

# Would You Recognize A False Teacher?

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[ 0 : 00 ] Turn in your Bible to 1 Timothy chapter 6.

! There are Bibles in the pews that you can use.

If you don't own a Bible, please take the Bible home with you today as a gift from us to you in our hopes that you'll continue to be reading God's Word. 1 Timothy chapter 6, beginning at the end of verse 2 and going through verse 5.

If you would stand with me as we honor the reading of God's Word together. Teach and urge these things.

If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing.

[ 1 : 13 ] He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.

May God add a blessing to the reading of his Word. Would you please be seated? One of the most unsettling experiences is when you unexpectedly walk face first into a spider's web.

The web clings to your face and your hair, sending you into a panic as you frantically try to remove it. Meanwhile, you have the thought of the spider that created that web maybe crawling around on you somewhere.

And so in desperation, you're trying to de-web yourself. I don't like spiders. But I do appreciate how their webs catch all the annoying little insects that are common this time of year.

And you've probably noticed that spiders construct their webs near light sources. You've probably seen that around the exterior of your home.

[ 2 : 37 ] Spiders don't build webs near light sources because they are attracted to light. They build their webs near light sources or sources of light because insects, their source of food, are drawn to the light.

Spiders are opportunistic hunters who instinctively know to use light sources to attract flying insects, making them ideal spots to build their webs and catch their unsuspecting prey.

Spiders use light to lure insects into their webs, their trap, where they eventually suck the life out of them.

What a spider does, and I know I've kind of grossed you out, but there's a point. What a spider does in constructing a web near a source of light to trap and consume its prey is what false teachers do to you, do to others.

The Bible is full of examples and warnings about false teachers who prey on unsuspecting people seeking the light of truth and understanding.

[ 4 : 06 ] Jesus didn't compare false teachers to spiders, but he did compare them to another lethal creature in Matthew chapter 7, verses 15 through 20.

There our Lord says, Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits.

Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? So every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit.

Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, you will recognize them by their fruits. Here, as he does in other places, Jesus warns us not only about the reality of false teachers, but he tells us how to identify them so that we aren't lured by them into their traps and become their prey.

In fact, just about every book in the New Testament contains some kind of warning to Christians about false teachers and some kind of instruction about how to identify them and how to expose them.

[ 5 : 27 ] Just in 1 Timothy, Paul has already done this several times in this letter. At the very beginning, in chapter 1, verses 3 through 4, he reminds Timothy of why he left him in Ephesus.

As I urged you, he says, when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine, nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies which promote speculations rather than the stewardship from God that is by faith.

In verse 20, Paul calls two of those false teachers out in that church by name, Hymenaeus and Alexander. These false teachers and their teaching created disorder and division in the church. And so part of Timothy's task was to confront them and others and expel them and put the church back into order so that it would support and promote the truth of God's Word.

In 1 Timothy 3, 14 through 15, we have Paul's purpose for writing this letter. He tells Timothy, I hope to come to you soon, but I am writing these things to you so that if I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, a pillar and buttress of the truth.

[ 6 : 42 ] In chapter 4, verses 1 through 3, Paul identifies the source behind the false teachers and their deception. There he says, Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times, some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are sealed, who forbid marriage and require abstinence from food that God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

In verses 6, 11, and 13, Paul commands Timothy to defend the truth, contend for the truth, and keep watch over himself and other members of the church that they will not be deceived by lies disguised as the truth.

False teachers, wolves dressed in sheep's clothing, spiders spinning webs to trap those attracted to the light of Christ, whether they know it or not, are Satan's instruments promoting his lies to divide and to devour the church and people.

Paul urges Timothy to defend his church against these false teachers, and he gives instructions to him once more on how to identify them and to expose them.

So the main idea for this morning's sermon is that Christians must identify and expose false teachers. Christians must identify and expose false teachers.

[ 8 : 20 ] Now, as a Christian, you might be wondering, why does this matter? Well, while God's Word compares false teachers to wolves, it compares Satan to a lion.

1 Peter 5, 8, There the apostle warns the church, Be sober-minded, be watchful. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour.

Like a hungry lion, Satan seeks to deceive us. He wants to discourage us so that we doubt God and sin in ways that are destructive to us.

Satan is clever, and he is cunning. He is a master of disguise, hiding his true intentions, as do false teachers who are under his influence.

Paul wrote about this in 2 Corinthians 11, verses 12 through 15. And what I am doing I will continue to do in order to undermine the claim of those who would like to claim that in their boasted mission, they work on the same terms as we do.

[ 9 : 29 ] For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

So it is no surprise if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds. Satan, unfortunately, has been very effective at coercing individuals, organizations, institutions, and schools that claim to be Christian to let their guard down regarding God's Word and the doctrines that are informed by it.

He's set traps for them by suggesting that God is a loving God who loves the things, even sinful things, that we know he condemns in his Word.

He's tricked many into thinking that the message of the gospel is primarily about social justice, feeding the hungry, taking care of the environment, or making money and being healthy and discovering some kind of secret, hidden knowledge that allows you to manipulate the universe in your favor as if you were God.

He's convinced people to create God in their own image. A God who condemns nothing, requires nothing, and accepts everything.

[11:04] He's used these people and these groups to promote a Christianity without Jesus Christ. A Christianity that ignores Jesus' commands to enter the narrow gate, to walk the narrow path, and to take up a cross of self-denial and seeking to glorify him with your life.

What they teach, what they preach, is close enough to the light to deceive, seize, and devour, like a spider and its web.

We need to identify them. We need to expose them so that we are not deceived and so that others are not deceived by them also.

If you're an unbeliever here this morning, again, we are glad that you are here. We have prayed for you. The Lord has brought you here. We're thankful that you are with us this morning because Jesus used another figure of speech, another metaphor, and another animal to describe what Satan does to you.

In Matthew 13, 3 through 4, and then verse 19, Jesus told a parable. And he told them many things in parables, saying, A sower went out to sow, and he sowed some good seed among the path, and the birds came and devoured them.

[12:26] And then in verse 19, he explains more of his parable. When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, the gospel of Jesus Christ, and does not understand it, the evil one, Satan, who comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart, this is what was sown along the path.

That's what Satan wants to do to you today, every day, that you would hear the gospel. And I pray that today, God would soften your heart, give you eyes to see, and ears to hear the good news that, again, Satan is desperate, desperate to snatch away from you.

We're glad you're here, and we hope that today is the day of your salvation. Christians must identify and expose false teachers, and our text today informs us how to do that.

And here I see three questions that we can ask of ourselves as we analyze someone who claims to be a Christian, someone who claims to know and speak the truth of God's word, but who is really a false teacher.

And you should use these three questions when you analyze sermons that you hear, when you analyze Christian materials that you read, when you listen even to Christian music, Christian music.

[13:55] And you should do it even when you listen to me preach. You should do it when you're in your Sunday school class because Satan is that deceptive. Three questions.

The first, so we can identify and expose false teachers, is their teaching consistent with Scripture? Is what they teach consistent with Scripture?

Verse three, Paul says, if anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness.

In the Greek, different doctrine is a compound word. It's made up of the Greek word heteros, which means other, and didaskaleo, which means to teach.

Paul adds that this other teaching does not agree with the sound words of Jesus. The Greek word translated as does not agree is written in the present tense, indicating that this is not just a mistake that somebody made.

[14:58] Maybe they said something that they didn't mean to say. This is somebody who is in a continuous state of disagreeing with the sound words of Jesus. The Greek word translated as sound is hygeia in usin, from which our English word hygiene comes from.

So putting this together, false teachers teach things that don't agree with the words of Jesus, and instead of being healthy for us, for our souls, they are poisonous for us.

They are teachings that will not produce godliness. They will not encourage people to pursue righteousness and holiness and Christlikeness.

Instead of being consistent with God's word, their teaching contradicts God's word. Their teaching encourages people to disagree with God's word and to reinterpret God's word to make disobeying God's word seem like the right thing to do.

Where have we seen this in the Bible? How about at the very beginning, with Satan in the garden of Eden when he tempted Eve? Let's look at Genesis 3, 1 through 5.

[16:12] Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, did God actually say, you shall not eat of any tree in the garden?

And the woman said to the serpent, we may eat of the fruits of the trees in the garden, but God said, you shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it lest you die.

But the serpent said to the woman, you will not surely die, for God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you'll be like God, knowing good and evil.

So what do we see Satan doing here? We see Satan questioning God's word. He's questioning Eve's interpretation of God's word. And then he switches out the truth of God's word for a lie. That disobeying God's word won't bring death, but a better life for you. That you will be like God. That you will be your own authority.

[ 17 : 23 ] That you can be the determiner of your own truth. He presents obedience to God as something that is oppressive.

And he presents disobedience to God as something that is liberating, freeing. And Satan continues to promote this lie through false teachers today.

For example, they'll talk a lot about God's love and that God is love. God is love. 1 John 4, 8.

God's love motivated him to send his son Jesus Christ. John 3, 16. There's some truth in what they say, but it's a truth that needs to be understood in light of all of the truth that God has revealed about himself in his word.

God reveals in the Bible that while he is love, he also hates sin. Because sin is the antithesis.

[ 18 : 26 ] It's the opposite of his nature and who he is. The Bible tells us that God is holy. When Isaiah receives a vision of God in heaven and the seraphim are repeatedly crying out to one another, Isaiah records that in chapter 6, verse 3.

One called out to another, Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory. They don't describe God as love, love, love, as R.C. Sproul has said, or wrath, wrath, wrath, but holy, holy, holy.

God's love and his wrath are informed by his holiness. The Bible describes God's attitude towards sin in strong terms.

In Isaiah 1, 6, it describes sin as putrefying sores. In Psalm 38, 4, it describes sin as a heavy burden. In Titus 1, 15, in 2 Corinthians 7, 1, it describes sin as defilement.

In Matthew 6, 12 through 15, sin is described as a binding debt. And in 1 John 1, 6, sin is described as darkness.

[ 19 : 41 ] And these are just a few things about what the Bible says about sin and the strong words it uses about it. God hates sin because God is holy.

And God hates sin because sin separates us from him. Isaiah 59, 2, but your iniquities have made a separation.

Your sins have made a separation between you and your God and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear. Sin caused Adam and Eve to separate themselves from God.

When they heard God walking in the garden, they ran from him. They hid from him. They separated themselves from him. Sin always brings separation from God.

God hates sin because it lessens our love for him. I've been reading Martin Lloyd-Jones sermons on the book of Romans.

[ 20 : 45 ] And in one of those sermons, he defined sin in a way that I had never thought of it before. It's kind of a long quote, but it's good. He said, the essence of sin is to fail to glorify God.

You ever thought about that? The essence of sin is to fail to glorify God. Man was made to glorify God. Man's chief end, the shorter catechism tells us, is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

And you see, if we only define sin as the failure to do that, we would see how the most respectable people can sometimes be terrible sinners. They have never been guilty of certain particular sins, of course not, but they do not glorify God.

They glorify themselves. So many people say, I cannot feel that I am a sinner. I have never felt it.

That is because they are thinking in terms of sin. If only they saw that sin is really just a failure to glorify God with the whole of their being all the time, they would see that they are terrible sinners.

Now, if that is sin, salvation must mean that we are brought into a state and a condition in which we live to glorify God. Most false teachers in our time are inconsistent with what they teach about God's love and people's sin by suggesting that God exists to glorify them instead of the other way around.

[ 22 : 04 ] That God's love means they are free, that they have freedom to love sin, which lessens their love for God and increases their love for themselves. As Paul says in verse four, they are

puffed up with conceit and understand nothing.

False teachers are conceited. They are prideful. They take pride in themselves and in their interpretations of God's word. They pride themselves in finding what they think are loopholes to justify and to celebrate their sin or to celebrate the things that God calls sin.

They understand nothing, Paul says. They are full of hot air. They're blowing smoke. They make confident assertions that are not consistent with the truth God's revealed in his word.

Just this morning, I was driving to church. I was listening to a Christian radio station and I was listening to a song. I don't know who wrote it. I don't know who sings it.

I don't even know the title of the song, but there was a line in it that said, the righteous king looks at me and wouldn't change anything. And I think, I can think of just a lot of Bible verses right now that completely contradict what you just said.

[ 23 : 22 ] Yes. Yes, he changes things. And we praise God that he does. It's called sanctification as he makes us more like Jesus Christ. as we seek to be obedient to him and put sin to death.

I think a clear way to identify if someone is consistent with scripture is how much they use scripture or don't use scripture when they teach or when they preach or in the lyrics that they use when they sing.

So ask yourself as you analyze them, do they use the Bible or is it there just kind of as a prop, as something they hold up at the end? Do they preach the gospel?

Do they say anything about the necessity of Jesus' sinless life and his atoning death and his victorious resurrection to save us from the eternal consequences of our sin, which is hell?

Do they talk about the reality of hell? Do they present Jesus as the only way to heaven or as one of many ways to heaven? Do they subtract from the scripture or do they add to the scriptures as was the case for many of the false teachers that Paul is talking about, saying that you're never saved enough.

[ 24 : 33 ] You have to do all these different works. You have to do all these different things to be saved or to stay saved. Are they humble or are they prideful? Do they make much of Jesus or much of themselves when they talk?

Do they condone what God condemns in his word? Do they condemn those whose doctrine is based on the sound teachings of Jesus Christ? Galatians 1, 8 through 9 tells us, but even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.

As we have said before, now I say again, if anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed. The better you know God's word, the better you will be able to identify those who don't speak for him.

Danny and I have been married for almost 18 years and we dated for four years before we were married, so we've known each other for quite a while.

I've spent a lot of time with her. I know my wife. So if one of my kids said to me, and she wasn't around, hey dad, mom said it's okay tonight if we eat nothing but candy.

[ 25 : 57 ] I would know that they were lying. I wouldn't even have to ask her because I know like there's always a vegetable at dinnertime and there's never once been candy for dinner.

And I would know that they were lying because that's inconsistent with what I know about her. And that's inconsistent with the love that I know that she has for our kids and the concern that she has for their health.

They might have fun eating nothing but candy for dinner, but it would hurt them. In the same way, if you know God as he's revealed himself in his word through his son, Jesus Christ, if you've spent time walking with him and are in a relationship with him through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, you will know when someone is saying things that don't match what you read and what he's revealed to you in his word.

You'll know when someone who claims to speak for him isn't truly speaking for him because what they say is not consistent with what you know about him as he's revealed himself to you in his word. Now the second question to help us identify and expose false teachers, does their teaching produce good fruit? Does their teaching produce good fruit? Because false teachers are prideful, Paul says in verse 4 again, that they have an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words.

[ 27 : 31 ] False teachers are identified by their cravings for controversy because I think controversy often draws attention and it increases their exposure, which they want.

They make speculations without good evidence to support their new theories, which really aren't new. In their desire to be accepted by popular culture, they'll try to redefine words and redefine terms in the Bible so people can say they are Christians while believing things that contradict God's word.

Like the theory of evolution, for example, which contradicts the Bible's account of God creating the world in six 24-hour days. They'll redefine words that addresses God's design for marriage and gender in the Bible.

They turn Jesus also into some kind of political revolutionary to justify their political beliefs and their disregard for civil authorities. They make God's word appear to say what it doesn't say because a lot of them don't really believe that the Bible is God's word.

They don't believe that it's inerrant. And they think they have the freedom to interpret it however they want. My own seminary, Midwestern, Baptist Theological Seminary, back in the 70s, we heard these stories as students of professors, men who claimed to be Christians, learned men who were teaching and who were writing books that denied the virgin birth of Jesus Christ.

[ 28 : 56 ] If Jesus wasn't divine, then he isn't God. And if Jesus isn't God, then his death wasn't capable of atoning for our sins. That's just one example of the false things that they were teaching in a Southern Baptist seminary claiming to be Christians preparing pastors for the ministry.

Now, there can be healthy debates about words in Scripture. And those debates are healthy if the motivation is that we're trying to help one another better understand what God is telling to us in that verse or through that word so we can better understand how that truth applies to our lives.

The point isn't in those conversations to stir up controversy, but to come to some kind of consensus on the true meaning of the word, on the true meaning of a verse or a passage so that we, again, can best understand it so that we can better apply it to our lives.

Ultimately, the fruit of false teachers' ministry does not result in godliness, but division from God and division from the truth. As Paul says in the rest of verse 4 going into verse 5, which produce envy.

These are the fruits of false teaching. Dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth.

[ 30 : 18 ] In our culture, to be a Christian who believes that the Bible is truly God's word that is inerrant and to uphold its morals and to uphold its values and to live by those things and to promote those things is to become a target of these false teachers and other people in culture who slander us by calling us names.

They say, you're old-fashioned. Or they'll say meaner things like, you're a bigot. You're homophobic. You're a sexist. You're a racist.

You're a legalist. And sometimes they'll even say, you're not a Christian. They have evil suspicions that Christian men, for example, are trying to oppress their wives and suppress their children because they, in their minds, crave some kind of power or control.

They're depraved of mind because the things of God seem like foolishness to them. 1 Corinthians 2.14 says, the natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.

They are like those described by Paul in Romans 1 who reject the truth of God and are given over to a debased mind by God who are deprived of the truth.

[ 31 : 45 ] One section of that, Romans 1.28-32 says, and since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice.

They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, this is the fruit, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.

Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them, but give approval to those who practice them. You will identify false teachers by the fruit they produce.

You can ask yourself questions like, do they fight the good fight of the faith or do they oppose those who are fighting the good fight of the faith? Do they make disciples of Jesus Christ or are they really making disciples for themselves?

Do they seek to communicate what the Bible says or do they contradict what the Bible says? Does their ministry produce the fruit of the Spirit or the fruit of the flesh?

[ 32 : 57 ] Galatians 5, 19 through 26, we see what the fruit of the flesh is as opposed to the fruit of the Spirit. Now the works of the flesh are evident, sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.

I warn you as I warned you before that those who do such things, listen to this, will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, and envying one another. Why do false teachers do this? What are they after?

Well, Paul tells us as we look at the third question in the end of verse five. You ask, are they motivated to serve God or to use Him for selfish gain? In the end of verse five, Paul says, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.

[ 34 : 25 ] This is what they are ultimately after. Whether it's fortune or fame, false teachers unlike Jesus don't empty themselves to serve others, but empty others in service to themselves.

We'll get into more of that in the weeks to come as Paul moves on to talk about Christian contentment and wealth, but understand, it's not a sin to have money, but the Bible says it is a sin to love money.

And many false teachers like Balaam in the Old Testament and Simon the sorcerer in the New Testament seek to use God for dishonest gain. Ultimately, false teachers don't love God, they love the world.

And they want money so they can have the things of the world. And this is why they do what they do. And it's why they gain a large following because many want the same things that they promote. 2 Timothy 4, 3-4 tells us that the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions.

[ 35 : 39 ] People who will tell them that your sin isn't sin, that God loves you just the way that you are. There's no cross that you have to bear. There's no following Christ isn't like that. There's nothing that you have to do but just continue to be who you are, pursue the passions that you love.

These are the teachers that they seek, that they accumulate. And in verse 4, Paul says, and we'll turn away from listening to the truth and they'll wander off into myths, into this garbage, false, lying teaching that contradicts God's word.

So that's how we can identify them, but why should we expose them? I think Peter gives a pretty good reason in 2 Peter 2, verses 4-10. For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy darkness to be kept until the judgment, if he did not spare the ancient world but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness with seven others when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly, if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes, he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly, and if he rescued the righteous lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked, for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard, then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Why must we expose them? Because we know the end for those who believe such things, who practice such things, for do such things.

And so, as Paul says at the very beginning here to Timothy, this is our, this is our adjustment for what we've heard today. Teach and urge these things.

[ 37 : 46 ] Teach and urge these things. teach to defend the truth in our church and urge those who are being deceived of the consequences that result ultimately from our sin that we have not repented of and that separation that our sin has created between God and us.

we are to urge them to repent and to turn to Christ that they would be saved from their sins and for the eternal consequences of their sins.

2 Corinthians 5, 18 through 20. All this is from God who through Christ reconciled us to himself and he gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

That is, in Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ. We speak for Christ. God making his appeal through us, we implore you. We don't say, hey, I think Jesus could help you or I think this could be a good thing for you.

[ 39 : 04 ] We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. Remember Spurgeon saying, and I'll paraphrase, but basically he said, if sinners be damned and committed to an eternity in hell, let them have to jump over our dead bodies or us, I should say, clinging on to their feet to keep them from going.

Friends, Christians, there's many false teachers in this world. There's many false teachers in our nation. There are many people who are dressed up in sheep's clothing and they are ravenous wolves and they are seeking to devour whatever they can devour. They're seeking to snatch up the truth wherever we go to spread it. We must teach and urge these things.

and frankly, I think that's a lot of times why we don't talk about hell because we're uncomfortable with its reality and also we are aware of our responsibility.

Who has God given the task to share the gospel? Who has God given the task to promote the truth of God's word?

[ 40 : 18 ] Who has God given the task to represent him in this fallen world? The church. You. How much are we imploring people?

How much do we care? How much are we trying and doing our part to identify and expose false teachers? others? It's frustrating.

Well, we know a day is coming when the frustration will be over and until that time, we have work to do. And not only do we give the bad news, but we must proclaim the good news.

But people have to hear the bad news in order to hear how good the good news is that, yes, you are a sinner. All of us have sinned. All of us have fallen way short of God's glory.

It's not even close. No matter how much good you think you've done, we are all born with the same nature as a result of our original parents' fall in the garden.

[ 41 : 31 ] And God would be justified to leave us to our choices, to leave us in our sin, but because God loves us.

He sent his son Jesus as a servant, emptying himself of the glories of the riches of heaven to add a human nature to his divine nature, to live the sinless life that the law required that none of us could come close to keeping.

And he did it. And he died on the cross, not because he was some kind of political revolutionary whose efforts were thwarted by the Romans, not because he was just setting some kind of example for us of what it looks like to sacrifice for others.

No, he died because if we were going to be saved, he had to die on the cross. He had to shed his blood on the cross. He had to take our place and endure God's wrath for the sins that we've committed against him.

There would be no other way. We cannot be saved unless God saves us. And he's saved us through his son Jesus. You don't deserve it. I don't deserve it.

[ 42 : 46 ] None of us do. This is why we praise and worship like we do. Because God has been gracious to those who don't deserve it. He's taken our place.

He's died in our place. And he's risen again. And he shares his life with us. And so we live through this world and it's terrible at times.

And we see the consequences of sin all around us and even in ourselves. But we have a hope that sure and that certain that Jesus Christ has come.

That he's died for my sins. That I'm forgiven. That I have life in Christ. And no matter how things are, how bad things are, I know that he who began a good work in me will complete it as he continues to change me and prepares me for heaven where there will be no more sin.

And we'll be with him in glory forever. Brother, friend, please, I implore you. You are here. If you have not been saved, you are here to hear this message.

[ 43 : 51 ] And God is calling to you today. Come to me. Repent of your sin. Turn to me and I will save you. I will transform you.

You will experience a love like you've never felt before. You will experience a hope like you've never had. You'll have a peace that you've never known. Turn to him.

Turn to him. Cry out to him and be saved. Let's pray. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for your word. We thank you for the truth. We thank you for your instruction. Because God, we are, we're not very smart sometimes. And we're easily tricked.

We're easily deceived by those who would come to us and claim to be speaking for you. But God, you've told us how we can identify them.

[ 44 : 51 ] That, Lord, if what they say is inconsistent with who you are as you revealed yourself through your word, we know that they're not from you. Lord, that if their ministry is producing attitudes and actions and things that contradicts your word that are producing fruit that is bad, we know they're not from you, Lord.

And ultimately, if they are after us for their own selfish gains, we know, God, that they do not speak for you. Lord, help us to be attentive, to identify them, and also to expose them.

Speaking the truth in love. Lord, that those who have been deceived would hear the gospel in the hopes that you would save them. And also, Lord, for those who promote these false teachings, Lord, we pray that they would have their eyes opened and their ears opened to see what they're doing, that they would repent, that you would save them.

God, we pray for our church. Lord, help our elders, our leaders to be protectors of our congregation. Lord, whatever material we're using, whoever would fill this pulpit, whoever is teaching in whatever age group, Lord, that we would be shrewd and that we would be on our guard to make sure that whatever materials, whatever person is teaching, that they are not saying things that contradict your word.

Because, Lord, you've given us a really important task. ask. And, Lord, for those who are our friends, our families, our co-workers, our neighbors, they've been deceived by these false teachers. Lord, help us to have the guts and the courage which you've called us to do to be your ambassadors and to speak the truth and love to them, to speak out against these lies, that people would hear the truth.

[ 46 : 31 ] We pray that they would know the truth and that you would save them as well. Lord, we love you and we're thankful for who you are and what you've done for us.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen.