

# Romans 8:15-16

Sunday 1/4/2009

There are two adoptions laid out in Romans chapter 8, and that is really the theme of that chapter. It shows you that the day you got saved, you were adopted spiritually into God's family. We looked at two great examples of that. I showed you in Galatians chapter 4 how he uses the allegory of Ishmael and Isaac, Hagar and Sarah, a bondswoman and a free woman, and how it shows you and I that we are not under bondage anymore once we get saved.

Then we looked at 2 Samuel chapter 9, and my goodness, it is one of the greatest chapters anywhere in the Bible that illustrates that spiritual adoption. That was in the great story of Mephibosheth, whose name means "breathing shame," who was the enemy of David. Yet God, through His mercy, brought Mephibosheth into David's family as his own son. We saw last week how that illustrates your life and my life as far as the first adoption.

But there is so much in here, and I want to go back to Romans chapter 8. We are going to begin reading at verse 15 again, and I can guarantee you we will not get past verse 16 today. But let us look at what it says here:

*Romans 8:15*

*For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.*

Now, that is where we were last week, and we looked at the two aspects. We looked at the fact that we have not received the spirit of bondage, and we talked about that. Then we talked about the Spirit of adoption, and we laid that out. Now today, verse 16:

*Romans 8:16*

*The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:*

Father, we thank and praise You for the Lord Jesus. Lord, we love You so much and thank You for all that You have done for us and all that You have given us. Lord, there is so much today that needs to be said, and Lord, so little time to say it in. Lord, I pray You will help me today to give me clarity of thought and the approach that I take today, and help these folks that are trying to learn their Bible and walk in the Spirit of God. Help me to help them, Lord, in everything to give them everything that they need. Help me, Father, to lay it out and be clear and plain in what we talk about. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

## I. The Holy Spirit's Role in Discernment

One of the greatest tools in dealing with people and working in ministry in general is found in Romans 8:16. It is probably one of the greatest verses in the Bible that really lays out for you and for me what the Holy Spirit of God does in our lives.

Every subject in the Bible has a definitive passage. Sometimes it is a definitive chapter. What do I mean by that? If you want a subject in the Bible that you want to really find the bottom line on,

you want to get everything out that really defines it so you can begin to understand it, you are going to find that there is a definitive passage. Sometimes it will be a definitive verse. Many times it will be a definitive chapter.

When it comes to the Holy Spirit of God, the definitive chapter on understanding and grasping the concept of the Holy Spirit of God is found in John chapter 16. John chapter 16 is one of the great places in the Bible that you are ever going to get into when you begin to lay it out.

It goes without saying that the greatest trick the devil wants to pull on people is simply the art of deception. That is what he does better than anything else in the world. He deceives unsaved people, and yes, unfortunately, many times he deceives God's people. You are going to find that the devil is so close to the original thing that it is sometimes almost virtually impossible to discern what is taking place, and people get deceived by that.

*Matthew 24:4 says, "Take heed that no man deceive you." Then it talks about many false prophets and many false teachers coming along the line that will deceive you.*

*2 Corinthians 11:14 is another great passage where it says that the devil was transformed into an angel of light. The devil, who we think of with horns and a pitchfork and always involved in the corruptible, damnable things of the world and life, but here is a place where it tells you that the devil's main sphere, his main place where he operates, is religion. He transforms himself into an angel of light. Why? That through that he can deceive people.*

*1 Timothy 2:14 is another great passage. It talks about the fact that when the devil deceived Eve and the devil got Eve to bring sin upon all mankind, the Bible says that Eve was deceived in the transgression. He deceived her.*

Yet we know that there is a time when the Antichrist, the man of sin, the son of perdition, is going to come to this world, and he is going to take over this world right before the coming of the Lord. The Bible says in Revelation 12:9 that even when he does show up, he is going to deceive all the world; the whole world is going to believe him. Of course, it does not take a rocket scientist to see that deception beginning to be unfolded as we even speak today across the world and across our country.

Unfortunately, God's people get deceived just like unsaved people. The devil uses the same tactics for God's people as he does for unsaved people. But fortunately for the child of God, there is a way to keep from being deceived. God has given us a way that we can never be deceived by anything or anybody. Romans 8:15 begins to talk about that and begins to lay it out. Romans 8:16, right before we get to John chapter 16, says this:

*Romans 8:16*

*The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.*

I want to talk to you today about one of the greatest tools you have to keep you and I from ever being deceived, and it is called the witness of the Spirit. I want to show you today what the witness of the Spirit means in your life. I want to define it for you. I want to then show you how you use it in everyday life so that you keep from being deceived.

The first thing I want you to see is to look at Romans 8:16. Verse 16 says, "The Spirit itself." There is where the Spirit of God is found in a neuter form, and you need to understand these things. Whenever you find in your Bible that it talks about the Holy Spirit of God, "Holy Spirit," the context of that passage is going to be the person of the Holy Spirit of God, who He is. Whenever you find the Holy Spirit addressed in the form of the "Holy Ghost," it is always going to be a reference in the context of the indwelling Spirit of God in you.

When you find the Holy Spirit of God is in a neuter form, here it is "itself," other places you will find just the word "it." It will never be dealing with the person; it will never be dealing with the context of the indwelling, but it will always be dealing with the work of the Holy Spirit of God.

## II. The Work of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit of God is one of the great studies in the Bible, and the defining chapter on it is in John chapter 16. This chapter defines the work of the Holy Spirit of God that will take place after the book of Acts when Christ goes back. This is a great passage. It says in John 16:7-15:

*John 16:7-15*

*Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

*And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:*

*Of sin, because they believe not on me;*

*Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more;*

*Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.*

*I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.*

*Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.*

*He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*

*All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*

At some point in your studies, you need to mark these seven things in this chapter. These are the seven things that are part of the work of the Holy Spirit of God once He comes and indwells you. We know that from the Bible that when Jesus is talking about this in John chapter 16, He is talking about future events. What He is saying is this: if I do not go back to heaven and ascend back to My Father, then the Holy Spirit of God is not going to come. And when the Holy Spirit of God does come, this is what He is going to do.

## III. Christ's Replacements on Earth

Let me take it just one step further. When Jesus Christ went back to heaven, and this will maybe answer a lot of questions for you, when Jesus Christ went back to heaven in Acts chapter 1, if you notice very carefully, He replaced Himself with three things. Those three things are the key three things in your life and my life today. When He went back to heaven, the physical presence of God's Son ascended up in Acts chapter 1 and went back to heaven. He replaced Himself on this earth with three things:

1. The Holy Spirit of God. That is what John chapter 16 is all about. We are going to talk about those seven things in just a second. That is the first thing He replaced Himself with. At the day of Pentecost, Acts chapter 2, the Spirit of God came like a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the believers. That was the fulfillment of John chapter 16.
2. The Word of God. By 90 AD, John writes the last books of the Bible, and now the Bible is complete. When Christ came the first time and Paul was doing his work and his ministry the first time, they had a complete Old Testament, but the New Testament was not completed yet. But at that time, 90 AD rolled around, and John now is on the Isle of Patmos, where he dies as a martyr, as tradition says he did, and he writes the last books of the Bible. He writes the Gospel of John, he writes First, Second, and Third John, and then he writes the Book of Revelation. At that point, we have not only a complete Old Testament, but we have a complete New Testament. The Bible is complete.
3. The local church. We find in the Book of Acts a transition taking place where we find by the time Paul comes on the scene in Acts chapter 9, we find that he becomes the Apostle to the Gentiles, and he really kicks off the beginning of the church age. In the Old Testament, they did not meet like this. They met in synagogues. In Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, they met in synagogues. Ah, but in the Book of Acts, something changes. What changed? I will tell you what changed: instead of meeting in a synagogue, which was only exclusively for Jews, now Gentiles, you and me, people like you and I from every walk of life that are Gentiles, who once before could never be part of the Jewish system unless we entered into that proselyte system that they had. Now we meet in churches like this, open up the Bible, and we do not talk about the law. We do not talk about the Old Testament things that they had to do. Now we talk about the grace of God, Christ's death on the cross, and we spread the good news, the gospel, to all the other Gentiles that are out there. Something changed.

What you have basically, if you want to grasp the concept of this, when Christ went back to heaven, it took three things to replace Him:

4. It took the Holy Spirit of God.
5. It took this Bible, which gives us the revelation of God.
6. It took the church.

We are His replacement, you and I. Did you ever notice where Jesus said to the disciples, "Greater things will you do than I have done"? Did you ever analyze that statement? How could you and I do greater things than Jesus did? The answer to that is He only had a ministry of three years. He only ministered for three years, from when He was 30 to when He was crucified at 33. When He was 33 years old, God reached down and took His life off the planet. When God reached down and took His life off the planet, He said, "I do not need Him to finish the work that

I sent Him to do." You know why? Because you and I were going to finish that work. We are His replacement. That is why He gave us the same Spirit that Christ had. He gave us the same mind that Christ had. That is why we are called as the church, the body of Christ. We are His replacement. When you grasp that and understand that, you get a better grasp of why the Holy Spirit of God and understanding how it works in your life is so important.

## IV. The Seven Works of the Holy Spirit Detailed

There are seven things that the Holy Spirit of God does. This is His work.

7. First of all, He is called the Comforter. Do you want comfort in your life? You get these seven things working in your life. Are you tired of the turmoil in your life? Are you tired of the ups and the downs? People come in all the time that have had some tough times in life. They have had some consequences and some problems that they have to work through. Once they get into the Bible and once they get the Bible working for them, and they get grounded in the Bible, and they get these things working in their lives, I know it can be hectic and tedious for a short time until you learn how to do it. But once you learn it and you understand what the Spirit of God does for you, that is where the comfort comes in. That comfort leads to the peace that passes all understanding that keeps our hearts and minds, as the Bible says.
8. The first three really are found in John 16:8.
9. The first thing the Holy Spirit of God does is reprove the world of sin. We do not have to explain that. It convicts the world that we are sinners.
10. The second thing it does is reprove the world of righteousness.
11. The third thing that it does in John 16:8 is reprove the world of judgment.

Somebody said, "Now what does that mean?" Here is what it means. First of all, it talks about the fact that He reproves the world of sin. God makes it very clear through the Holy Spirit of God that there is sin in this world, and you are either one of two camps: you are either a saved person or you are a sinner, one or the other.

We know that people will want to deceive themselves. We know that because the Bible says the devil deceives. There are a lot of people running around the world that do not believe in God, they do not believe in the Bible, they do not believe in going to church, they do not believe in any of those things. The bottom line is when it says He reproves the world of righteousness and reproves the world of judgment, here is what He is saying: even though a man denies God, even though a man or a woman denies God and the things of God, the bottom line is down inside them, because the Holy Spirit of God is dealing with them and working with them, they know, even though outwardly they talk about the fact that they do not believe, inside the Holy Spirit of God is just beating them up.

There is not a religion on this world, whether it is true or it is false, there is not a religion, there is not a teaching, there is not a philosopher anywhere in life that does not believe that someplace, somewhere, somehow it is all going to come down, and you are going to have to give an account of what you do. They all may believe differently, they all may believe wrong, but everybody knows that it is going to be payday someday. I do not care what you believe. That is because the

Holy Spirit of God ingrains in us that because He was sinless and because He came down and lived a sinless life, the contrast is too great. He not only reproveth the world of sin, but He reproveth the world of righteousness, and He reproveth the world of judgment. You know that you are going to get it, whether you admit it or not, someday.

The reason why I know this is true is because every unsaved man, and a lot of saved people too, but every unsaved man, every other word out of his mouth is a phrase that deals with his eternal damnation. I had an atheist one time, he said, "I do not believe in God," and every other word out of his mouth was "God damn this" or "God damn that." I am saying to myself, and I said to him, "Well, if you do not believe, why would you use a name that you do not even believe is in existence as a curse word? I mean, is not that kind of stupid? You do not believe in God, but you want to use His name?" I believe in God, and I use His name not the way you do, but the bottom line is I use it because I believe it. You know why he uses it in a derogatory way? Because deep down inside, he believes it too. You cannot get away from it. He reproveth the world of sin, He reproveth the world of righteousness, and He reproveth the world of judgment.

12. In John 16:13, the fourth thing that He does, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he shall guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come." The next thing the Holy Spirit of God does, it shows you prophecy. It shows you what is going to happen before it happens. I could spend an hour just on this, but we do not have time.
13. The next thing in the same verse, in the first part of the verse, the Holy Spirit of God is going to lead and to guide you into all truth. I love that part of that verse. It did not say "some truth." It did not say "just truth." It made it very clear that He is going to lead and guide you into all truth. Not just truth, all truth. Not some of the truth, not a little bit of the truth. The Holy Spirit of God, because He is truth, will lead and guide you into all truth.
14. John 16:14-16, He speaks not of His own. The Holy Spirit of God never takes any credit for anything. He exists freely for one reason, and that is to glorify Christ and glorify God. Here it is. This is what we want to get to. This is where we are going to camp for a while here when we put this thing in together when we get into Romans chapter 8, when it says, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Here is what He says:

*John 16:15*

*All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*

He just told you that He will show you what is really of God and what is really not of God. Do you know how valuable that is? Once you realize that the devil's main sphere is religion and the devil's main sphere is deception, and that he wants to deceive the whole world, and he will, and he has. He wants to deceive unsaved people, and he has, and he wants to deceive many of God's people, and he has accomplished that. To have a verse that tells me that the Holy Spirit of God will show me what really is of God. Christ said, "All that God has is Mine, and I am going to, the Spirit of God is going to take that and He is going to show it unto you." He is saying He is going to show you in your life, in every decision you have got to make, in every circumstance you find

yourself in, in every scenario you can imagine, He is going to show you what is really of God and what is really not of God. What a deal that is.

In the Bible, this is called discernment and discretion in the book of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. The tragedy is that in most cases, these seven workings of the Holy Spirit of God, not to mention the last one, are completely unknown to the average child of God, and that is why it is so easy for God's people to be deceived. I have never seen it in the 35 some years of my ministry, spanning two of the greatest periods of church history. I have never seen a time like it is today where God's people are so deceived in what they believe and deceived, and many times they have deceived themselves, but it is an incredible thing.

## V. Practical Application: Trying the Spirits

The day you got saved, and we know what I am about to say from Romans chapters 5, 6, and 7, we have studied it. The day you got saved, you got the Holy Spirit of God. You got all the Holy Spirit of God there is. There is nothing more you can get. You got everything that God had inside you in the Holy Ghost as the Holy Spirit of God took up residency inside your body. We know that. He lives inside you, and His job through the Word of God is daily to perfect you. We know that now.

At the same time, we know the Bible to be God's complete revelation of God and His plan and His mind, which was also now written by the Spirit of God. Here is how this thing works.

*2 Peter 1:21*

*For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*

The Bible is written by the Holy Spirit. The day you got saved, the Holy Spirit of God takes up residency inside you, known as the Holy Ghost. He does seven things in your life. Now what you have here, when you begin to realize this, is that the Holy Spirit of God in you and the book that God gave you will bear witness in your life between the Spirit of God that is in you and the Word of God that is here, that they both wrote, that will tell you what is right and what is wrong. It is one of the greatest keys in making decisions in your life. It is absolutely one of the greatest aspects to have in dealing with people and not being deceived, because people will try to deceive you.

I have a number of you that work with me in different areas. You know, a problem. People come in for counseling, and many of them, let us face it, many of them come in. They are fed up with the world. Many of them, they are the blessing of this world to work with. They have been in a dark time, and they got saved, or they got back with God, and somebody orchestrated getting them back where the Spirit of God could get into their life. They come into church, and I am not saying they do not struggle, but they want to do what is right, and they are tired of the lifestyle that they have had. Praise God. I love it when it comes in and it happens that way.

But you and I both know that that is not always the case. You have worked with me with people this past year. You have worked with me with people, some of you, since we started our church,

and you know that that is not always the way that it works. You are going to find people who do not want to, they want to try to deceive you. They want to put the facade on that they are doing what is right when they are not doing what is right. It is an incredible thing.

What happens is this, and this is how you begin to understand this, because there are a couple of things you need to know. One of my favorite videos on television is the, and it is not on a regular thing, but I love to watch it. When I see it is coming on, I will block everything out because I want to watch it. It is that thing on the "most stupid criminals." I think that is the greatest thing in the whole wide world. My favorite one is this surveillance camera in a 7-Eleven or a convenience store. The crook is going to come down through the ceiling. You have seen it too. You are watching this video camera, and all of a sudden you see a few chunks of plaster fall, then you see this fall, then you see some of the struts in the ceiling come down, then all of a sudden, this guy falls through the hole in the ceiling, lands on a shelf, breaks, I do not know how he did not break his back, flops over and is completely unconscious on the floor. When he wakes up, the cops are standing there putting the handcuffs on him. He tried to break in through the ceiling. I do not know how he fell through the hole, but he fell 10 or 12, 15 feet, and he landed on a shelf and busted himself up and was lying unconscious when they came in this morning, and they locked him up. To me, that is the world's stupidest criminal. I love those things.

I loved another one where a guy was hiding up, and he had him, and he would not come down, and the police did not know if he was up there or not. They searched the house, could not find him, and he is in a crawl space up there. The guy is stupid because he thinks, "Oh, they are in the house. If I am real quiet, they will not look up." This guy won an award hands down as far as I am concerned. I love it. The policemen are up there saying, "Hey, we are going to give you a chance to come down. We know you are up there." They are not sure he is up there, but they are pretty sure he is up there. No cop in his right mind is going to stick his head up there to see if he is up there. But I love what he does. A cop gave him a warning, he says, "Hey, we are going to give you one more chance to come down, and then we are going to send the dog up." Now this was my favorite part because I love dogs. This German Shepherd weighed 900 pounds. He was a monster. You know how police dogs are. They live to bite you. If they do not bite somebody in a day, they are bummed. They have one goal in life as a police dog: they tear you a new one. That is all they want to do. They want you to run. When you stand there and question you, and the guy has got his police dog down there, you think he is saying, "Run, run, run, run, run, run." A cop is not going to chase you. He certainly cannot shoot you. In the old days, they used to shoot you. Cannot shoot you. "Go get it." That dog said, and off he goes. I do not care how fast you can run. You are not going to outrun him. You have two legs. He has four, dummy. Four to two is twice as fast. I can finish that poem, and he is going to, but I am not going to go there.

I love it. It took two police officers, big guys, to pick this dog up. I mean, it is in a crawl space. They got this dog up, and this dog is raring to go. They put this dog up there. Nobody still knows that the guy is up there or not. The dog knows he is up there. By this time, the dog says, "I do not care if he is up there or not. I am going to find somebody and bite him." I love it. They put that dog, get that dog to the rear end, and they are pushing him up in that crawl space. All you hear for a moment is silence. And then, "Whoa!" You hear this guy screaming, "Get this dog off me!

Get this dog off me! Get this dog off me!" He is the, he won the dumbest criminal award. He thought the cops would come in and search the house, and the cops would say, "There is a crawl space up there. Ah, he would not be up there. Let us go get some donuts." No, they said. Well, they did. The dog's name was Donuts.

I say this: if there was an award for stupidity in Christianity, it would be a lot like the stupid criminal. It would be the people that come in who want to serve God and want to do what, say they want to do what is right with God, but have a deception. The bottom line is this: you can fake a lot of things as a Christian. You can lie to your wife. You can lie to your husband. You can lie to your kid. Your kids can lie to you. You can lie to each other. You can lie to me. But there is one person you cannot lie to, and it is the Holy Spirit of God.

I tell people all the time, you can fake a lot of things in life. What you cannot fake is being filled by the Spirit of God. You cannot. It is impossible. It is absolutely impossible to fake the fact that you are right with God when you are not. When somebody tries to deceive, and you have seen them come in this year, we have worked with several of them who are no longer with us today. You have worked with several of them. They came in at a dubious background. They wanted to do what is right. They did this, they did that. And they said all the right things. But once you began to work with them, you began to see that there was a deception that was being played out.

I tell people all the time, you can fake as a child of God a lot of things, but you cannot fake taking a right, you cannot fake a right spirit with God when it is not right. I will tell you why that is, because there is such a contrast. The Spirit of God and the spirit of the flesh are never going to get together, and a child of God thinking that they will, you are akin to the world's dumbest criminals. If you think that walking in the flesh is akin to walking in the Spirit, and you think that you are good enough to do one and fake the other, you need to be up there in the 7-Eleven with the guy coming through the ceiling. You are crazy.

The difference is contrast.

*1 Corinthians 8:3*

*But if any man love God, the same is known of him.*

If you love God, it shows in everything that you do. We talked the other night in the Song of Solomon when we were coming through that great book. I showed you there in Song of Solomon 5:15 how about the countenance. We went through all the characteristics that the church, the bride, should have in a relationship with Christ. You cannot fake those. You cannot fake having a happy countenance when you are not happy on the inside.

One of my favorite verses is back there in Psalms, and it is about when the children of Israel are taken in captivity, and they are down there along the river of Babylon. They have lost everything. They have lost their homes. Many of them have lost their families. They have lost their God. They have lost the Bible. They have lost everything. They violated what God gave them. They threw it out the window, and now God brought down Nebuchadnezzar, who put them in chains, killed Zedekiah, killed his kids, put him in slavery, took him down by the river Chebar, Ezekiel chapter 1, and there they lived for the rest of their lives as captives away from God, away from

their families. The Babylonians come down in this great verse in Psalms, and they say to them, "Why do not you sing us, sing for us one of those great songs of Zion? Why do not you sing for us, 'I got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart'? Come on, give us a rendition. Why do not you sing for us, 'My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine'?" They come down, and they really mock them. They say, "Why do not you sing one of us great songs of Zion?" And you know what the answer is? "How can we sing the LORD's song in a strange land?" The answer is you cannot. You cannot. You cannot fake it. You cannot.

Proverbs 5:13, Psalms 46, Psalms 105, it is all there. Your countenance is the greatest giveaway, especially when you were once on fire for God. That is the story, the great story of Cain and Abel. Cain and Abel started out pretty good. But along the line, when they brought their sacrifices, the Bible says that God had respect unto Abel's and not unto Cain's. You know what happened at that point? Cain got an attitude toward God. The Bible says the moment he got an attitude, God comes up, and He says the first words out of His mouth, a great key in dealing with people. First words out of His mouth, God, "Why has thy countenance fallen?" You can tell by the countenance what is going on spiritually inside. You know what it led to in Genesis chapter 4? It led to Cain leaving the presence of the Lord.

I am telling you, the Bible says, "If any man love God, the same is known of him." There are some characteristics that go along with loving somebody. If they are not there, you have deceived yourself. You can kid yourself. You can buy a big old sign along the road, those billboards that says, "My name is so and so, and I really love God." It does not change a thing. Not only is countenance important when you look at all this, but attitude.

My favorite story in the Bible on attitude is in 1 Kings chapter 22, really the whole chapter, and I do not have time to get into it this morning. But if you know anything about the Old Testament, you know the great story of Jehoshaphat, Ahab, and Micaiah. To me, it is one of the greatest stories anywhere in the Bible, and I just love to read it every time I can because you have all the elements. Ahab was the king of Israel. There was a time when he was younger that Ahab was okay. But as he got older, he got less okay. By the time we find him here in 1 Kings chapter 22, he is a long way from God. He is a wicked king, one of the wickedest kings Israel ever had. But he has a guy in his kingdom by the name of Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat is a pretty good guy. We get our phrase "jumping Jehoshaphat" from that little story here. We do not have time to get into that this morning, but that is where it comes from. Then you have Micaiah. Micaiah is the prophet of the Lord.

Jehoshaphat does exactly what we do when we get out of fellowship with God. He does not like to hear truth. What he does in his case, because he is the king and it is nice to be the king, he builds around him 400 prophets. You know what those 400 prophets primarily do? Those 400 prophets primarily tell Ahab what he wants to hear. That is their only job. Their only job is to tell him what he wants to hear, not what he does not want to hear. So they are in a little strait here in this chapter, and I love it. It shows his attitude.

What happens is, Jehoshaphat comes in, and the king is kind of upset, and he says, "Hey look, this is what my 400 prophets are saying." Jehoshaphat, he is not buying it exactly. He may not be

where he needs to be, but he knows this is not right. He says to the king, very cautiously, "Well, King, I know you have your 400 guys. And they are telling you what you are saying they are telling you. But do you think there is anybody out there that is a prophet of the Lord that we can inquire of?" In other words, Jehoshaphat, he is not buying these 400 guys. He knows what is going on.

I love the response. Ahab says, "Yeah, there is one, Micaiah. But I hate him!" Read the rest of the verse. "Do I hate him? Because he prophesied no good thing concerning me." When you get into that state, when people come in and they get into that state, oh, it is fine for a while, but let me tell you something. I told you last year that this year would be the year in the Bible. We talked about it Thursday night. I told you that after four or five years, the newness wears off, the excitement wears off, and by this time, you find out who has got the longevity to go the distance and who starts to fall by the wayside. We have people come in, they want to be excited, and it will last about three or four weeks. Why? Because they get deceived.

How do you keep from getting deceived in all that? Someday down the line, some of you boys are going to pastor, and you are going to have a church. You will have a church hopefully like this one, where you have a tremendously good amount of good people. But you are going to be faced with the same issues, and you are going to have the same problems that this church faces, the same problem that every church faces, and the same problem that faced all the way down through the Bible. You are going to have to keep from being deceived.

Ah, Micaiah. One of my favorite verses. They go to Micaiah, and they want to get Micaiah. Jehoshaphat tries to run the distance, and he tries to get him to say something. In 1 Kings 22:14, my favorite verse in the Bible. In fact, this Bible here is my preaching Bible. I have 300 sermons in here. I have another one just like it that has got another 300, maybe 400 in it. This Bible is nicked, beat up, scratched, it is Bible-bent everywhere in the world. This is my first real preaching Bible. This is not my study Bible. This is my preaching Bible. I never take that when I preach, or my study Bible when I preach. I cannot afford to lose it. I cannot afford to beat it up. I have got to give it longevity as long as I can. But this one, you can see the scars. This thing has been through some war. This thing used to be a shield when people threw rocks at me when I used to preach on the street. This thing used to, this has been spit on, scuffed on. One time a guy knocked it out of my hand and stepped on it and crashed it in the ground because he did not like what I was saying. When I started to preach, the first story I heard about was Micaiah. Micaiah has always been one of my heroes. What he said in 1 Kings 22:14 has always impacted my life. You know what he said?

*1 Kings 22:14*

*And Micaiah said, As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak.*

He did not care who liked it and who did not like it. As a young man, that impressed me. I am nowhere in the character of Micaiah. There have been many times I put my tail between my legs, and I took the short route. But the bottom line is this, he never did. The bottom line to me is this: when I started to preach, I had that verse in Boston in front of this Bible. On the front of this Bible it says, "As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak." Because

the bottom line is this: this book and the Spirit of God that wrote it, and the Spirit of God that is in you, the two of them together are the only thing that are going to keep you from being deceived. You are going to find in dealing with people that people are going to come to the point where, as I say many, many times, you can fake a lot of things in life, but you cannot fake the Spirit of God in your life when He is not there and ruling and reigning in your life.

Now, I am going to give you another verse to tie into what we have already said because we are building a progression here. Turn back to 1 John chapter 4. Here is another great one. 1 John chapter 4 verse 1. Look at verse 1:

*1 John 4:1-3*

*Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*

*Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:*

*And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.*

Primarily, so you get the whole weight of this verse, this great verse, primarily, we should say doctrinally, this verse is dealing with the cults that we find today. You will find that the spirit that false religions put forth, one of the ways that you can smell them out and know that they have the spirit of antichrist, is because all the cults do not believe that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh. Unity, the Mormons, the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Seventh Day, all of those groups that we classify as the cults, one of the things that they all have in common is that they do not believe that Jesus Christ was the deity of God in the flesh. They all believe that He was a recreated lesser God. They all deny the virgin birth. They all deny the fact that He was very God. They make Him a lesser God, a demagogue, but they do not make Him God Almighty incarnate in the flesh as we teach it and we know the Bible teaches. That is what it is primarily for in this doctrinal sense.

But when you begin to look at it in a practical form, that spirit of antichrist, that is not the Antichrist in general that we talk about in the Bible that comes at the end, it leads to that. But this spirit here is a spirit that is antichrist, in other words, against Christ. That would be the spirit of your flesh. That would be a spirit of your flesh in a practical sense. When you look at this and put it all together and you understand it, you realize that for you and for me, many of God's people, many of God's people fall into this category.

I am going to show you how to try the spirit in just a moment. I am going to show you how you take the spirit and try the spirit based on Romans chapter 8 that His Spirit bears witness with our spirit so you never get deceived. But when you look at this, the first thing he says here is, "Believe not every spirit." You do not believe what somebody said just because they say it. The Bible says you "try the spirit." There is a process. This is unknown to most of God's people. There is a process by which a person says this or they do this or they do that, or you see this in

their life. How do you keep from being sucked in? I am going to show you in a few moments how to keep from being sucked in by me. I am not going to show you everything, but I am going to show you how you keep even from me. I put myself under this microscope. "Believe not every spirit." And in a process to try the spirits whether they be of God or not. Why? Because many false prophets shall arise, and they are going to deceive you. Be a child of God of having discernment and perception. Be able to perceive things the way they are.

Now that verse says, "Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God." Now the average Christian would say, "Well, that does not apply to me. I believe He comes in God." Hey, hey, hey, hey, hey, what did it say? It says, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirit." Now let me ask you a question. I do not want a show of hands, or I do not want anything to recognize you. Just look at it on your own inside. The bottom line is this: if that verse is true, and the verse says that we are to try the spirit, the Bible says we have the witness of the Spirit. The Spirit bears witness of our spirit that we are the children of God. If we use the Spirit and try the Spirit and have the witness of the Spirit, and yet we are told not to believe every spirit because the spirit in a man that says Christ is not come in the flesh is not of God, what does that do for a child of God that says it but then lives his life like they do not ever believe it?

Do you realize, ladies and gentlemen, do you understand that Christianity is more than just saying it? We crack on Jehovah's Witnesses all the time. Nobody likes Jehovah's Witnesses. I feel sorry for them. I do not like them, but I feel sorry for them. They get more bad press than anybody in the world. I know my mother, Buster Hart, when he came to the door in the early years, she would throw hot water on them. I have known people to slam the doors in their face. I know people that just give them what for up one side and down the other. I am not saying that you should. I would not throw hot water on them, but I know they are a cult.

But the bottom line is this. Are we really any better? You know what the main, I guess, would be the second issue? The first thing that the Jehovah's Witnesses teach is they do not believe that Jesus Christ is God. You know the second thing that they teach is their big doctrine? They do not believe there is a hell. They do not believe anybody is going to hell. They do not believe one person on this planet is going to hell. That is usually the biggest stick that Baptists go after them on. But that being said, in the verse we have here, let me ask you a question. You may say, "Do you believe in hell?" But what is the last time you wept over somebody that you worked with that is lost and dying and going to hell? What is the last time you even got off your duff to go across the street and witness to somebody? You probably have people in your family right now that are lost without Christ and without a chance to go to hell. You might be the only person that can reach into their world and get them. It may be a tough reach, and it may be an extended reach, and it may take you a while, but you may be the only person that can reach them, and God has orchestrated it as such. The problem is we are like Jehovah's Witnesses. We do not really believe there is a hell.

So my point is this: what kind of spirit is in us if we say we believe that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, but we do not live our lives like we do? If you believe that statement is true, if you believe that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, if you believe that, then there are some things that

you ought to be doing in your life if you believe that go along with the plan that we talked about earlier that God used you to replace Himself with. If you really believe that Jesus Christ had come in the flesh, and then you realize that He went back, if you really believe that, you would know that you are His replacement, and everything else in life is secondary, and His goal is first. That verse is a killer. I have never rewritten the Bible, but if I ever did, I am leaving that verse out. That verse will get you every time.

What we are about, with that in mind, what we are about to look at will be invaluable to you in your life to keep you from being deceived. It says here, and the first part it says here is to "try the spirit." How do we try the spirit? First of all, make it very clear, we are not talking about wine cooler, Jack Daniel's, or Bud Light. I was down on a mission one time years ago, and I was down there, and a guy came up to me, and he was drunk as a skunk, and he looked at me, and he says, and I had just preached, and I preached on drinking that night, and he came up to me, and he said, "Preacher, you know you preached on drinking tonight, and you know that the Bible says it is okay to drink." I said, "Okay, where at?" He said, "Well, the Bible says, I am not sure where it is at, but you know what is in there." He said, "It is that place that says, it says, 'Drink a little wine for thy stomach's sake.'" I said, "Yeah, I know. And it says a little wine. You obviously blew that one." He actually said, "Well, the Bible said that where at?" He said, "Where to drink the spirits." I said, "No, we are going to try the spirits, Claude, try the spirits." You have got to be half nuts to be in ministry. You deal with all kinds of people. But let me just say for all you out there that when it says, when we talk about how to try the spirits, we are not talking about those kinds of spirits. But I want you to understand the concept of trying the spirits through the witness of the Spirit, and that Spirit bearing witness with your spirit.

I am going to give you a couple of, you know what I think? I think some of you have already experienced this. You just did not know it. Let me give you some very simple case studies. I am sure almost everybody in here, if you have been saved for at least a year or so, can probably identify with this. These are what I call case studies. Let us see if you can relate. We are talking about how do we try the spirits. The Bible says that His Spirit, God's Spirit, bears witness with our spirit, we are the children of God. In other words, I know I am saved because the witness of the Spirit in God and the witness of the Spirit in me and the Bible all line things up. It says that we are to try the spirit. We are not to believe every spirit, we are to try this spirit. All right, let us talk about that. How do we try the spirits? Let us talk about that first.

Have you ever been in a foreign country? Ever lived with a family that you cannot even communicate with that is saved? I was in Romania, I was in South America, I was in Africa. I have been in a number of countries in my little stint as a Christian. Many times I have stayed with people in their homes where I was preaching in this earth that did not speak English. I am going to tell you, there is a bond between them and you that you feel immediately. I cannot speak to them, they cannot speak to me. I cannot explain it. You almost have to experience it to understand what I am saying because they are saved, and the Holy Spirit of God is living in them, and because I am saved, and the Holy Spirit of God is living in me, the two spirits bear witness. I cannot speak their language, they cannot speak mine. But there is a, you can feel it in the room, you can feel it in the home, you can feel it in the presence. There is something there

that I may not be able to speak their language, they cannot speak mine, but we know we are one in Christ. Why? Because the Spirit in them and the Spirit in me is bearing witness that we are the children of God. Have you ever been in that scenario?

Have you ever been to a bad church? Other than this one? Some of you boys went to Christmas Mass on Christmas Eve, did you not? I know what is going on with you guys, I get all the intel. Father Shenanigans called me right after you left. I used to do those things, but I do not have time to do them anymore. But did you feel the difference there that something was not right? You really want an experience? Go to a charismatic church sometime. I mean a real rock and roll. If you want to feel it, that is where you will feel it. You want to really feel something is not right? Go to a Unity church. You want to really feel something out of whack? Go to a JW church. You will find out why, when you are there, you will find out why they know.

Have you ever noticed that Jehovah's Witness churches, every church you ever saw, every Jehovah's Witness church you ever saw in your life has no windows in it? There is no reason for that, other than the fact that once you are in there, you will not escape through the window. Have you ever been in a bad church, and you are sitting there, and you just know it is all wrong? It is just like, it does not fit, it does not work.

Here is a good one. Have you ever had a Christian who you thought was a good Christian try to get you to do something or go somewhere, or deep down inside, and you went? But deep down inside, you knew that it was not the right thing to do. Deep down inside, you just had this feeling that it was not exactly, and you just, but you gave in, you went anyhow. You thought deep down in yourself, "This is not what, I am going here, I know this person is a Christian, this person is this, but this just does not strike me what a Christian ought to be doing." Have you ever been in that situation?

Some of you have been saved two or three or four years. Have you ever gone back to the old places you used to hang out? Ever run into the old crowd that you used to hang out with? When you get around that place or back in that place where once you used to have the time of your life, you used to have a ball with your old friends, it was just everything. Now you feel like you are completely out of place there. You try to talk to your old friends, you have nothing in common. Even the simplest verbiage just does not work for you. Ladies and gentlemen, you have just had a lesson on trying the spirits and the witness of the Spirit. You did not even know it.

Because the Bible is built on principles, and the Spirit of God operates by those principles. When you have the Spirit of God in you, and you try to go up against something that is another spirit other than God, the red lights are going to go off. Now you may not have enough courage to say, "I am not going." You may not have enough guts to stand up and say, "This is not right, this is what we need to do." But the bottom line is you know something is not right. You feel it because the witness of the Spirit is chiding against another spirit.

You have two spirits. We have studied them so far. You have the Spirit of Christ, and you have the spirit of the world or the spirit of the flesh. Ladies and gentlemen, those two will never match up. You will never. World's dumbest criminal. You will never. You will absolutely never. You have deceived yourself. You are totally off track. If you ever think that you can take a spirit that

is of the flesh and a Spirit of God and get a comprehensive nice warm fuzzy feeling with the two of them. You cannot. You cannot.

Have you ever been around a Christian who once was on fire for God? God was number one in their life, and now they are way out in left field. They get irritable whenever you talk about God. At one time in their life, God was the number one thing. They loved to talk about God. All they wanted to do was be around God and talk about God. Now you try to talk about God, and it is like my case, "I hate you." They cannot. What they used to love now becomes an irritation to them. The contrast between what they once were and what they are now. What they cared about the things of God then and what they think about.

I call them New York Christians. I hate New York City. Anyone here from New York City? I love you, but I hate New York City. New York City to me. I am a Midwestern boy. Even before I lived here, I am from Ohio. That is kind of Midwestern. People are nice here. I have never met a nasty person when I needed help with something in Kansas City. You go up to somebody and you say, "Hey, I am lost." Not only will they help you, they will give you gas money to get there. People here are nice. This is the Midwest. Laid back. People are friendly. I guarantee you. You broke down on the freeway, and you have a flat tire, and it is at night. I guarantee you, unless it is a strange night, somebody will stop and help you fix that tire. New York City, they run over you. I just cannot, that is not me. I am a people person. I love to help people.

We were at the races last night, and there was a corn dog lady there. There was a lady that was sitting up in the back, about halfway up, drunk as a skunk. Had the biggest corn dog you have ever seen in your life. Chomping on it. I am looking up to her, and I am thinking, "Oh boy," and she is sprawled out everywhere. She is just drunk. Eating the corn dog. I go up the back because you can really see the races from the top up there, and I am watching the races, and my boy and Kenzie were up there with me, and they were having a great time. The corn dog lady was about halfway down. She was out of it, man. She was absolutely, I do not know where she got the booze because I do not think they sold it there. She was drunk. But she had a fetish for corn dogs. There is no question about that.

So the races are over, and I start coming down the thing, and she starts coming out. She is everywhere. Now she is halfway up. She is going to, if she falls, she is going to shut down the auditorium for an hour. What do I do? Did I step out of the way and get around her, "Oh, the corn dog drunk lady"? No, I put my arm around her. Held her. Said, "Come on now, one step at a time." We went down a step at a time. She was so drunk that by the time we got to those nine steps, I was feeling woozy. Give me a bite of a corn dog too. You cannot go wrong with that. I put my arm around her. Took her by the arm. Walked her down the stairs. I looked over, and Jamie is looking at me like, "What are you doing? This woman is going to puke all over you." I walked her down the steps one at a time. "Come on now, take it easy." She is, I mean, and she is a big lady. She is, and I am afraid she is going to fall. I mean, these things are steep, and they are not very stable anyhow, and she is very, and I am helping her down. We get, I said, "Well, now one more step, one more step, one more step," and then she just went on to the rally, and I just.

In New York City, they just said, "Ah, get down the stairs." I learned very early in life going to New York City. That is why they remind me of so many Christians that once had it, now they do not have it, because in New York City, if you want directions, here is the way you do. If you ever go to New York City, here is what you do. If you get lost in New York City and you are trying to find where you want to go, here is how you do it. Go up to somebody that looks like they know, been around New York City, looks like a New Yorker, you can tell them, and say this: "Hi, I am visiting here. Could you tell me how to get to the Statue of Liberty, or should I just go drop dead?" Tell them the line they are going to give you back before. Okay, because you are not going to get anything nice. I mean, I cannot even repeat some of the things they will tell you in New York City. They do not want you to, they do not care what you do, you can wind up in Hudson Bay and the river as far as they are concerned. They do not care. They remind me of Christians that at one time had the power of God. The contrast is so great from what they once were to what they are now, to how they loved God to now that they do not care anything about it. Oh, New York Christians, have you ever seen them?

You see, ladies and gentlemen, you have had lessons on trying the spirits, and I am telling you these two spirits, the Spirit of Christ and the spirit of the world, you may be good. You may be real good. You may be razor sharp, keen, and fine. You may just be as slippery as you could get, but you will not get around those two spirits, and they will go together. Want a simple lesson in it? Go get two magnets. You turn them this way, and they lock together. Turn them the other way, reverse the polarity, can never get them together. That is you and God's Spirit. If the polarity is not just right, it will lock. If it is not, you are not fooling anybody.

Bible Christianity runs through a system. That system is a system of unity: one book, one Spirit, one mind, one church, one bond, one fellowship, one unity. This is why I told you New Year's Eve when we started to come through those things, and I told you the greatest thing you ever learned: God divides, then He adds. The devil multiplies, then he divides. Simple formula, learn it. God divides. First thing He did when you got saved, He divided your soul from the spirit. You know what He did then? He added the blessings of God into your life. The next thing He did was divided you from the world, and when He divided you from the world, He gave you a new family. First thing He did is divided you from the old garbage you used to read, and He gave you something good and an attitude to read. You see, God divides first, and then He adds.

The devil, we learned from Solomon last Thursday night, he multiplies where God divides first, then adds. The devil multiplies first, then he divides. You know what he multiplies? He multiplies all the things in your world. That is what he did with Solomon, remember the horses, the women, the things from Egypt, the chariotry, all of the great things that he imported in, but he would know what he was not supposed to, and he caused the people to go back to Egypt, back to the world. The Bible says clearly in that passage that he multiplied all those things to him. No, God divides first, then He adds to your life. The devil multiplies in your life, then he divides. You know what he divides after he multiplies? He divides you from the Bible. He divides you from God's Spirit. He divides you from the church. He divides you in time from your husband or your wife. He will divide you in time from your kids. He will divide you in time from your job. That is how he does it. You better learn that because the key is he wants to deceive you with that,

and if you do not understand how to try the spirits, we talked about Thursday night: lordship, relationship, fellowship, and stewardship, the four areas that you are constantly building to in your life.

## VI. Rules for Trying the Spirits

Now let us look at these two very quickly, these two passages, and we will see how this thing, two simple rules. First, it says this, you want to get this working in your life:

*Rule number one: Beloved, believe not every spirit.*

I have a simple rule in dealing with people, and yet I will explain what I am saying here, I will explain it in a second. I have a simple rule with people I work with in the ministry: I do not believe anything they say. I have heard every lie there is to hear in 35 years of ministry. I do not believe anybody. Obviously, with explanation, once we get into a working relationship in the ministry and all those things, obviously you have proven yourself, and I believe. But somebody comes in off the street, or somebody comes in here, "Hey, we have all been there." How many times in the last two years have we dealt with people? They said, "I want to do this, I want to do that, I want to do this, I want to do that," and then two days later, they do not want to do anything. I do not believe anything anybody tells me, and I will tell you what, that is not a bad thing. You say, "What? You do not have any faith in people?" You are getting smarter already. "Beloved, believe not every spirit." Why? Because people deceive you. People will, people will, people will deceive you. They will tell you one thing when they want to do something else. I do not believe anything they say. It just does not. The rule is, do not believe what they say. The rule is, watch what they do. Because in every case, part of trying the spirits, believing the spirits or not believing, it is watching what somebody is, listening to what somebody says, and then watching what somebody does. That is the key.

We are so naive that because we want to believe people, that we give them the benefit of the doubt, and that is where we become vulnerable because we think because they are saved, they would not lie to us. Because they are saved, they would not try to deceive me. Hey, let me tell you something, the rule stands, and it is a good one, and it is not my rule, it is the rule all you better follow. "Beloved, believe not every spirit." Somebody says, "I love God, I want to work with people, I love the Bible." Watch and see if what they do matches up with what they say. Somebody says, "Well, I love God, and I love this, and I love that, and I want to do this." My question that you would have asked them is found here, another great principle:

*Luke 6:46*

*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*

You have got to match up. What you say has to match up with what you live. Mel Subaka used to have an example. My father-in-law, I remember it so vividly. He told an illustration of how that in this narrow channel in the shipping industry, someplace on the East Coast, the ships had a very hard time getting into. He says that the way they had lost so many ships in that channel, and that said lost so many ships that went down, that what they did is they orchestrated a system of lights

that as you were coming in, the lights appeared as three: one light here, one light there, one light there. As you maneuvered into the right position to come through the channel, the three lights went to two lights. Then as you got right in the right channel to come in safely, those three lights became one light. In other words, they were positioned that they had to line up, and when you were out of position, they did not line up. You saw three separate, but when you got in right position in the right place to get in safely, those three things lined up in one. That is the way it is with your life and my life. There are some things that better line up, and if you do not line up and you line yourself up, you are going to get deceived. You are going to become shipwrecked. You are going to go. You have got to learn to try the spirit.

Now the first thing said, "Beloved, believe not every spirit." The second thing is:

*But try the spirits whether they are of God.*

The single greatest aspect of God in the Bible is this: if you want the number one thing the Bible does, the greatest aspect of God in the Bible is simply this: God never violates His own principles. Once He writes it down, it never gets violated. This is why I beat you senseless every time we are together to learn Bible principles. Learn the principles of the Word of God. Get them in your heart. Get them in your life. Get them in your world. Put them on your little three by five cards. Get them down where you learn the principles because it is the Spirit of God in you, the principles in this book that are going to line up and bear witness with the Spirit of the Word of God, the Spirit in you, and the principles in the Bible that tells you, "Yes, this is right. No, this is wrong. No, this stinks. No, this is okay." It works with unsaved people. It works with saved people. Let us face it, as a Christian, we have to make decisions every day of our lives. Some of those decisions will impact your relationship with God. How do you do that? You do that by first of all, believing not every spirit. Second of all, trying those spirits. The Spirit of God bearing witness with your spirit that these things are in the Word of God and the way they need to go exactly the way it is.

I told you a little earlier, I put myself under the same microscope. What is good for you is good for me. I am not somebody up here that preaches one set of standards for you, another standard for me. That will never work. No, no, no. I put myself under my own microscope. How many times have I told you that you are a fool if you just believe what I say? My goal for you is to take and check out everything that I say. Everything that I say. I would not believe one thing that comes out of my mouth. Somebody said one time, "You know how you can tell Bob is lying?" "No, how?" "His mouth moves." I check me out on everything.

As a pastor, I am not accountable to any one person. I am not accountable to any one person as a pastor. I am accountable to this body. You keep me accountable, and as this church grows, so does my accountability to this church. I have to stay right on track with the Bible. There are some guys in here, and I will not mention your name because I do not want to put you under the spotlight or I do not want to embarrass you, but there are some guys in here that I meet with on a regular basis. One of the greatest things I appreciate about you is the fact that you do not let me say much of anything without, if you do not see it and understand it, calling me into question on it. Now you do not nitpick me to death, and it is not goofy stuff where you are just looking for

something all the time, but you are smart enough to know, and I really appreciate. I have about five or six of you in here that I work with on a regular basis, and then when I teach something on Thursday night or I lay something out, when you come over, and I love the way you approach it because you are, it is like, "Well, I do not want him to think that I am questioning what he says." No, no, it is okay. You can question what I say. I am not thin-skinned about it. You can sit down and you can say to me, "Bob, I do not understand this. You laid this out. It is not that I do not believe it, I just want to understand, how did you get that?" That is exactly what, as this church grows, and what I am doing basically is painting myself into a corner, and I have some gals that do it too. I have some gals that they want to know everything about anything, like most women, and they just want to, they want to, they want everything, and they want to know what I am saying. What I am doing is painting myself into a corner by allowing you to question me on anything I teach without getting defensive on it. Hey, it is fair game. I am not accountable to any one person. I am accountable to you, the body. The more I teach you the Bible, and the more you learn the Bible, and the better you get with the Bible, and the better you learn the Bible, and the better you live the Bible, the better you keep me accountable that I will not get up here some morning and have a big old thing of Kool-Aid punch and have a little cup for everybody. Some of you would drink it no matter what it was, it would not make any difference.

I am telling you folks, your spirit and the Spirit of God, when I teach you the Bible, when I get this spirit that is in this book in you, and you already got the spirit because you are saved, and I have the spirit because I am saved, it is like those three lights, brother. Everything lined up, and the day that I am preaching to you that those things do not line up, then we have a problem. I put myself under the same thing as you. I am no better than you. I am absolutely no better than you. I may be the pastor of this church, and I may be at the responsibility of making the decisions and running it and getting new vision from God and translating it to you, but at the end of the day, I am not somebody up here that is unapproachable. I have to go by the same rules that you do. I do not have one set of standards for you and one set for me. I have made myself accountable to this body, taught you men and women everything I possibly can about the Bible, and you know what you are supposed to do with that? Keep me honest. You ought to. You know why? I sure keep you honest every Sunday. You should not let me slide. You know why I do not let you slide? It is a two-way street. That is what the Bible intended it to be. Our spirits bearing witness with one Spirit, God's Spirit bearing witness with my spirit, trying the spirit to prove all things, the Bible says, through the unchanging principles of the Word of God. That is how it works.

## VII. Conclusion: The Sixth Sense of the Christian

Let me recap seven things out of here you want to have before we go, and we take this whole thing that I laid out and break it down into seven things you want to remember so you do not get deceived. Of course, people, bless their hearts, will deceive you. People will deceive you knowingly, sometimes they will try to deceive you unknowingly, but that is just the way it goes, and you have to be able to try the spirits. You have to be able to let the Spirit of God that is in you bear witness with God's Spirit that whatever you are deciding, whatever you are doing, is biblically right, and if you use the principles in the format that I have given you, you will never, never, never be deceived. You may lose some friends, but you will never be deceived.

*Rule number one: This is first and foremost. I am going to say it again, I know you are sick of hearing it. The price of learning is repetition. Learn Bible principles. Learn Bible principles. Commit 2009 to a time in your life where you are going to learn Bible principles. Get something in you.*

Let us say I go home this afternoon, and I turn my car on to go out, and I am driving down the road. The little oil light comes on my car, and I really do not know much about cars. I have been driving around with my engine light on, it is a check engine, for two years, and it is still fine. So the oil light comes on, I figure I can get away with it. While I get down in the street, and all of a sudden, I hear this thing. My hood got a dent where a rod went right up through that engine. I open up the thing, and the smoke clears away, and I look down there, and I just said to myself, "Man, I just blew my engine." So I get it towed back down to the garage there. Monday morning, I go down to the bank. I walk in there, beautiful bank. Wow, there is a great bank. Look at that, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight tellers, all with money. I love this place. I walk up to teller number one. I say, "Hi, my name is Bob Alexander." "Well, Mr. Alexander, what can I do for you?" "Well, you know what, oh, your name is Cindy. Cindy, I will tell you, you are not going to believe this. Last Sunday, I am driving out to get me a Big Mac, my engine blew up my car. I took it, got it towed down here to Bob's Auto, you cannot go anyplace else, Bob's Auto, and they told me it is going to cost three thousand dollars to get it fixed. So I am here today because I need to get three thousand dollars from the bank." She said, "Do you have your account?" I said, "Yes, I do. Here is my account number right here." She goes back to know, and she looked up to that thing, and she says, "Mr. Alexander, how much did you want?" And I said, "I need three thousand dollars." She shows the back, she says, "Well, I am sorry," she says, "You only have, you only have four dollars on your account." And I said, "Well, I know, but this is the bank, got all kinds of money back there." "Well, I was watching right here while you were doing a little deal on the thing over there, that woman gave this guy here, I counted out nine, nine one hundred dollar bills. Now who gave him nine hundred dollars? I need three thousand." She said, "You do not understand, he has got the money on the account. I do not know what you have done with your money, Mr. Alexander, but you only have four dollars here, and we cannot give you, we cannot give you three thousand dollars when you only have four thousand dollars if you put in." Am I getting through to anybody here?

You wonder why you have problems in your life, and you go to God, you cannot get any answers. You wonder why you continue to struggle and struggle and struggle, and you scratch your head and say, "Well, why God will not answer me?" The same reason the stupid woman at the bank will not give me my three thousand dollars. Do you actually think that when you get into a jam as a Christian, you just walk up to God and like I did to the teller and say, "Hey God, I am in a jam, You fix me up"? God says, "Sure, I will fix you up. What do you have on the account? What principles have you put in your bank?" If you do not put any money in the bank, when you get in the jam, you cannot get anything out of it. When you do not put any principles in the account of your heart, and you do not build the Word of God into your heart, "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee," when you do not put the Word of God through the principles in your life and your heart, when you have a tough time in your life, and

you come up against something, and you need to draw on that account, there has got to be something in there. Learn Bible principles. Learn Bible principles. It is invaluable.

*Number two: Not only do you need to learn Bible principles, ladies and gentlemen, but you need to learn to use Bible principles.*

Let God, who never violates His own principles, take the book written by the Spirit of God and match it up with your spirit, sealed by the Spirit of God through His Spirit, which knows your heart and the book, and let Him lay out to you what is real and what is not real based on the principles in the Word of God. Did you notice the examples I gave you today? Micaiah. Do not think for a moment because somebody is saved or somebody is your friend or somebody is this that they will not, they will not get out of fellowship with God and try to lead you down the wrong path. Ahab wanted 400 people around him that told him what he wanted to hear. One of the first traits of people to get out of fellowship is they want to hang out with other people that are just like them. Birds of a feather flock together.

*Believe not every spirit.*

*1 Thessalonians 5:21*

*Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.*

*The fifth thing: Do not get caught up in what they say. Always watch what they do.*

*Luke 6:46*

*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*

*The sixth thing: You cannot fake a real Bible-based Holy Ghost spiritual walk. You can never get together the Spirit of Christ and the spirit of the flesh. You cannot ever, and you cannot fake it.*

The reason why so many of God's people get away with it is because the people that they are around are dumber than they are. If you know Bible principles, if you know Bible principles, if you know Bible principles, it will stand out just like that.

I used to, years ago, when I lived in Ohio, Ohio had a hundred million groundhogs. When I moved to Missouri in 1976, Missouri did not have any groundhogs. Now they are everywhere. I have a couple living in my backyard. But in Ohio, they are everywhere, and farmers hate them because if you do not know anything about groundhogs, they dig holes down in the pasture, and the cows come along stepping and break their legs. So farmers would love for you to come shoot groundhogs, and we had about three or four guys that worked together, and we were all groundhog hunters. We all hunted, but we loved hunting groundhogs, and we had rifles with scopes on them. One summer, we had a competition: who shot the biggest groundhog and who shot the most groundhogs? I am not kidding, every night after work, every night if it was not raining in the summer, we would be out hunting groundhogs. I had my favorite spot. I had a place that was groundhog hotel. There were more groundhog holes in there. My farthest shot, if I ever made, was 600 yards on a groundhog, and I did not get him in the first shot. But that was so far away that you would fire, and about a second later, the bullet would hit the groundhog. Come

down, look right back up because you can hear the shot too far away. My first time I fired, it went over here, so I moved it over there. Second time I fired, it went over behind him but was right in line with him, so I just dropped that sucker a little bit. Next time, I just split him right over and got him. 600 yards, paced it off, 600 yards. I never won it. I killed 128 groundhogs that summer. My buddy won it, killed 160.

Here is what I learned from that. I got so good that I could look at a cornfield, I could look at a wheat field, I could look at anything out there, and because I had spent so much time outside hunting, when I am hunting, I could tell a blade of grass from a groundhog standing up. I could be at 400 yards, I could see a bush, and I could see a groundhog, and I could distinguish, "That is a bush, and that is a groundhog." Where if I would have never done that, it looked like two bushes. I did not need a pair of binoculars. I had done it so long, been so involved with it, become, as the Indians used to say, "one with the groundhogs." I had, I had, I had just done everything day after day after day. I could see them, I could smell them, I could tell, I knew their antics, I knew everything about them.

My point is this: you need to be that way with the Bible. You get the biblical principles where you live in that book every day. You stay in that book every day, and you, those principles work for you every day, and you get in that book, and you stay in that book, and you stay with it, and you stay with it, and you stay with it. You know what? Just like I could go out in the field and I can look across 500 acres out there, and I can say to myself, "There is one sitting, there is one standing right there." Somebody would say, "Well, no, that is not." "No, that is a groundhog. Give me binoculars." "Yep, he has got his head just above the clovers. He is eating in the clover field." You can say, "That is not right." I see that red flag went up. Red flag is up. Red light is on. Warning, warning, warning. Deceiving in process. Deceiving in process. It is always where you spend the time developing your senses.

You know, as human beings, we have five senses. Trying the spirits and the Spirit bearing witness with your spirit is the sixth sense, which you always hear about in the supernatural world. It is the supernatural. "You know, I saw a vision," and all these things. None of that other stuff. The sixth sense is only given to a Christian who steps outside the natural, lives in the supernatural, and through that book, so he will not be deceived. God gives him a process that he can try the spirits, bear witness for the spirits, so we know the things are really of God or not. That is your sixth spiritual sense. You ought to use it as a Christian. It is the most valuable thing you have. If you are going to ever work with people, it is the absolutely paramount thing you have got to have to keep from being deceived: is what that person is saying to me, or what they are doing, or how they are acting, or what they are going through, is that the way a Christian ought to do it? Do not go with what they say. Watch what they do.

*Then the last thing:*

*1 Corinthians 8:3*

*But if any man love God, the same is known of him.*

If you love God, it shows. You do not have to read a billboard. You do not have to go get your 25-pound King James Bible. You do not have to wear a 60-pound cross around your neck. If you love Him, and He is in you, and you are in Him, and you are walking in the Spirit of God, it is apparent. By the same token, if any man does not love God, it shows just as apparently. Why? Because you cannot fake. I am going to leave you with this: you cannot fake a true spiritual Holy Ghost filled walk with God. You may be good. You may be slippery good. You may be certifiably good. But you cannot fake that because that is a basis of the spirit of the flesh versus the Spirit of God, and they will never get together.