

**BOOK OF 2 CORINTHIANS**  
**BEWARE OF FALSE TEACHERS**  
**2 CORINTHIANS 11:1-15**

**Introduction**

Read our Text.

False teachers and religions have been around ever since the Garden of Eden!

In Jesus time here on the earth He had to contend with the scribes and Pharisees, who were the original legalists. They had bound the Jews with judgment and condemnation, threatening to excommunicate from the synagogue anyone who violated any of their more than six hundred rules and regulations. These rules were not part of the Mosaic Law but merely traditions added to the Law down through the generations.

Before we get into our text in 2 Corinthians, I want us to look first at Jesus' response to the false teachers of His day. Then we will come back to our text and look at Paul's warnings to the Corinthians concerning the deception that had infiltrated their Church

Because of all the -isms, schisms, and cults in our day and time, please understand that these warnings are equally relevant to us.

**I. THINGS THAT SIGNAL A QUESTIONABLE MINISTRY!**  
**(MATTHEW 15:1-14)**

**A. Questionable Ministries Substitute Human Tradition For Divine Revelation!**

The Pharisees have come to Jesus with one of their loaded questions. **(Vs 2)**

How does Jesus answer them? With a pointed question of His own. **(Vs 3-6)**

Jesus is saying that the Pharisees had negated the authority of God's Word, substituting their traditions instead.

**B. Questionable Ministries Have Externals That Seem Right, But Internally They Are Far From God!**

**BOOK OF 2 CORINTHIANS**  
**BEWARE OF FALSE TEACHERS**  
**2 CORINTHIANS 11:1-15**

Jesus continues with a sharp rebuke here! **(Vs 7-9)**

False religions or cult members may sound right or look right on the surface, but don't be fooled. What does their heart truly reveal? What are their motives?

**C. Questionable Ministries Offer Teachings That Defile And Destroy. (Vs 10-11)**

Conversely, godly teaching brings glory to God!

What comes from the mouth originates in the heart! **(Vs. 19-20)**

The ugly truth of false religions and cults is that their teaching ultimately brings destruction in the form of spiritual ruin, sometimes moral compromise, and often emotional instability.

**D. Questionable Ministries Are Led By The Blind. (Vs 14)**

In other words, these spiritually blind leaders are leading their equally blind followers to hell. Jesus says to stay away from them—don't get sucked into their manipulation!

**II. THINGS TO WATCH OUT FOR IN ANY RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION!**

The presence of any these six things will shed light on any so-called "*ministry*" and expose them for what they truly are.

1. **Authoritarianism**—lack of a servant's heart, lack of grace, Lording over God's heritage. (i.e. An attitude of "*You accept what I say and do what I say do without question.*")
2. **Exclusiveness**—suspicion and paranoia, theirs is the only true Church and the only way.
3. **Greed**—manipulation of one's followers to get money!
4. **Sensuality** —moral impurity or sexual looseness!

**BOOK OF 2 CORINTHIANS**  
**BEWARE OF FALSE TEACHERS**  
**2 CORINTHIANS 11:1-15**

5. **Unaccountability**—secrecy, irresponsibility, not accountable.
6. **Rationalization**—manifested in defensiveness when confronted and/or twisting of the Scriptures to fit ones lifestyle or opinions.

**III. OUR NEED FOR DISCERNMENT!**

False teaching has continued since Jesus time and, as we have seen, it had invaded the Corinthian Church as well.

There were false teachers who had accused Paul of heresy, but in reality they were creating a heresy of their own. So in the eleventh chapter of his second letter to these gullible Greeks, Paul warns of the trap awaiting them.

**A. We See The Concern Of A Caring Shepherd.**

Paul explains his distaste for what he has to do. (vs 1)  
By “*folly*”, he means having to talk about himself, having to boast about his role, having to present his credentials, having to stress his apostolic authority.

Why does he do it then? (Vs 2-3)

He's jealous for their spiritual purity, as a father would be jealous for his daughter's sexual purity before he presents her to her groom.

Paul wanted to offer to Christ a Church with an unadulterated loyalty and love for Him.

**B. The Differences Between The Authentic And The Artificial.**

In verses 4-12, Paul contrasts the true and the false, showing the Corinthians three ways to know the difference.

1. **False teachers proclaim another Jesus and a different gospel. (Vs 4)**

**BOOK OF 2 CORINTHIANS**  
**BEWARE OF FALSE TEACHERS**  
**2 CORINTHIANS 11:1-15**

The first word “*another*” here is translated from a word that means “*another of a similar kind.*” i.e. A false teacher may talk about Jesus, he may sound biblical, but he's fooling you! (Things that are different are not the same!)

The second word “*another*”, on the other hand, is translated from a word that means “*another of an opposite kind.*” Their spirit is opposite to the Spirit of Christ, creating divisiveness.

And their gospel opposes the gospel of salvation, usually adding works. The phrase “*ye might well bear with them,*” is a touch of sarcasm, meaning they were tolerant of this heresy.

*False teachers proclaim another Jesus and a different gospel.*

2. **False teachers have a lot of charisma.**

The Corinthians were persuaded to embrace heretical teaching because it was wrapped in appealing charm!

Now Paul begins his defense. (Vs 5-6)

Basically his argument is this: “*I'm just as authentic as the original twelve apostles. Place me next to Peter, Andrew, James, or John, and I can measure up with the best of them. Others may be more eloquent, but what I lack in eloquence, I more than compensate for in knowledge, for God has taught me what I'm teaching you.*”

Don't be seduced by persuasive delivery—you'd better check the content!

**BOOK OF 2 CORINTHIANS  
BEWARE OF FALSE TEACHERS  
2 CORINTHIANS 11:1-15**

**3. False teachers are greedy.**

Some of these teachers were telling the Corinthians that Paul's words weren't worth hearing because he refused pay from the Corinthian Church!

Paul addresses that accusation in **verses 7-9**.

Paul had received offerings from other Churches so that he could remain financially free in ministering to Corinth! He never wanted it said that he came to them for the money they could have amply provided!

Paul concludes his personal defense in **verses 10-12**.

Because of his love for the Corinthians, Paul would continue to point out these wolves in sheep's clothing.

*Matthew 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

*Acts 20:29 For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.*

**C. The Source Of False Prophets. (Vs 13-15a)**

Paul was not surprised by the popularity of these false teachers, because he knew their source!

Satan is behind it all! He is the archenemy of Christ Himself!  
He disguises himself!

The word “*transforming*” means “*to change in fashion or appearance*” and has the idea of a masquerade.

**BOOK OF 2 CORINTHIANS  
BEWARE OF FALSE TEACHERS  
2 CORINTHIANS 11:1-15**

Satan and his followers may appear right and good at first. But **vs 15b** says that their “*end shall be according to their works.*”

They become victims of their own lies and perish without Christ!

**D. Keep Yourself From Falling For The Phony!**

Here are two suggestions to help you discern authentic ministries from the artificial.

**1. Probe Into The Doctrinal Statement Of The Organization.**

Does it proclaim the deity of Jesus Christ as the eternal second member of the Trinity?

Does it offer salvation as a free gift of God, purchased at the cross by Christ and available without works, based on His death and bodily resurrection?

If anything's missing, leave it alone—it's heresy.

**2. Examine the private lives of leadership.**

Are the leaders accountable? Do they have servants' hearts? Are they free from sexual and moral impurity? Free of greed and financial impropriety? Willing to answer hard questions openly and honestly?

**Conclusion**

Remember, that we have a message of hope based on Jesus Christ and the Word of God. When we come into contact with a cult member, we need to share that message. We need to know our Bible, stick to the issues of Christ and salvation, and pray that they will respond. But we are NOT to be open their doctrine and twisting of Scriptures.