

Distinguishing Truth From Error By Greg Rangel

Not too long ago as I was beginning to teach the book of Jude to the congregation I showed the congregation two pictures of a one dollar bill to show the importance of knowing truth from error. The first bill was obviously a picture of a real dollar bill, while the other was not, because apart from the rest of the bill being fake, the picture was not that of George Washington but of me. At the same time, both pictures were three times bigger than an actual dollar bill.

Upon looking at the one dollar bill that had my face on it there were plenty of laughs because it seemed very funny to them that I would do that. I held up the copy with my face on it and asked if that one was the genuine dollar bill. No hands were raised because it was obviously a fake. I raised the second copy and asked them if that one was the genuine one and to my surprise many people did raise up their hands. I then asked the people that did not raise their hands at all why they didn't raise their hands. Their response was that neither picture was the genuine one because they were both fakes. And that was the exact point that I was trying to get across to the congregation. Both pictures were fakes, even though one looked like the real thing.

To further prove the point I asked the congregation if they were able to take this picture of the true dollar bill to the store and buy something with it. And the point that I was trying to convey across hit everyone like a ton of bricks.

Unfortunately when it comes to spirituality many people fail to question what is being taught to them from the pulpit or altar. Many just go in and out of church believing what was taught, preached, or screamed at them without investigating from the Scriptures to see if what they heard goes in accordance to the Word of God or not. Because of that they simply believe what they hear because they are not able to distinguish truth from error. The way that they see it is that if it sounds beautiful, therefore it must be true. But unfortunately beauty is not a standard to judge between truth and error because how many Hollywood beauty queens cannot get near a stove due to the much plastic and silicone that is on them?

Pastor John MacArthur says in his book titled "Preaching" that, "I am continually overwhelmed by the responsibility and liability that possesses the preacher of God's Word. We all look within indignation at the Lawyer or Judge who, for the motive of personal wealth distort the truth in attacking the reputation and personal possessions of people, while reducing them to poverty. We respond with similar indignation to the quack doctor who, by incompetence, hazards the health and life of someone for the purpose of financial gain. Such people deserve to be considered criminals. The pain and loss of their victims should rightly be laid to their account...Medical and legal associations have set standards in an attempt to prevent such malpractice. But what about me as the purveyor of God's truth, the physician of the soul? Shall I not be held responsible to God for any perversion of truth, however witless, and for my negligence and lack of skill?"

Even though MacArthur is dealing directly with the teachers of God's Word, he does make a point though in what he says that we can apply to ourselves. We as people expect the lawyers, the judges, and the doctors, and let me add accountants, to give us the truth, the whole truth, and none other than the truth. If we expect the truth from these professionals, why should we not

expect the truth from pastors? There are a lot of money driven, and money loving quacks out there that are just an imitation.

If a doctor mistakenly gives you the wrong bill of health that says that the cancer test came out negative, that can be very detrimental to your health. But what if the “spiritual leader” gives you the wrong gospel? That will be very detrimental to your soul because it would mean that since you failed to study the Scriptures for yourself you were not able to distinguish truth from error, and therefore spending an eternity in hell.