

HOW TO DISCERN TRUTH FROM ERROR IN THE LAST DAYS

In Matthew 24: 4-5 Jesus warned His believers that the last days would be filled with deception taught by many false prophets and teachers. Most of us would agree that we are living in the last days, therefore this passage applies directly to us. Most of us are passionate and have a love for the truth.

Jesus, the real WORD (John 1: 1), inspired the Apostle Paul to teach us how to understand and interpret the WRITTEN word. In 2 Timothy 3: 13-17 Paul also warns us about false teachers and their false teachings, but here he also gives us a failproof tool to help us discern truth from error. Notice what he says to Timothy:

¹³ But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴ But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them, ¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

¹⁶ All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3: 13-17).

Here we have the famous passage that most of us know by heart. Verses sixteen to seventeen show us that we must regard ALL SCRIPTURE, and disregard none, for “ALL SCRIPTURE IS GIVEN BY INSPIRATION OF GOD.”

What is unfortunate, however, is that most of us also disregard the verses that precede it, especially verse fifteen. It is here that Paul teaches us that failproof method of understanding all of the inspired Scriptures. Notice verse fifteen:

¹⁵ and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

The Holy Scriptures are able to make us “WISE FOR SALVATION.” But how are they able to make us “WISE FOR SALVATION?” In one way, and in one way only: “THROUGH FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS.”

The Scriptures available in Paul’s time was, of course, the Old Testament. The Old Testament is the Holy Scriptures Paul is talking about (obviously the New Testament is inspired also but it was still in the process of being written by the apostles).

If we interpret the Old Testament “THROUGH FAITH WHICH IS IN JESUS CHRIST” then we will interpret it in the Spirit, which gives life (2 Cor. 3: 6). But if we interpret the Old Testament without the “FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS,” then we will interpret them through the flesh (our own human wisdom) or in the letter of the law (for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life, 2 Cor. 3: 6). Without the “FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS” the Holy Scriptures will become unholy for us.

Without FAITH WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS’ revelation of His Father’s character of agape love, the Old Testament Holy Scriptures is no longer “given by inspiration of God, and is” no

longer “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

Without Jesus as our foolproof tool for interpreting the Scripture a veil will cover our eyes and our minds will be blinded when we read the Old Testament:

¹²Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech—¹³unlike Moses, *who* put a veil over his face so that the children of Israel could not look steadily at the end of what was passing away. ¹⁴But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the *veil* is taken away in Christ. ¹⁵But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart. ¹⁶Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. ¹⁷Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty. ¹⁸But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord (2 Corinthians 3: 12-18).

⁴Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we do not lose heart. ²But we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God. ³But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them. ⁵For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus’ sake. ⁶For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to *give* the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4: 1-6).

We pray that we will keep Jesus foremost in all our studies because He Himself pointed us to the fact that all Scriptures testify of Him:

³⁹You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. ⁴⁰But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life (John 5: 39-40).