



Maurice Tabard, 1929

These are springs without water and mists driven by a storm,
for whom the black darkness has been reserved.

2 Peter 2:17

Spotting Fakes

A LONG WITH THE POOR, OPPORTUNISTS
WILL ALWAYS BE WITH US.

Not everyone who appears so is evil, nor is everyone who appears so good. Flesh can just as easily mask bad intentions as those righteous, which is why only God can diagnose the true condition of any heart.

Every Christian radio station is capable of broadcasting heresy; every Christian bookstore can sell how-to and inspirational paperbacks that are doctrinally wrong; and every Christian pulpit in the land may be manned, if even for a moment, by someone espousing false teaching.

“There is a conspiracy of her prophets in her midst like a roaring lion tearing the prey. They have devoured lives; they have taken treasure and precious things; they have made many widows in the midst of her.”

Ezekiel 22:25

The Lord did not leave believers in a sharply delineated black and white world. Would that He had. But the truth is, we are left on our own to distinguish not just good from evil, but the myriad shades of gray covering the vast open plains between saintly good and the blatant works of Satan. And it is up to each of us to be always on guard against that which does not square with the truth of God.

Beloved, 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

How do we do this? How is common, fleshly man ever to be equipped to discern right from wrong, true from false?

By knowing well the One who *is* truth.

The more familiar the jeweler is with diamonds of quality, the better he is at recognizing glass and paste. The one accustomed to a diet of gourmet food has a palate too refined for Spam. The regular reader of classic literature has little patience with poorly written pulp fiction.

And the one familiar with God’s truth can spot a fake a mile away.

O send out Your light and Your truth, let them lead me;
Let them bring me to Your holy hill
And to Your dwelling places.

Psalms 43:3

The only way to recognize a false prophet is to know that his words are a lie. The only way to know what God does *not* say is to know what He *does* say. And the only way to recognize an evil spirit is to be so imbued and controlled by the One that is holy that subterfuge and gloss have no appeal.

We do not learn God by osmosis or lineage. God is learned first through the atonement of His Son and the indwelling of His Spirit—but that is only the beginning. We know who and what He is, we learn the sound of His voice, we recognize His mannerisms and ways by spending much time with Him.

Absent that intimate communion, we leave ourselves open to believing the lie. With it, we are not led astray.

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.”

John 10:27



Say some,
“Tell us how to discern truth.”
You may judge it by three things: by God, by Christ, and by man; that is, the truth which honors God, the truth which glorifies Christ, and the truth which humbles man.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon