



September 11, 2005

Discerning Truth Colossians 2.8-10

“See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.” Colossians 2.8-10

There is many ways in which we as human beings must be on the alert. We must be alert spiritually, because there are dangers to our faith. There are those who would pervert the truth of Christianity, and this perversion manifests itself in subtle ways.

Our text today gives us some practical advice on what to do.

1. Don't Be Deceived

“See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.” Colossians 2.8

Core Competency: Bible Study

I read the Bible to know God, the truth and to find direction for my daily life.

*“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”
Hebrews 4.12*

2. Do Be Discerning

“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.” Colossians 2.9-10

*“When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say the Son of Man is?’
They replied, ‘Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’
‘But what about you?’ he asked. ‘Who do you say I am?’
Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’” Matthew 16.13-16*

This is still the central issue of Christianity. Who do we say that Jesus really is? If he is anything other than our Lord and God, then we are not describing Christianity. This is the Christ test.

“Jesus answered, ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’” John 14.6

1. We believe the Bible is the inerrant Word of God, which was written by men divinely inspired by him (2 Peter 1:20-21; 2 Timothy 3:16) and is, therefore, the only infallible authority (Isaiah 55:11; Matthew 24:35) in matters of faith and conduct (Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11; 2 Timothy 3:15-17).
2. We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons (Deuteronomy 6:4; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14): Father (John 6:27), Son (Hebrews 1:8), and Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3, 4).
3. We believe in God the Father, almighty Creator of heaven and earth (Genesis 1:1; 2:1; Psalm 33:6; Nehemiah 9:6; Isaiah 42:5; 43:7; Hebrews 11:3), eternal in his being (Genesis 21:33), perfect in holiness (1 John 1:5), infinite in wisdom (Isaiah 40:13,14; Romans 11:33-36), measureless in power (Revelation 19:6), and ever present (Psalm 139:7-12). We rejoice that he concerns himself mercifully in human affairs (Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3) that he hears and answers prayer (Luke 11:1-13; Acts 12:5-7), and that he gives eternal life to all who come to him through his Son Jesus Christ (John 3:16).
4. We believe in Jesus Christ, the eternal and only Son of God (John 1:1,14; 8:58; 17:5; Philippians 2:6-8), conceived by the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:26-38), of virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23), sinless in his life (John 8:46; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15), making atonement for the sins of the world by his death (Isaiah 53:10; Ephesians 1:5; Colossians 1:19-20). We believe in his bodily resurrection (Luke 24:39; John 20:25-27; 21:7; Romans 1:4; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, 20-58), his ascension into heaven to the right hand of God the Father (Acts 1:9-11; Ephesians 1:20), and his imminent, personal, and visible return to the world according to his promise (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).
5. We believe in the Holy Spirit who came forth from God to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8-11). In his ministry the Holy Spirit regenerates (Titus 3:5, 6), indwells (1 Corinthians 6:19; Romans 8:9), sanctifies (Romans 15:16; 1 Peter 1:2), teaches (John 16:12-15), empowers for service (Acts 1:8), and comforts those who believe in Jesus Christ (Romans 8:16,17). We believe that spiritual baptism occurs at conversion (Romans 6:3, 4; 1 Corinthians 12:13), resulting in union with Christ and placement into his body (Ephesians 1:13, 14).
6. We believe that all people by nature and by choice are sinners (Genesis 3:8-10; Romans 1:18-3:23; 5:15-19; Revelation 20:13), but that *"God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life"* (John 3:16). We believe in the resurrection of the dead and that those who accept Christ as Lord and Savior will rejoice forever in God's presence and those who refuse to accept Christ as Lord and Savior will be forever separated from God (2 Thessalonians 1:5-10; 2 Peter 2:9; Revelation 20:11-15). We believe that every human being is ultimately responsible to God alone in matters of faith (John 3:16-18; 6:47; Hebrews 9:27).
7. We believe in the universal church - a living spiritual body of which Christ is the head and of which all regenerated people are members (Ephesians 1:22-23). We also believe in a multitude of local churches (1 Corinthians 1:2; 11:18; Philippians 1:1), each a company of believers in Jesus Christ associated for worship, work, and fellowship (Ephesians 1:3-5; 1 Peter 2:9-10; Acts 2:42-47; 8:4; Colossians 1:5-6; Ephesians 4:11-16). We believe that to these churches were committed the ordinances of baptism (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:41; 8:36; 10:47) and the Lord's Supper (Luke 22:17-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26), and the task of proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost world (Matthew 28:16-20; 1 Thessalonians 1:4-10). We believe that each church should be autonomous and free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority (Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). Nevertheless, we support cooperation with other persons and groups in programs that promote the work of God's universal church (Acts 15:6-23; 2 Corinthians 9:1-5).
8. We believe that Christians are to follow the Savior's example in ministering to human physical needs. Such acts of love, when done in the name of Jesus, bring glory to God (Matthew 5:13-16).

