio in the quality of a preacher and his own honesty to himself about knowing the capabilities

that exist within himself concerning the nature of the "old man".

TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE:

The person that comes off as unusually spiritual more often than not is because of an aberrated reason. Those "too good to be true" individuals are often just that. Beneath the incredible facade of wonderfulness is the "little darker than usual" side. A person once asked me why I was so nice. My reply was that I had more to hide. Being acutely aware of my own short comings is what prompted that jest-full remark, yet in the right arena it is a very appropriate remark relating to a great number of people and ministers and situations within Christianity today.

CHAPTER TEN

REVERSE HUMILITY:

There are those individuals and churches and organizations who spend time glorying in their lowliness. This is pride worse than pride. This is the pride of the Pharisees.

WISDOM SEEKS NOT ITSELF:

For wisdom to be reflecting upon itself it cannot then be wisdom for introspection in search for assurance is foolishness.

WE LIKE TO TALK ABOUT OUR DAD:

Those who are children of God enjoy hearing about Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and God the Father and all subjects related. Those who are not comfortable talking about Jesus fall into the category of being suspect of whether they are even born again as yet. There is a verse in the Bible where it says they knew the people were Christians because they listened to,

and was enjoying what was being said about Jesus.

ISAIAH 5:20

"Woe unto the man that calls evil good".

KARMA CORN:

Three children in a cult commune nursery wandered off and got into a refrigerator and died inside. The cult's indifferent response was "that was their karma". They should have been tried and given jail terms for manslaughter for such a remark and indifference then told "this is your karma".

THEY IS WHAT THEY AIN'T:

Though the following statement is in no way fool proof I have found it to be very often true. I listen to what people say to me about themselves at first meeting. Much of the time these things they first tell you about themselves are the very things that are not true. They seem to pick the areas they know they have a problem with and right off the bat try to get you to believe what they wish was true. For underneath is the yearning for a relationship they can have that is free of the faults they know about themselves. So that is many times what is falsely painted at the onset of a relationship. I have used this very effectively in dealing with various companies. When they have said, "This Company is like a family and you can come to me and talk any time you feel a need to". I have looked for it to be a company run by a tyrant who didn't listen to anybody. As I said, these are definitely not solid axioms I am relating here and it almost borders on the paranoia, but human nature is what it is. I have simply found these events to be substantially reoccurring enough that mentioning them is of value despite the negative sound of the outlay. This

phenomenon has been amazingly accurate. When someone offers up to me so quickly, when first meeting, how honest he is; I look for him to be a cheat and in most cases this bares out to be true in the end. I have to ask... when a person first meets me; why he even carries the need around to let me know that he is honest.

JUDGES 7:6

Reading this story about Gideon's army at the water hole makes me think of discernment. A good soldier does not stoop and lap from a water hole, but brings that water to his lips with the cup of his hand so he can keep his eyes up and on his surroundings. The idea of them drinking represents a time of revival as water is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. It is good wisdom to keep in mind that as revival comes to keep watch on the surroundings to see what may be sneaking into the group. Do not get so involved with the drinking in that you get caught off guard or that you fail to hear some "rustling in the bushes". With revival will come the wolves to lure any young lambs away they can to devour. Interesting that it is specifically part of the J.W. training to go after recent Christian converts to lure into the cult and not "unbelievers".

TUNING IN:

We should not live too much by our feelings for as Christians we are to live by faith, but I must point out that it is through feelings which discernment is used. Discernment, much of the time, is felt. We just have to learn how to fine tune our spirits to recognize the difference between our own emotions and the feelings that may be discernment in operation.

MATTHEW 7:15-23

Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them. Not everyone who says to me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophecy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?" Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!"

MATTHEW 15:8 & 9

These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.

MATTHEW 23

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. Everything they do is done for men to see: They make phylacteries wide and the tassels of their prayer shawls long; they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; they love to be greeted in

the marketplaces and to have men call them "Rabbi". But you are not to be called "Rabbi", for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth "Father", for you have one Father, and He is in heaven. Nor are you to be called "teacher", for you have one Teacher, The Christ. The greatest among you will be your servant. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. Woe to you, you teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to. Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are. Woe to you, blind guides! You say, "If anyone swears by the temple, he is bound by his oath". You blind fools! Which is greater; the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred? Therefore, he who swears by the altar swears by it and everything on it. And he who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who dwells in it. And he who swears by heaven swears by God's throne and by the one who sits on it. Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices, mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law, justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel. Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup

and dish, and then the outside also will be clean. Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like white washed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men's bones and everything unclean. In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness. Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous. And you say, "If we had lived in the days of our forefathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets." So you testify against yourself that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of the sin of your forefathers! You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? Therefore I am sending you prophets and wise men and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town. And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berakiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. I tell you the truth; all this will come upon this generation. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord".

Matthew 23 was such a good picture of falsehood I was compelled to copy the whole chapter here. Just reading it provokes discernment of those things around us. There are people and churches today that fit this description. You can tell how Jesus feels about them. For descriptions of the end times read Matthew 24 and 25.

These are just the notes from the class on discernment I taught. They are not complete in any way for there is a great deal more to say concerning the subject, but this is offered here, as written, as a tool toward one becoming familiar with discernment and some of its facets. I most earnestly pray that at least a few things herein will prove to be beneficial to increasing the quality of your Christian walk.

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