**How Can We Know Which Preacher Is Telling Us The Truth?**

Back in the fall of 2019, a Bible Crossfire caller wanted to know "How Can We Know Which Preacher Is Telling Us The Truth?" I gave him an answer then, but I want to go more in-depth now.

This is a very important question because Jesus said in Matt 15:14 "Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch." In this verse the blind leader represents the false teacher and the blind follower represents us if we allow that false religious teacher to lead us astray, and the ditch represents the bad place. So if we allow a false religious teacher to lead us astray, we will be lost in h-e-l-l just like the false teacher will be.

So just how do we keep from being led astray by a false teacher - in the words of the caller, “How Can We Know Which Preacher Is Telling Us The Truth?” An important verse to keep in mind in this regard is Acts 17:11 which reads "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." So the Bereans are given the highest of compliments by God because they didn't just accept what Paul and Silas preached blindly; instead they compared what he was teaching to the scriptures to make sure it was so.

Let me illustrate how to do this with three examples ...

First, most churches allow women to preach from the pulpit. But we have clear texts that teach otherwise, for example, I Cor 14:34-35 "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." So you can tell which preacher is telling you the truth simply by comparing what they preach on the women preachers issue to this passage.

Some might wonder about passages like Acts 21:9 that show women prophesied, but in a case like that, what you should do is figure out how both passages can be true. Don't just ignore one passage and hold to the other, but what position would make both passages true? Well if one scripture shows a woman can prophesy, that is, teach God's word, and another scripture says she can't teach in church, what should our conclusion be? - that a woman can teach God's word, but not in the church assembly. When I was a boy and my Dad told me not to talk in church, he wasn’t telling me I couldn’t talk in Burger King, right? That's really a very simple rule - to make all passages true, but most don't follow it. We should know that if God wrote the Bible, everything in it (all verses) will be true.

That shows us when we seem to have verses on both sides of a question, we shouldn’t just throw up our hands and say there are 20 verses that teach A and only ten that teach B, so A must be the truth and I will ignore the B passages. Instead we should figure out how all 30 verses can be true. I think you can see this with the Women Preachers issue. Now let’s apply that same simple method to determine what a sinner must do to be saved. Many use John 3:16 to say that all a person has to do is believe in Jesus. But if that were so, that would rule a sinner having to repent which we see is clearly required by verses like Luke 13:3 – “… except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” And if we look at Acts 2:38 (“… Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost”), we see that both repentance and baptism are required to get the remission of sins. See how that if we take John 3:16 by itself and ignore other passages, we might come to the wrong conclusion, but if we take everything the Bible has to say on the subject, we come to the complete truth?

Another example is how do you tell what the truth on divorce and remarriage is? It used to be taught by everyone that second and third marriages should be terminated, but now most preachers will tell you it is okay to stay in a second marriage. What did Jesus say in Matt 19:9? - "... Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery." That's pretty clear isn't it? Jesus is calling these second marriages adulterous, and surely we understand that a faithful Christian cannot live in adultery. Even before the New Testament went into effect, John the Baptist told Herod (who was in a second marriage) in Matt 14:4 - "It is not lawful for thee to have her." Why would we think it is any different today? Does a change in culture change the moral teaching of God's word somehow? Most preachers today aren’t willing to stand for the truth on this issue because it would hurt their attendance numbers, and therefore their contribution. But John the Baptist was willing to lose his head for preaching the truth on divorce and remarriage. See the difference in most preachers today, and preachers who are really serving the Lord?

Most of the time, it is really not that hard. Most churches believe differently than the Bible on many subjects not because the Bible is ambiguous on a point, but because political correctness gets in the way, or the pressure of the possibility of losing members if they stand for the truth gets in the way. The Bible is not really that hard to understand on most subjects.