

THE TITLE OF THE MESSAGE:

A CALL FOR DISCERNMENT IN THE HOME

Nehemiah 4:14b

Dennis Hostetler

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SUBJECT TOPICALLY REFERENCED UNDER:

Discernment, Doctrine, False Teachers, Family, Bible Interpretation

Nehemiah 4:14b

Do not be afraid of them. Remember the Lord, great and awesome, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your houses.

In Nehemiah's day a call of action went out to the heads of households, to repair the gates & breaches of the walls of Jerusalem. Thus, to especially motivate the men of Jerusalem, he had each head of household repair that portion of the wall directly in front of his house; this proved to be a great strategy, for the walls were completed in 52 days! It has been said that a man's home is his castle; in fact, 17th century English common law enshrined "the castle doctrine" from this ancient concept. British PM William Pitt stating at the time: "The poorest man may in his cottage bid defiance to all the forces of the crown. It may be frail – its roof may shake – the wind may blow through it – the storm may enter – the rain may enter – but the King of England cannot enter."

As followers of Jesus, we can make application that the greater the stakes are in a spiritual battle, the greater the effort we must exert in it.

Jude 1:3

Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

Jude, half-brother of Jesus and full biological son of Mary & Joseph had been devoting his energy to writing an epistle to his audience to encourage them in their common faith in Christ; but instead, like a breaking news flash that interrupts regular programming, he addressed an emergency that required immediate attention.

One commentator stated that "Like a hammer blow, he gives a trumpet call to defend the faith.

"Warren Wiersbe has stated that "The Holy Spirit led him to put down his harp and sound the trumpet!"

Jude found it necessary to write for them to "contend" = "**Eh-pog-o-nee-zah-my**" = "epi" "Upon" + " ag-on-nee-zah=ah=my" =

1. to enter a contest: contend in the gymnastic games.
2. to contend with adversaries, fight.
3. metaph. to contend, struggle, with difficulties and dangers.
4. to endeavor with strenuous zeal, strive: to obtain something.

https://img.olympicchannel.com/images/image/private/t_16-9_3200/primary/w1eo4el8wr6prjicq5n4

What does Jude mean by “the faith”?

The systemized body of truth, communicated from Jesus to His apostles; it’s the unchanging core of Biblical doctrine, of which Jesus Christ is at the center.

Why Contend?

Jude 1:4: “For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Because false teachers & their accompanying false doctrine had penetrated the local church. Jude spells it out in the imagery of battle and athletic contests, the strenuous effort that must be given to contend for the faith against the infiltrators.

Charles Spurgeon:

“Discernment is not knowing the difference between right and wrong. It is knowing the difference between right and almost right.”

As it was in Jude’s day, so it is in ours. Please look to the Screens:

#1 Carl Lentz

That was Carl Lentz on the View, former pastor of Hill-song NY, before the recent scandals. that have rocked their churches. He muted his voice on a subject God has spoken clearly about, abortion; “you shall not murder” (Exodus 20:13) & “Deliver those who are drawn toward death” (Proverbs 24:11). Please look to the Screens again:

#2 Joel Osteen

That was Joel Osteen, On Larry King, pastor of 43,000 member+ Lakewood church in Houston Texas, author of books like “Your Best Life Now”.

He muted his voice on the very foundation stone of our belief, salvation through Jesus alone. “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” (John. 14:6) & “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts. 4:12).

But contending for the faith and being diligent against the infiltration of false doctrine is not solely the purview of pastors or those in full time ministry; every believer, but especially heads of household must be diligent in the fight. I would like to lay down some foundational principles to demonstrate this is so.

Foundation #1: Fathers And Mothers Are Together Called To Shepherd Their Children.

1 Timothy 3:2-4

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; 3 not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; 4 one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?)

https://apologeticspress.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Shepherd-and-Sheep-123rf-4114180_xl.png

Paul here in enumerating qualifications for that of bishop / pastor, in verse 4 he makes an argument from the lesser to the greater, as Jesus often did, that a father who is ruling / shepherding his own children well, is one good indicator of him potentially being qualified to shepherd the local church as well. We could therefore infer that what is happening in the family home **is functional shepherding**. We observe in the **New Testament the offices of Pastor/Shepherd, Elder and Bishop overlap**.

<https://colinsmothers.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/pebvenncolor1.jpg>

Each of these terms emphasizing a different area of their ministry:

1. A “**Bishop**” or “**Eh-Pis-Kah=Pos**” in Greek, means one who has responsibility of safeguarding or seeing to it that something is done in a correct way.

We don’t really use the term bishop around here, because it obviously carries a lot of historical branding and baggage, that would make one think of someone clothed in gold vestments, with a mitered hat, and ecclesiastical ring, seated on a throne in a basilica somewhere; that’s not the way God’s servant- shepherds are to operate. NAR too!

2. **Elder** or “Pres-boo-ter-os” in Greek, literally means an older man; within the church it emphasizes a leader with physical & spiritual maturity.

3. **Pastor** in Greek is “Po-My-Know”, which is literally a Shepherd or herdsman, especially of sheep. This term emphasizes the responsibility of feeding the flock.

Although Paul’s emphasis in 2 Timothy 3, is upon a father ruling / shepherding his children well, it goes without saying that this task is a cooperative effort, as husband & wife are as one in marriage covenant. We see this oneness clearly laid out in Scripture:

#1. The wife is the husband’s helper:

Genesis 2:18

And the Lord God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.”

The Hebrew word for “Helper” here, “Ay-zehr” is not a demeaning term meaning the woman is the man’s secretary or maid, but is very often used of God Himself, often in a military or strategic context. The wife is her husband’s strategic partner in life.

#2. Husband and wife are bone of bone, flesh of flesh; in marriage the two have become one:

Genesis 2:23-24

²³ And Adam said: "This *is* now bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman,
Because she was taken out of Man."

²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

#3. The wife is the husband's companion and wife by covenant:

Malachi 2:14

Yet you say, "For what reason?" Because the Lord has been witness
Between you and the wife of your youth, With whom you have dealt treacherously; Yet she is your
companion And your wife by covenant.

#4. Husbands are to love their wives, as they love themselves; loving your wife is loving your own body:

Ephesians 5:28

So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

#5. Husband and wife are heirs together of the grace of life:

1 Peter 3:7

Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as *being* heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.

Thus, if husband and wife are one in marriage, it's necessary that they be unified in the counsel they give to their children...

Proverbs 1:8

My son, hear the instruction of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother.

Proverbs 6:20

My son, keep your father's command, and do not forsake the law of your mother.

Foundation #2: False Teachers Have Infiltrated The Church Like Never Before.

Paul here gives his farewell address to the Ephesian Elders - the only discourse by Paul to believers recorded in the Book of Acts. This takes place at Miletus, on the Western coast of modern-day Turkey, on the final leg of his 3rd Missionary Journey, probably on the steps of the Great Harbor Monument....

Acts 20:28-31

²⁸ Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. ²⁹ For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. ³⁰ Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. ³¹ Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

https://vervaceous.files.wordpress.com/2014/05/snarling_wolves_wallpaper_95a9x.jpg?w=930&h=698

***Paul tells the Shepherds “Take heed” or “Guard” the people of God;
They were to do this by:**

- 1. Feeding the sheep by teaching them the Word of God.**
- 2. Protect the sheep from false teachers /teaching.**

WHY? What do they do?

- 1. They Pervert / distort the truth; (Greek: “to turn aside,” “to twist or disturb”)**
- 2. They Persuade others to follow them.**

***The flock which these elders must tend will be invaded by false teachers coming in among them, causing some of the flock to scatter. But, as they continue Paul's ministry in teaching the whole counsel of God, this will help to limit the danger.**

John 10:7-10

⁷ Then Jesus said to them again, “Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. ⁸ All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. ¹⁰ The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have *it* more abundantly.

<https://gospelstudy.us/wp-content/uploads/sheepfold.jpg>

In Biblical times the shepherd literally lay asleep at night in the opening to the sheep-pen!

****Story from youth camp:**

Following in the footsteps of Jesus, the greatest Shepherd, dads and moms are to protect the gates / entry points of their household from false teachers and false doctrine trying to subvert their family.

Some of us while not called to the ministry of full time pastor, or we may not be a parent, yet if we are single, old or young, male, or female, if we are a growing believer, encouraging or helping anyone else grow in the faith, then we also are doing some degree of functional shepherding; as it has been said, we all should have a mentor, a co-laborer, and someone we are discipling; we all need a Paul, a Silas and a Timothy in our lives!

7 STEPS TO EVALUATE SOMEONE'S DOCTRINE:

I. Know Your Bible, It's Important Doctrines And What's A Deal Breaker

2 Timothy 2:15

Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

https://ogden_images.s3.amazonaws.com/www.motherearthnews.com/images/2019/10/22160233/554E822817F642FCB12B3B038B1C8FFFC.jpg

Be a workman, not a debater, (squabbler); How so?

By "Rightly dividing" = "Orth-ah-tah-Meo" means to go straight, or make straight paths. It can be used metaphorically of a plough making a straight furrow, or of a stone mason cutting stones at a straight angle. Paul was a tent maker, so he would have been familiar with how to cut straight through camel hair for tents. Cutting aright; handling properly. This year the theme of VBS has been Hebrews 4:12, the power of the Word of God and handling it accurately. Satan quoted Scripture to Jesus, the author of Scripture, but he distorted it out of context. Jesus Quoted it but put it back into context. Do not mishandle.

Vital areas of doctrine to know are:

*The Bible Itself. *Theology - study of God Himself - Father, Son & Holy Spirit. *Angels - good & evil.

*Mankind. His dilemma: Sin. The solution: Salvation (through Jesus). *The Peoples of God: Israel & the Church. *Eschatology: The Last Things. Here's a couple great reads to brush up on basic Bible doctrine; the first is Know What You Believe by Paul Little:

And the second is Major Bible Themes by Lewis Sperry Chafer & John F. Walvoord:

<https://pictures.abebooks.com/isbn/9780310223900-us.jpg>

<https://pictures.abebooks.com/isbn/9780830834235-us.jpg>

1 Timothy 4:16

Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Doctrine = "**Di-Das-Kal-Ee-Ah**" 1. teaching, instruction. 2. that which is taught, doctrine.

II. Know The Enemy's Tactics

Ephesians 6:11

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

<https://safeconnections.org/app/uploads/stalking.jpg>

Paul warned us of the devils “Wiles”, the “**Meth-Ah-Dye-Ah**” in **Greek**. It’s a compound of “Meta” = means after or beyond, to operate at a higher level, or change. + “Ha-Doo-Oh” = to travel or journey.

1. to follow up or investigate by method and settled plan; 2. to follow craftily, frame devices, deceive.
Popular False Doctrines Today include:

***Charismania: Distorted view of Spiritual Gifts**

***The Prosperity Gospel, AKA The Word of Faith Movement**

***Unbalanced View of Spiritual Warfare (Territorial spirits, deliverance ministries, generational curses)**

***New Apostolic Reformation (NAR)**

***Celebrity preachers, of seeker friendly mega-churches, that encourage Antinomianism**

***Liberal Theology**

***Progressive Christianity**

***Replacement Theolog**

III. Note False Teachers Encroaching In Your Circle Of Influence And Keep One Eye Gazing Ahead Into The Horizon

Romans 16:17-18

Now I urge you, brethren, note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple.

<https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcS8tt6pth-ELrIkgZmmrPiJxMtyZeWtEanf8Q&usqp=CAU>

“Note” = “Skaw-Pay-Oh” “to look at, consider” (Eng., “scope”), implying mental consideration.

Avoid / turn away from those who:

A. Spread false teaching, contrary to the true.

B. Seve their Belly = any fleshly indulgence; enslaved to their own desires.

Their method is: A. Smooth words; subtly makes error sound plausible to the hearer.

B. Flattering speech, flattery. Their works resulted in: A. Dissensions / schism (Disunity among a group formally unified) B. Hindrances - that which causes someone to trip; something causing indignation & antagonism towards the Gospel.

Excurses: An Exercise in Discernment, Part 1: Christine Caine

https://neutrinodata.s3-ap-southeast-1.amazonaws.com/equipandempower/userimages/Chris_Photo.jpg

Christine Caine is an internationally known female Christian motivational speaker, founder of the 'Propel Women' organization, and author of several best-selling books.

You might one day come across a mostly right-on quote by her shared by one of your Christian friends in your IG stories, with a nice, picturesque background:

https://d347bo4ltvynaz.cloudfront.net/images/preview/In_His_House_2_-_Instagram_Quote_b.jpg

However, you need to exercise caution, and not be so swift to share things from Christine Caine, because it can be construed as a soft endorsement. Observe some of the things she says...

Christine Caine, a graduate of Hillsong College AU, clearly embraces the Prosperity Gospel / Word of Faith movement.

Excurses: An Exercise In Discernment, Part 2: Jackie Hill Perry

<https://media.thegospelcoalition.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/10120037/Jackie-Hill-Perry.jpg>

Jackie Hill Perry is a "Christian", former lesbian, hip hop artist & writer for publications such as [The Resurgence](#) and [John Piper's](#) Desiring God, Let's say you were to also run across...

https://sermonquotes.com/wp-content/uploads/SQ_Encourage_Rebuke_750x750.jpg

Again, you need to exercise caution, and not be so swift to share things from Jackie Hill Perry. Observe some of the things she says...

Jacky Hill Perry is clearly embracing Critical Race Theory, a tactic of Cultural Marxism contrary to the Gospel.

IV. Seek Clarification From Those Who Have Insight

Proverbs 11:14

Where there is no counsel, the people fall; but in the multitude of counselors there is safety.

Proverbs 24:6

For by wise counsel you will wage your own war, and in a multitude of counselors there is safety.

V. Distinguish Between Guilt By Association From The Error Of Guilt By Cooperation

Matthew 9:10-12

Now it happened, as Jesus sat at the table in the house, that behold, many tax collectors and sinners came and sat with Him and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said to His disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?' When Jesus heard that, He said to them, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick.'

<https://i.swncdn.com/media/1200w/via/8948-gettyimages-photos-1.jpg>

VI. As You Guard Against False Teachings, Don't Make Over-Corrections

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

https://m.msccruises.com/en-gl/Mobile/Assets/About-us-640-380_135156_12229_433-265_Images.jpg

Correction= "Ep-An-Or-Thaw-Sis", meaning, 1. restoration to being upright or an upright state.
2. correction, or improvement.

VII. Some Practical Tips To Evaluate Those Who May Be Slipping Into Error Or May Be Full Blown False Teachers

1 John 4:1

Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

1 Thessalonians 5:21

Test all things; hold fast what is good.

<https://www.bustle.com/articles/177578-why-do-olympians-bite-their-medals-the-answer-is-much-less-bizarre-than-you-d-think>

There's the Holy Spirit who leads the true teacher in sound doctrine and there are demonic spirits influencing human teachers towards false doctrine.

Test = "Dock-Ee-Maw-Zo", 1. to test, examine, prove, scrutinize (to see whether a thing be genuine or not), as in metals. **In the ancient world there was no banking system as we know it today, and no paper money. All money was made from metal, heated until liquid, poured into molds and allowed to cool. When the coins were cooled, they were comparatively soft.**

People would bite down on them to test their authenticity. Pure gold is a soft metal and biting down on it would leave a noticeable mark.

VII a.) Test by doing a General Internet Search; The Person's name + key words:

***False Teachings.**

***Spiritual Gifts. Tongues.**

***Prosperity Gospel or Word of Faith.**

***Spiritual Warfare, Territorial spirits, Deliverance Ministry, Generational Curses.**

***Seeker Friendly.**

***Liberal Theology.**

***Progressive Christianity.**

***Aberrant views on Bible Prophecy, including Replacement Theology.**

VII b.) Specific Research of Primary Sources:

***Their official website, especially look at statement of faith, bio & endorsements.**

***Are they part of any other organization, or network & do those organizations have any statement of faith? What is their home church and who is their pastor?**

***Note who they associate with, but don't fall into the error of guilt by association.**

***Read or watch their blogs, videos, or preview their books with critical eyes and ears.**

***Examine their social media accounts: especially their Instagram and Twitter.**

VII c.) Search Discernment Ministry Databases...with Caution!

***Charismania: A Distorted view of Spiritual Gifts**

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***New Apostolic Reformation (NAR)**

***Celebrity preachers, of seeker friendly mega-churches, that encourage Antinomianism**

***Liberal Theology**

***Progressive Christianity**

***Replacement Theology AKA as Supersessionism, AKA Covenant Theology**

A Collage of the Following 3 Images:

<https://www.religionnewsblog.com/25244/faith-healing-or-foul-play-2008-cliff-fall-victim-sues-bible-school-students>

<https://julieroys.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/lake-campus.jpg>

https://www.gannett-cdn.com/presto/2020/06/14/PRRS/bde99785-97be-4500-9b18-dfa83c21168d-IMG_9704.jpg?width=1320&height=990&fit=crop&format=pjpg&auto=webp

To wrap up; some practical concerns of how bad doctrines effects lives, brings heart ache, and misrepresents God's name:

In 2008, a young man Jason Carlsen, who was at a party with 2 Bethel School of Supernatural Ministry students Zachary & Sarah, fell off a 200-ft cliff landing on a bank of the Sacramento River in Redding CA. According to Redding police detectives, the 2 friends / students they drove to the bottom of the cliff & thought they could save him through faith healing, but being unable to locate him they delayed calling 911 for 6 Hrs. The young man ended up in a coma and is a paraplegic to this day.

Another tragic event connected with the activities & doctrine of Bethel Church is the death of 2-year-old Olive Heiligenthal:

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2019/12/21/bethel-church-prayer-hasnt-brought-olive-back-life/2724417001/>

Olive's mother Kailey was a worship leader for Bethel Church; the day after Olive' death her & her husband in a series of IG posts, vowed that God would raise her from the dead. #rd & 4th day's they posted great days for a resurrection. They began to have special worship & prayer meetings for Olive's resurrection. They created a trending hashtag #WakeUpOlive, gaining national media attention. But finally on the 6th day, Olive's mother, Kailey, is a singer and songwriter — posted Update on Bethel's IG account, indicating the family's hopes of resurrection have been abandoned. "Here is where we are: Olive hasn't been raised. The breakthrough we have sought hasn't come," Bethel Music wrote in the post. "And so, we are moving towards a memorial service and celebration of her life."

Acts 17:11

These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness, and searched the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.

Walter Martin:

"Controversy for the sake of controversy is sin. Controversy for the sake of truth is a divine command."

Warren Wiersbe:

"Believe God's Word will save you, mature you from childhood to adulthood, and equip you to serve the Lord. Satanic deception is rampant today and has infected the church, and the only weapon that defeats the deceivers is God's inspired Word."

Parents have over 3,000 hours a year to teach their kids about Christ. The church has their children on an average of about 40 hours a year; Parents please don't rely solely on the church to teach your kids about God and the Christian worldview!

1 Thessalonians 2:19-20

For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Is it not even you in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming? For you are our glory and joy.

Paul says those who are the fruit of his spiritual labor / investment, will be for him a crown ("Stephanos") of rejoicing at Jesus' presence (@ His Bema Seat).

This crown is a victors wreath / garland / chaplet given to successful athletes in the Olympian games.

1 Peter 5:4

...when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away...

Exercising discernment and contending for sound doctrine is not solely the task of pastors and church leadership, for God is calling every disciple of Jesus to test all things and be careful what they listen to.

“The Church is facing a tsunami of deception in these last days, but accurately wielding the Word of God will defeat the strategies of the enemy every single time.”

John 3:16

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

The Proclamation of the Gospel. The Call to Repentance and Faith in Jesus.

End of Study

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