

Deception! Recognising True and False Ministries

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Seven Ways to Recognize False Ministries

I do not believe anyone could doubt that we are living in the last days. And because we are, satan is waging all out war to try to deceive Christian believers. There are many false prophets, false teachers, false prophetesses, and false Christs appearing throughout the world, trying to lead God's people astray.

That's why we've got to be spiritually keen. We must be full of the Holy Spirit and in touch with God. We must know the Word of God and stand on it. The time for playing is over.

In the days ahead we're going to see supernatural manifestations in the world like we've never seen before. God is pouring out His Spirit on all flesh and the supernatural gifts

of the Holy Spirit are in operation. But right alongside are deceptive manifestations that appear to be exactly the same. That's why people are deceived. They think that just because something is supernatural it is of God. But that is not true! Just because something is supernatural, strange, or spectacular doesn't mean it's of God. How can you tell the difference? How can you know whether a person is a false prophet, a false teacher, a false individual who has been sent by satan to lead you astray? In this book, I want to discuss seven ways to recognize and separate these deceivers from the true ministers of God. Of course, there may be other ways, but these are seven important guidelines.

If you will learn these seven rules and apply them to those who represent themselves as spiritual leaders, when the hour of deception comes God will help you see these people for the deceivers they are and prevent them from leading you astray.

No. 1: The false minister usually will come as an angel of light, claiming to have a special revelation from God.

2Corinthians 11:13-15 says, For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.

Notice carefully that Paul says satan is transformed into an angel of light and that his ministers are transformed as the ministers of righteousness. It should not shock us to realize that satan has ministers just as the Lord Jesus Christ has ministers; but instead of helping us, satan's ministers want to destroy our souls.

When these false ministers come, they will tell you that they have a new, deeper revelation from God. They claim to have light— spiritual insight and understanding—that your pastor, church leaders, and teachers do not have. They say theirs is a special revelation that God has unveiled to them in these last days, especially for an elect few.

Beware of anyone who claims to have deep and great revelations about which none of the people of your church have any knowledge. This is virtually always a sure mark of a false minister, a deceiver. These people appear as angels of light, but they are ministers of satan.

A woman once came to me in our church and said, "Brother Osteen, God has given me a revelation so deep that even you won't believe it."

Right in her face, very boldly, I said, "It's a lie! It's a lie! It's not from God. It's from the devil because God knows that I will believe anything His Word reveals."

She was so shocked by my reply that she dropped her defences, and I was able to help her see that such a statement and attitude was not from God.

Always remember that any revelation can and should be tested by your leaders. Revelation can be tested by the Word of God. Beware of far-out doctrines that twist the Scriptures in order to have something biblical to stand on.

A few years ago some people got a "new revelation," and went around casting demons out of Christians—having people vomit up evil spirits. They actually carried bags around! They felt if you didn't vomit up everything inside your stomach that you weren't getting rid of the demons.

A friend of mine got caught up in this deception. He and his wife went around carrying bags. We had other people in our

church who saw demons under every tree and between everyone's toes.

We had to deal with these people. Sure, they did "supernatural" things. They talked to demons and the demons talked back. But it wasn't of God. They were deceived. They had no Scriptures on which to stand. We are not to talk to demons. We are called to cast them out.

My Bible tells me that a Christian can't have two masters. Either he belongs to God or to the devil (see Matthew 6:24). Our bodies are called the temples of God (see 1Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19), and I don't believe God is going to let a demon live in His temple.

Be wary of any "new revelation." When you start thinking you know more than the pastor who has been teaching you, take heed that the devil isn't trying to deceive you. A know-it-all attitude is an open door to the devil.

Also, when you meet in homes and small groups, beware of the bizarre, the extreme, the unusual that sets you apart and makes you different from the rest of the body of Christ. Watch out when you start thinking that your little group has some new revelation that even the church leaders won't accept because you've tapped into something special. Your "revelation" will fizzle out, and you will be hurt.

Stay balanced. Look in the Bible. Did anything like you're doing ever happen to people in the Bible? Is there even an indication that they might have done it? If your new practice is far out and different, check it out carefully. Satan may be deceiving you.

No. 2: False ministers usually attack and criticize the spiritual leaders of the local church

When false teachers come in to spoil the flock, they must first convince the congregation that its leaders, elders, and pastor do not have the biblical light that they have. They usually criticize and condemn those who are watching over and feeding the flock—the ones who' for years have taken care of the congregation. These false ministers have bad things to say about the pastor or those in authority.

Why do they do this? They want to destroy the credibility of the church leaders who stand up against them. But the Bible says, *Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.* (Hebrews 13:17).

The Bible is very clear that we are to submit ourselves to the authority of those who must watch over our souls. Why? Because God has put them in authority over us and given them the wisdom to protect us and care for us (see Ephesians 4:11-13). I believe that the pastor has the greatest responsibility to guard the spiritual lives of his people than any other minister because God has called him to be their shepherd. A shepherd watches over the sheep. If they didn't have a shepherd, they would always have to be watching and guarding themselves. They wouldn't have time to eat the grass or lie down beside the waters in peace. They would always be afraid of the wolves, bears, and lions that would come in to devour them. But the sheep know that their shepherd loves and cares for them, so they don't have to be constantly on guard. They don't have to be afraid. They know the shepherd is watching over them. He walks around, watching, and if he sees a predator coming to destroy one of his sheep, he takes his staff and drives the enemy away.

If the shepherd sees his whole flock drifting in the wrong direction—maybe toward a road where they might get hit, or toward a cliff where they might fall, or close to the trees where wolves and bears lurk, or to any place of danger—he begins to guide the sheep away from danger and back to safety.

If he sees one of his sheep wandering off, he goes over and tries to get that sheep back to the flock. He tells the sheep, "Get back! Go on over there with the flock." That shepherd is trying to save the sheep's life.

So what does the sheep do? If he doesn't understand the role of the shepherd, he might get mad. He might think, "I just don't understand that pastor. I wasn't doing anything wrong. It seemed like good grass to me. I don't understand why he would come and tell me to watch out." But the pastor sees the danger. He's trying to protect that sheep.

The Bible calls the pastor a bishop, which means "one who oversees." Pastor means "shepherd." To *shepherd* means "to guard, to feed, to guide, to direct, to take care of, to be responsible for." We need good pastors who are constantly aware of the needs of their flocks and will immediately go to their defence and rescue them out of the hand of the enemy.

Several years ago a man came drifting into our town. He was one of those whom the Bible talks about in 2 Timothy 3:6-7, *They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth.*

This man taught all kinds of false doctrine, and after a while, he had gathered a group of women who thought he was a prophet. Not all these ladies were "silly women laden with

sins." Some of them were women from our church, good women. But they had been deceived.

The man claimed he had a great revelation, and he would teach this group about his special light. These women got all enamoured with him. They were taken away by his seemingly great and mighty anointing of God. They were drawn to him as a person and thought he was a special apostle, a great teacher. He had revelations that nobody else had.

One of these women, a member of our church, told me that this man had been a guest in her home and had left a jacket hanging in the closet. The women of this group gathered around his jacket and touched it. They thought it was marvellous to have this piece of clothing that had touched his body. It was the most sacred thing they had ever touched. It almost became idolatry.

The end result of this man's deception was that he wanted these women to sell their homes, give him the money, and move into a commune he had started in another state.

I watched this going on and tried to counsel and pray with this lady, but I wasn't taking it too seriously. Then early one morning as I was praying and seeking God, He put an alarm in my heart. He said, "How long are you going to put up with someone trying to steal one of your sheep? How long are you going to leave this lady to the mouth of the lion and the paw of the bear? Are you going to let her be deceived and sell everything and go to a commune?"

After the Lord rebuked me, I jumped up and called this lady and had a conference with her. I expressed my alarm, rebuked the devil, and brought the Scripture to bear on the situation. I gave her some of the truths I ain sharing in this book. Praise God, the devil's hold on her was broken, and she was delivered.

When she came to herself, she told me, "I don't know what came over me. Why, it is unthinkable what I was about to do. I can't imagine selling my home or being drawn into such false doctrine. Thank God. Brother Osteen, that you cared enough to rescue me!" This woman is still a staunch and stable member of our church today.

That's what pastors are for. We church leaders ought to rescue our sheep as part of our spiritual responsibility. When we see the congregation drifting in the wrong direction, we must rise up and take action. I personally do. I warn our flock when there is a false teacher in their midst. I strongly take my stand. I don't let any of these deceivers have sway in our church services because my responsibility is to guard the flock God has given me, to guide them, and to rescue them from the enemy.

When you hear these ministers of satan putting down your pastor or leaders, don't listen. They are of the devil, and they will lead you astray.

No. 3: The false minister usually has a message of doom, destruction, and death.

I tell my congregation that if I had died every time someone prophesied my death, I would have had ten thousand funerals. When false prophets and ministers of satan come and find I resist them strongly, they start prophesying my doom. Their message is, "I pronounce upon you doom and destruction. Thus saith the Lord, 'You shall surely die.'" I just stand up to them and say, "No, that's not true. You are deceived." I rebuke the demon force in them, turn them away, and get them out of the congregation.

I remember a fellow who came to our church several years ago. He tried to cause disturbances in the services, but I

wouldn't let him. He would try to stand up in a service, and I would sit him down. This went on and on.

Finally, he came to me and said, "I am a prophet to the nations! Thus saith the Lord, 'You shall die before this building is finished.'"

I said, "No, you are not a prophet to the nations. You are not a prophet to anything. You are a poor deceived individual for whom Christ died, but the devil has gotten hold of you. I am not going to die. I am going to live, for with long life He satisfies me and shows me His salvation."

I rebuked the devil in that man and turned him loose, and he never came back. I finished that building and another building and still another building after that, and I still haven't died.

False prophets and teachers often have messages of doom and destruction, especially for those who resist them. We must recognize that they themselves are deceived. They think they are prophets, but they don't, understand the role of a New Testament prophet. They think it is like that of a prophet in the Old Testament, sent to bring the people a message of doom and destruction. But there is a big difference between a message of prophecy in the Old Testament and in the New Testament.

In the Old, the prophet was the mediator between God and the people. He spoke for God in a very literal sense. His message was often one of judgment. But in the New Testament this is not true. Because Christ died for us, we can all come boldly to the throne of grace. We do not need a priest or prophet to stand between us and God and speak to us for God. We can go directly into His presence (see Hebrews 4:14-16).

The ministry of prophecy in the New Testament is not a violent display of the anger of God as it often was in the Old.

The Bible clearly states that the gift of prophecy in the New Testament is to exhort, edify, and comfort the individual (see 1 Corinthians 14:3).

So don't be deceived into believing these deceivers who come like Old Testament prophets with a message of doom. The message of those who have the gift of prophecy in our day—the New Testament day—is a message of exhortation, edification, and comfort.

Invariably, however, if you cross these false prophets in their revelation of new light, they will pronounce doom and destruction upon you. If you refuse to take them into your home, listen to them, or support them, their final word will always be, "You will find out that I am true. This church will be dissolved in destruction, and the pastors and elders will die. God will send them quick destruction." Turn away from people like that. Their very words mark them as ministers of satan.

No. 4: False prophets and deceivers usually claim that they have been sent to you by God as His special messengers, and they usually come from a distant place.

Not all false ministers come from distant places, but they do strongly declare that "God Almighty has sent me to you with a message." Now, we know God can send people to us with messages, and just because a person says "God sent me to you" doesn't always mean he is a minister of satan. But more often than not this is a very strong indication that such a person is a deceiver.

Watch out when a "prophet" comes from a far and distant place and says he has been sent to you by God. Usually he doesn't have any money, needs support, and ends up staying in the homes of people in the church. When this happens,

people need to be spiritually strong because this false minister will try to deceive them.

In many cases, these false messengers drag children along. Their homes have been broken up because their husbands or wives wouldn't put up with their false doings. These people drift around without any support. Because kind-hearted church people have sympathy for them and their children, they take these deceivers in and let them use their homes as a base. And many times these satanic ministers deceive the people of that home. They work to get the sympathy and understanding of the family, and then they begin to spread their false doctrine.

The Bible says, *"If a man will not work, he shall not eat."* (2Thessalonians 3:10), When these people come around me, I tell them, "Go get yourself a job. Make your own money. Take care of your children and your family. Go back to your husband or wife. Go back to where you came from."

Beware of those who drift in, have no means of support, and want to stay in your home. Beware of those who claim they have been sent by God from a far place to give new light to you and your church. That is a sure mark of a minister of satan.

Let me also add a word of warning about money. Usually false ministers talk a lot about money. They prophesy that you are to give them money, or that you are to open your home, or that you are to sell such and such to give to them. They may get very angry if you refuse to support them or give them money. Beware of these people. They are not of God, and they will deceive you if you are not careful.

No. 5: False ministers usually have a rebellious, unteachable spirit and will recognize no authority over them.

The Bible says, *Rebellion is as the sin of divination, (or witchcraft)* (1Samuel 15:23). It also says, *Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.* (Hebrews 13:17). God has placed authority and governments in the Church. This does not mean that your pastor or elder has a right to direct every detail of your life, but they do have the right to watch over and guide and protect you. They have the right to come and warn you or instruct you when it comes to error.

False teachers are so rebellious and unteachable in their spirits that they will not allow anyone to tell them what to do. They have stood up in my congregation, and I've had to say, "Would you please sit down."

No, they wouldn't sit down. "Will you please be seated so we can go on with the service." No, they wouldn't. "Will you please be seated. I do not recognize that you have a message for this congregation." No, they wouldn't recognize my authority. These kind of people are of satan.

God has given me a call to be a pastor. The Holy Ghost has set me over my congregation. Yet, these ministers of satan would not recognize that I have any authority to direct the service at all. At times when this has happened, I've simply had some of my people take the disturbers out of the service. Some of them stiffened up like a board, and we literally had to carry them out. But carry them out we did! I will not allow my services to be disrupted by those who have a rebellious and unteachable spirit.

Now, in our congregation, we teach people to stand if they have a message of prophecy, tongues, or any revelation. If someone stands and it is not quite the right time, I say, "Will, you please sit down and hold that for a few minutes, and I

will call on you when I have finished this thought. Then you can give it." Then, when I feel the time is right I point to them and say, "Go ahead and give your message."

If I feel the person is out of order, I just stop him and say, "No, that is out of order." But I haven't had to do that but once in four or five years.

I've held a prophecy for days. I gave a prophecy two or three years ago, and I can still give it almost word for word. It burned in my heart. Just because God gives you a prophecy or revelation, that doesn't necessarily mean you are to give it at that moment. 1Corinthians 14:32-33 says, *The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets. For God is not a God of disorder but of peace.* The person who is really moving with God will submit to the overall good of the congregation.

If I discover that the person's message is totally out of context with the Word of God, I stop him right in the middle of it. However, I put up with a whole lot when I find a person who is making a few mistakes as a baby Christian doing his best to obey God.

But the minister of satan recognizes no authority. He acknowledges no one as having any right to tell him what to do. He is rebellious and unteachable and will not yield to any sort of authority. Be quick to recognize that this is a minister of satan.

No. 6: False ministers and deceivers will have the supernatural without the fruit of the Spirit.

There are supernatural, miraculous things happening in the world today that are not of God. Ephesians 6:12 (Amplified) says, *For we are not wrestling with flesh and blood—contending only with physical opponents—but against the despotisms, against the powers, against [the master spirits who are] the world rulers of this present*

darkness, against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenly (supernatural) sphere.

A sure sign that a person is a minister or a tool of satan is that, even though he causes supernatural things to happen, his life does not demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23 says, *The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.* One of the most important tests you can apply to a person to see if he is of God is to measure his life by these verses.

Jesus said in Matthew 7:15-20, *"Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognise them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognise them.*

Jesus didn't say you would know the good from the bad by their works or their miracles or their supernatural signs. He did not say you would know them by their prophecies which come true or the supernatural things they know and do, or even by the strange, supernatural occurrences in their lives. No, Jesus said you would know them by their fruits.

In these last days we are going to see more and more supernatural occurrences. 2Thessalonians 2:7-10 says, *For the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; but the one who now holds it back will continue to do so till he is taken out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendour of his coming. The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in*

every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved.

This says that satan has the power to work signs and lying wonders.

Revelation 13:13-14 talks about satan and the minister of satan doing miraculous things. *And he performed great and miraculous signs, even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men. Because of the signs he was given power to do on behalf of the first beast, he deceived the inhabitants of the earth. He ordered them to set up an image in honour of the beast who was wounded by the sword and yet lived.*

Revelation 16:13-14 says, *Then I saw three evil spirits that looked like frogs; they came out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast and out of the mouth of the false prophet. They are spirits of demons performing miraculous signs.* This is an amazing statement from God. He is talking about things that are going to happen.

Just because a person has the supernatural in his life does not mean that he is of God. These false teachers, false Christs, false apostles and false prophets who come into the Church and show supernatural signs deceive many people. But we must beware. satan himself is transformed into an angel of light, the Bible says, and his ministers are transformed into ministers of righteousness. They can work all sorts of false, lying miracles and wonders to deceive people. These deceivers demonstrate the supernatural, but they do not have the fruit of the Spirit.

I have discovered during my many years in the ministry that it is easy to separate the false from the true simply on the basis of their fruit. Jesus said, *By their fruit you will recognize them.*

What are the fruits of these false teachers? They may have a false piety which brings sympathy from your heart. At first,

they seemingly have & humble attitude that draws people to them. But when it gets to the bottom line, what are the results of their being in your congregation, your group, your town? What fruit do they cause to grow in those with whom they associate?

I'll tell you what fruit they have. I have seen it over and over again. Their fruit is confusion, division, discord, deception, and destruction. Their fruit is shearing and shearing the sheep of their money and goods. When they finally leave, the pastor has to pick up the pieces, love the people back into the Word of God, mend their wounds, and get them back on the right track.

We must be careful not to be taken in by supernatural displays. Keep looking at the fruit. You can't go by the supernatural alone because the false can look just like the real thing. Exodus 7:10-12 says, *So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the Lord commanded. Aaron threw his staff down in front of Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake. Pharaoh then summoned the wise men and sorcerers, and the Egyptian magicians also did the same things by their secret arts: Each one threw down his staff and it became a snake. But Aaron's staff swallowed up their staffs.*

These verses tell us that Pharaoh's magicians performed the same identical miracle that Moses and Aaron performed. Aaron threw down his rod, and it became a serpent. The magicians threw down their rods, and they became serpents, too, supernaturally. But Aaron's serpent swallowed up all their serpents, overcoming them. These men of the occult had the same supernatural works as Moses and Aaron, but they weren't of God. They didn't have the fruit of the Spirit in their lives.

Moses was the meekest man on the earth. Pharaoh's magicians were arrogant. They were ministers of satan even

though they could duplicate the miracle of God. In the end, however, God overcame them all.

When these people come into our churches, we need to test their fruit. Do they have gentleness? Are they willing to yield to the pastor or church leaders? Do they have love? Do they love the congregation? Acts 20:29 says that these false ministers are grievous wolves who enter into the Church, not sparing the flock. They have no love for the sheep. They have no real concern for the local church. They have supernatural displays, but by their lack of spiritual fruit you can tell that they are ministers of satan.

No. 7: The false ministers who drift in and out of church congregations have no roots—no spiritual ties, no affiliation with a local church, no pastor who can vouch for them, no reputation that can be verified.

There are many false teachers and ministers who drift around the country. If you ask, "Where did you come from? Do you have a pastor there? A congregation? Is there anyone in that town who knows you? Could I call where you have been for the last six months and see what they think about your ministry?" they have no answer. Many times they don't want anyone to know where they came from. They don't want anyone calling to check on them. They know not one person you call will give them a good report. Everywhere they have been they have caused discord, trouble, and heartache. They have left the sheep wounded and deceived, and they have done nothing but harm.

These are several ways you can recognize the minister of satan who comes as a minister of light. As pastors, church leaders, and Christians, we have a responsibility to be careful who we listen to, who we let speak to our congregations, who

we invite into our homes. The Bible says, *Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.* (1 John 4:1). You say, "Brother Osteen, if I feel a person is a minister of satan, what can I do? How should I handle the situation?"

Five Suggestions for Church Leaders

Let me make some suggestions to pastors and church leaders on how to go about handling this type of person and situation.

First, do much praying when someone you feel is a minister of satan drifts into your congregation and gets hold of some of your people. Get alone and pray and seek the mind of God. Pray much in the Spirit, using your prayer language.

Second, remember that the battle is not a legal battle. It is a spiritual battle. You are not wrestling against flesh and blood but against demon forces.

Third, depend completely on the Holy Spirit. Trust God to manifest the gifts of the Holy Spirit and to impart His wisdom to the situation.

Fourth, remember to love the person or persons in your congregation who have been deceived. They are not the enemy. You are fighting a demon force that has deceived them.

Fifth, take a bold stand against satan. Don't be arrogant. Be bold in the power and might of the Holy Spirit. I urge you to protect your flock at all cost. Dare to be a true servant of God. Do not allow the ministers of satan to sow discord in your congregation.

Eight Suggestions for Church Members

Let me also suggest several things to you, as a member of a congregation who might come up against these false ministers.

First, remember that a false teacher, a minister of satan, may not be recognized immediately. So be on your guard. Keep spiritually in tune with God so you can recognize someone who does not have the Spirit of God within.

I've been in meetings where intellectually everything was just fine. But something inside of me didn't like it. I couldn't put my hands on anything in particular that was wrong. Everything looked and sounded all right. Yet, inside me, something kept telling me, "Beware!" It was not a real disturbance. It was just that still small voice saying, "Don't touch it! It's not right!" That's the Holy Spirit. When you keep sensitive to the Spirit and listen to His leading, He will show you every time whether something is real or false.

Second, keep this little book handy. If you suspect someone to be a minister of satan, ask yourself, "Does this person remind me of the seven things Brother Osteen mentioned?" Go over the seven points carefully and prayerfully and see how the individual measures up.

Third, always hold your pastor and church leaders in high regard. Remember that God has put them in the positions they hold. Pray daily for them. Lift up your pastor and his wife, your elders, your deacons, and your leaders in prayer to God.

Fourth, personally take a stand against false ministers. If you find that someone is a false prophet or teacher and he is drifting around the congregation, resist him. Go to him and say, "No, Brother! This is not right. Stop deceiving these people." Strongly take your stand against him. If he insists on continuing, tell your pastor or a church leader.

Fifth, help your friends who are being deceived by these false ministers of satan. Take it upon yourself to share this booklet with them, and show them the seven ways they can recognize the false from the true. Don't wait for the situation to grow worse and worse until it finally comes to your pastor's attention. By that time, too many people will be deceived and hurt.

Sixth, stay in regular attendance in your church. Don't let anybody drag you away from your regular church services to go to any meeting that would cause your faith to be weakened. Be faithful in attending church where your pastor teaches the Word of God so that you will be strong and ready to resist error.

Seventh, don't let strangers stay in your home if you suspect they might be ministers of satan. You are putting yourself and your family in unnecessary danger. If they are in your home, and you recognize that they are ministers of satan, get rid of them immediately.

You say, "Brother Osteen, shouldn't I minister to them?" Yes, you can minister to them, but it is better to minister to them outside your home. I know we are to entertain strangers and those who may be angels of God, but we do not want the angels of the devil in our homes. So be careful who you entertain and who you let stay any length of time in your home.

Eighth, stay full of the Holy Ghost. Pray much in tongues every day. And stay in the Word of God. Feed on the Word and grow up into maturity. If you are spiritually mature, you will know how to recognize and separate the false from the true.

Hebrews 5:12-14 says, *In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.*

In other words, if you are staying in the Word of God and are strong in the Word, you will know how to discern between good and evil, the false and the true. So stay full of the Holy Ghost and full of the Word of God, and God will make you a strong pillar in the Church in these last days.

My Confession for You

Finally, let me say that I love you. My desire in this booklet is to help you. As the days grow darker, I want to make a bold confession over you that you will not be deceived. On the contrary, you will be able to deliver those who are being deceived. You will cast out demons, and they will go forth out of people. You will resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

I want you to make this confession with me:

I boldly confess that I am of God. I am born of the Spirit of God. I am filled with the Spirit of God. I am full of the Word of God. I am strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. I have been delivered from the power of darkness and have been translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. I am in the light. I am a child of the light. I do not walk in darkness, but I walk in the light of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I boldly confess that I will not be deceived. I boldly confess that I will quickly recognize the ministers of satan. I boldly confess that not only will I not be deceived but I will deliver those who are being deceived. I boldly confess that I will be a pillar in my local church. I will be strong in the body of believers where I attend regularly.

I boldly declare that I will be a strength to my pastor and his wife and family and to the leaders of my church. satan will have no place in my life. My children will not be deceived. My mate will not be deceived. We will be strong in these last days, and we will be a credit to the Gospel. When the final day comes and the Lord calls us home, He will be able to say to me, 'Well done, good and faithful servant!'



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