

COUNTERFEIT GIFTS

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THE GIFTS TO THE CHURCH

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Okay, what I wanted to speak to you about today is on the counterfeit gifts, false ministries in operation in the church. This is something that really we all need to be taught about because Jesus said we need to be aware of this and so did Paul and so throughout the Bible we're told to pay attention to those we are learning from and those that we are following, etc.

I want to just look at the different things that the Bible has to say about these things. There are five gift-ministries: apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers, pastors and of those five ministries that work within the church, there are counterfeits to each of those, also. They are false ministries in each of those categories, too.

But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we (2 Corinthians 11:12). For such are false apostles (that's the word pseudo-apostle, that's the only place in the Bible, it just means they are "like", isn't that what pseudo means? Kind of like something? But not quite, not genuine. That's what this is, a pseudo-apostle, a want-a-be.), For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ (v.13). This is something they do. This is an action they take. They transform themselves into the apostles of Christ.

And no marvel; for satan himself is transformed into an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:14), therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works (v.15). Well in a sense, that's the truth for all of us. We're all going to be judged and we're all going to have that baptism of fire, as it talks about. But you know the nice thing for the rest of us is that it also says on the day of Pentecost there was another baptism that came. It was tongues

"like as a fire" and like as a means it is a type of. So the baptism of the Holy Spirit actually is a type of the baptism of fire to come. The baptism of fire to come is going to baptize your soul so to speak. In other words, the works that you have done, the wood, hay and stubble is going to be burned. The gold, silver, precious stones is going to last for eternity. But since we have the Holy Spirit available and that is like as unto fire, if we will allow the Holy Spirit to cleanse us now, it will be cleansed before we get to that fire. In that sense we are all going to be judged according to our works, but if we will judge ourselves now, then we won't go through that judgment then. Isn't that neat? I'd rather have that done now. The Holy Spirit hurts less than fire. But anyway their end shall be according to their works.

I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little (2 Corinthians 11:16). That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting (v.17). Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also (v.18). For ye suffer fools gladly (He's not real nice to these guys that he's talking about. You put up with these fools gladly seeing that you are so smart that's why you've got these fools fooling you. You have these false apostles sneaking in there.), For ye suffer fools gladly seeing ye yourselves are wise (v.19). For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face (v.20). In other words all these things are going on and they're still trying to convince themselves that they are true apostles. Look at how they are being treated by their leadership. Paul is saying, "Well, you know. I'm not that smart, but you guys are putting up with fools and it's because you think you're so dang smart. Why don't you take a look at the results of what's going on around here and how you are being treated and the leadership is doing this and maybe you'll wake up." Paul was pretty good to the Corinthians. I mean he really tried to shake them up there, but...

I'm going to read you verses 12-14 here out of the NIV. "I will keep on doing what I am doing in order to cut the ground from under those who want an opportunity to be considered equal with us in the things they boast about. For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as the apostles of Christ and no wonder for satan himself masquerades as an angel of light". See others had come into Corinth and they were calling themselves apostles. They were showing proof that they were greater than the likes of Paul because they were prosperous and they weren't suffering. They were able to live off the people, yet it was Paul that went in here and set up the church and then moved on and rather than doing what the Bible talks about is honest in terms of you know communicating unto those that teach well and labor is worthy of his hire. Instead these guys came in here and then they set up shop and for the proof of their apostleship was how prosperous they were. Well look at this, I mean well after all, they have to be good. Look at the size of the offering. You know what I mean? That's exactly what was happening in the church at Corinth. While Paul is out here having to work with his hands to support his own ministry for the outreach that he was doing, and these guys were back here doing, "Yep, Paul, you know he talks really tough in his letters, but he's just a little guy and he doesn't even speak good English, you know and the criticisms that they

gave..." Paul wrote back and said, "Don't worry when I get there, I'm going to be just like I say I am in the letter that I send you. Don't worry." But anyway.

Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed (I can see not having him come into the house, but what do you mean, don't even bless him? That's what it says here in verse 11): For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds (2 John 9-11). You know so many times I have seen where it may have even been a proper arrangement or a proper ministry ordained by the Lord at one time, but then it becomes corrupt, but then out of a sense of, maybe a sense of owing or a sense of whatever, people continue to support it and people continue to bid it Godspeed even though it has now gone off course and what does the Word of God say? It says when you do that then you are a partaker of the evil deeds, also. Even by praying for it or wishing it godspeed. This is how we are all in a sense watchmen within the church. Because all of us sin and fall short, so we are suppose to restore such a one in the spirit of meekness and that's, if we will all see this happening in the church, we will see how much more effectually the Holy Spirit can do things. Because the Lord will chasten and rebuke whom He loves, but many times when He tries to chasten and rebuke, the people of God say, "Oh, no. We can't let that happen to him. I mean after all look at the wonderful things that have happened in the past." So the people of God come in and step in and stop the chastening of the Lord. But anyway. We don't want to be a partaker of the evil deeds. We would like the Lord to come in and chasten and rebuke and bless a person so they can continue with the ministry that the Lord has called them to if they choose to. Well.

"And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, (He wanted to converse with them and tell them the things and warn them of the things that were going to happen after he left.)(Acts 20:17-18). For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God (v.27). Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood (v.28). For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock (v.29). Also of your own selves (In other words, he's looking them right in the eye and saying, "Some of you guys..." Some of the men that he had ordained as elders...) Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them (v.30). Not after the Lord, but after themselves". Sometimes there is just a subtle difference. What we need to do with leadership is what we should be doing with leadership is discipling people to the Lord Jesus. But not discipling people to ourselves.

Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears (Acts 20:31). For the space of three years he spent his time warning them about various things and teaching them so that they could be prepared for that which may come in the future and here he is giving them actually a prophecy and

telling them what is going to come in the future. Did they listen to him? Let me take you to Revelation.

"Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write: These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars I his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks (Revelation 2:1). The seven golden candle-sticks represent the churches; the stars represent the angels of the churches. I know thy words, and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil (You can't put up with them. They didn't wish them Godspeed.); and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars (v.2); And hast born, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast labored, and hast not fainted" (v.3).

So did they listen to Paul? See this was written long after Paul had moved on and even after Paul's death that John is writing this revelation to the church in Ephesus and yet the Lord is saying through John there that they had tried the apostles and found them to be liars. So did they listen to Paul's warning? I should say so. I should say that when Paul told them, "Look there are going to be these wolves that come in among you. There are going to be those that try to draw men and disciples unto themselves. Be ready for it." I should say that they were ready and they found them to be liars. It doesn't say that some didn't get drawn after them, but the church is still there for them to write to.

I have seen situations where the false apostles came in and the false prophets, where those leaders where the wolves in the sheep's clothing came in and by the time people figured out what was going on, the church was gone.

Now a church can be destroyed by the devil and it can also be taken by the Lord, if you'll keep reading there in Revelation you'll see there is a situation where if they did not bring back their first love, the Lord was going to take their candlestick. So the Lord is the head of the church and He has the right to move in if the leadership will not allow Him to run it. But there is the other side of the coin of division that's caused by the wolves in the sheep's clothing where the false brethren unaware snuck in. But Paul warned them by the Spirit of God living and dwelling within him and therefore they went back to the Lord and He was able to show them so they were able to find those false apostles and call them liars. Some of them came from their own ranks as friends. Well. There's just a lot of good stuff in there that we can learn from. Well. We have false prophets also.

Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves (Matthew 7:15). Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? (v.16). Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit (v.17).

And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many (Matthew 24:11). And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold (v.12). This is talking about in the last days. Now isn't that interesting that in Ephesus when that letter was written to them in Revelation it said, "Look, you've done all these good things. You've found the false brethren. You've found the false apostles. You've called them to be liars."

But then what the Lord reproved them on was that they lost their first love. Now here in Matthew it says that when the false prophets rise, they deceive many and because iniquity abounds, the love of many shall wax cold. It doesn't necessarily say that all the people whose love waxes cold are evil. But it is because of the iniquity. Now haven't we experienced that? Because of things we see that we just say, "You know or to heck with it." I know I have experienced that. You see the iniquity, you might even confront it, you might even do like they did in Ephesus and say, "Hey, you're a liar." Either literally or you go to them and point out something that's not right, but after a while if you don't come back to the Lord and allow Him to take the burden, do you know what happens because of that iniquity? Your love grows cold. You may lose your first love and you can't allow that to happen.

In other words if these things occur, and they will occur, whether we each individually come across this or not, is not the point, but the church will come across this and it has been with us since the first day, but in the last days it even will become more apparent. Even as the light gets brighter, the darkness is also going to be more apparent, too. We can't allow ourselves to have our love grow cold. We need to learn how to reprove and to reject, if necessary, not to give Godspeed if we see something that's incorrect. If the reproof has been brought and it's been rejected, then we need to not allow our love to grow cold. We need to come back to the Lord and let Him minister to us and to our church so that we keep our first love. Because we could still be affected by it even though we're not corrupted by it.

Now let's move on to false teachers. But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction (2 Peter 2:1). And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of (v.2). And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you; whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not (v.3). You know this is really a terrible thing. It's always been within the church to some extent, but for you to speak the damnable heresies you know, obviously if they speak a damnable heresy they're not going to say, "This is a damnable heresy." It's going to be cloaked. It's going to be covered and it's going to be mixed with other things because why would anybody receive a heresy like that unless it seemed to be right? Once again it denies the Lord and it denies the power of the Lord. It denies that which He is doing and many times they begin to deny the Lord when someone is speaking to them as a false teacher and somebody comes up and says, "You know, that's not right. Or that's not all right." and they say, "No." and they begin to deny that which was the reproof given to them and they in that sense, in that way, also are denying the Lord.

But there is something very important that you need to see right here in verse three and that is, "...with feigned words they make merchandise of you..." This is very terrible that we see this in the church, but it definitely comes into play. I've seen it many times. In India I saw it very big. But it's in our church here that people need money. They make merchandise of the people and they say, "Well, alright you take these guys and we'll take

these guys and then we'll split it up or..." You know there can be an order to that that's Godly, but there can also be what's the motivation? Is it because of merchandise? Is it because of money? Is it because of...both in Timothy and in Titus, when the rules are set down by the Lord as to what are the requirements of an elder in the church, you see it over and over and over again ... not for filthy lucre sake. They're not doing it for money. Now, yes a workman is worthy of his hire. Paul taught us that, but he also, when it came right down to it, Paul was going to do his ministry whether anybody helped him or not. He had to go out there and make tents and do whatever he had to do. He had to do whatever he needed to do. It didn't matter. He was going to do it and get the job done, even if it was a little bit more. He knew how to be abased and he knew how to abound. It says he knew how to have all and to suffer need. Then it says "I've learned in all things to be content" and then he says, "I can do all things through Christ which is in me." But he learned that. He didn't just get born again and the next day make that statement: "I can do all things through Christ..." You know. He learned those things because he went through the process of being abased and abounding.

This is a very evil, evil thing. To turn people into merchandising, Balaam. To look at the people in terms of what good gain could come from it. Unfortunately, this is also a temptation we are going to look at. It is a temptation to anybody in leadership. It is a temptation for anybody. Aren't you tempted in your job, whatever it may be? To maybe cut a corner here or do that or do some little bit of dishonesty if you think it might bring a little bit more gain a little bit more quicker? So that doesn't mean that you do it. Because you're going to be honest and we need honesty in Christian leadership, too. But we need to also understand that it is the great temptation that comes to leadership especially when there is not oversight. That's why I believe in the Word of God that the church organization is set up with elders so that there are people to show account to one another. That doesn't mean that one may not rise up because of the gift that's in them, but we have to show account to one another.

I know that myself, for my own self and where the Lord has called me out and where He has placed me, operating in so many ways, so many of the things He has me doing, nobody else knows. It's between He and I . In a sense He needs that because that's why He's called me there and He's called me for whatever His reason may be to do those things. In a sense that's a dangerous place because when you have things that are just between you and Him, if you don't balance that with humility, etc. you can get off. That's why I seek for godly men and women that are willing to reproof and correct me and to point out to me and to do it in love and allow me to take it back to the Lord, of course, but I seek for godly associations of accountability. Because you know why? I have seen many, many people with so many greater abilities than I have, go down. Obviously they didn't go down on purpose, did they? They were deceived.

Now I don't believe the Lord called me because of my abilities. I believe He called me because of the gifts that He gave me, but the point is that many people with many more abilities that should have been able to maybe do so much more, have gone down, so myself I take this in a very humble fashion that if the Lord's calling me personally to do certain things, I'm certainly not going to trust in my abilities. I have to trust in Him. We're

not, in my life I pray that the Lord would reprove me before I would ever give in on a temptation on making a merchandise of men. I'm not saying that the temptation has come up, but there haven't been ministers that have approached me with this type of thinking. It's astounding to me that it actually happens, but it does and that's why it's in the Bible.

So anyway. Pray for me. I pray for me that I will be honest, too, because these warnings are in here for a reason. Well, alright.

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears (2 Timothy 4:3). And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (v.4). In other words because of the heaps of teachers the piles of teachers, obviously the doctrines that come with those teachers, then people turn away from the truth. It's not that they intended to turn away from the truth. Obviously they were intending to receive the truth, weren't they? I believe their intentions were to receive the truth, that's why they were getting the teachers, but they heaped them and what ended up was they turned from the truth and what they began to believe were untruths or fables or children's stories. That's why James says to not have many teachers, many doctrinal teachers.

False evangelists , euaggelion. "As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach (that word preach is the same root as the word for evangelist) If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:9). Oh, Paul is not very nice. You are supposed to bless and curse not, Paul. Well, this is how serious he is about the true gospel being preached.

You know that the gospel is not just a message, the gospel is a Person. Jesus is the Good News. Gospel means Good News. Jesus is the Good News. An evangelist is someone who has a long suit in preaching the Good News. The ministry of an evangelist has nothing to do with the audience, it has to do with the gift. When that person with the gift of an evangelist, preaches the Good News and there happens to be unsaved out there, when they receive the Good News, what happens? They get saved and there is great joy in that place. According to faith there is also miracles and healings. If that person with that gift of the evangelist preaches the Good News and the audience happens to be people that are saved, what happens? They still receive it. There is still great joy. There is a lot of reconciliation to Christ that happens and according to faith there are miracles and healings because that's the ministry. The ministry is not the audience. The ministry is the gift. The results may be slightly different according to the audience, but there is always going to be great joy because the Good News has been preached and there is going to be miracles and healings, obviously according to the faith, but that comes with that ministry. But if you preach any other gospel you don't have the great joy. You don't have these things happening and the Lord is not magnified. Because He is the gospel. He is the Good News and when we preach the gospel, when we preach the Good News, it's the Lord that we get to know. Neat?

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtlety, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ (2 Corinthians 11:3). For

if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might bear well with him" (v.4). Don't even receive it. Don't even take it once you realize there is another gospel, especially when it comes to the gospel. The gospel is always simple.

Now I'm not saying that all Bible teaching is always that simple. You know, if you have done any kind of research, there's times when you are like, whoa this one little detail takes me to that detail and that takes me to another one and there are times when you need to sit down and sort through something biblical. Well, that's teaching when you expound like that. When it comes to the pure gospel, I mean the pure preaching of Jesus, that is evangelism and that is always simple. There is simplicity in Christ and when you come in preaching another Jesus and it is not simple like that, and it's starting to tie up your spirit inside in knots and you're going, "Oh, wait a minute here..." that's not the pure gospel and Paul is saying, "Don't even deal with it because you might get tripped." Keep that simplicity and don't listen to the preaching of another Jesus, because the true preaching is simply preaching Jesus. The gospel is Jesus.

False Shepherd: "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy; I (Jesus) am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly (John 10:10). I am the good shepherd, the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep (v.11). But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth; and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep (v.12). The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep (v.13). I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (v.14). See the true shepherd gives his life. He's willing to die for that little ol' sheep. The shepherd you'd think is worth more than a sheep. But yet he's willing to die for that sheep. He'll fight off bears. He'll fight off wolves. But you hire somebody to do the job, what happens? Well, he looks just like the shepherd, doesn't he? And he does the shepherd's job, doesn't he? Right up until adversity, and then he runs.

But you know biblically it is an interesting thing. I know this about shepherds in the Bible. The word for "pastor" in Ephesians 4 is the word "shepherd." It is the same word, that is the one place they translate it in the New Testament as pastor, but it is the word shepherd. It is just the same word for the guy that watches over sheep. The neat thing about shepherds though, in the Bible, like David and like Jacob, etc. most of the time when you see a shepherd, no they're not a hireling, they weren't somebody that was hired to do the job, but they're also not the owner. David didn't own the sheep, his dad owned the sheep. Really a true shepherd understands that. They are not his sheep. They belong to his father. He's just watching over them. But he is not a hireling, either, he is a relative. That's the true shepherd. That's the true shepherd. Well.

I had that happen to me one day. I was down in my room down stairs and I don't know what I was doing. I don't think I was in prayer, I think I was just doing something. The Lord spoke to me and said, "They're My sheep. They ought to go where I send them." I thought, "Hey, I'm not trying to hold anybody back. You know"...and I started listing all

the people I helped move on to other places, you know, and that's all He said to me. I'm like, "Okay, what am I going to do with that information?" So I was defending myself right away. "I don't see anybody I'm holding back." About ten minutes later the phone rang and a friend of mine from one of my prayer groups called me and said, "Hey, do you mind if I come fellowship with you guys tomorrow?" I said, "Sure, great. Come on over." Well, it turned out that the Lord had spoken to him and he had been praying about, "Where can I go to learn more meat and learn more things and get closer to You Lord?" He said, "Go fellowship with Lloyd." The thing about it was though he was a member of a church and I was friends with the pastor. If the Lord hadn't spoke that to me, do you know what I would have done? I would have said, "No, no, you really probably should stay where you are" but since the Lord said, "Listen, they are My sheep and they ought to go where I send them" so then when it turned out He was sending somebody to me, it was like I didn't chase them off. It was the opposite of what I thought.

But we are His sheep. We are His children and the sheep of His pasture. We ought to go where He sends us. A shepherd is certainly going to be watching over and a shepherd sometimes might know that, "No, no. You're not being sent over that creek. No, no. That is really your own soul. Come back." That is the job of a shepherd. But at the same time the shepherd is not going to draw them after himself.

The other thing a shepherd is not going to do is scatter them. See, I'm not going to read this because I covered this on the section of the pastor but you can write this down: Ezekiel 34:1-6 and Jeremiah 23:1-4 is the attributes of false pastors and false shepherds and the sheep rather than being fed are being fed upon. The sheep are being fleeced, so to speak and the sheep are scattered. But when the true shepherds are in the flock and there's not one shepherd except for the chief Shepherd, is Jesus Christ, but the other shepherds within the flock, there is more than one and they work together. But yet they...I think I'll tell you another little story, if you don't mind my little stories.

In my church we have an eldership and we've had that even before we really understood the fullness of the necessity for eldership, etc. There's nothing wrong with having a person called a pastor, that's what I'm called, but we need to separate and understand the difference between a title that may come from that, I mean you can have a church and you can have an apostle in the church, you can have an evangelist in the church, you can have a pastor, that can be your job in that church. That does not necessarily signify a gift-ministry within that person. There is nothing necessarily wrong with that, but we can't confuse the two. Well, anyway it especially coincided when the Lord had called me out. Now the Lord called me out a long time ago and I'd travel within my region for quite a while within especially Western Montana and taught in other churches, etc. and that's been something the Lord had put on my heart and I enjoyed doing, but really more recently in the last few years has He sent me out as it has turned out to be around the world and things like that. There was some that rose up out of our ranks in our church that decided that really I wasn't called to do this job of pastoring and leading the eldership over this church and they felt that they were. So therefore when I didn't really think that was the Lord's will. I did take it to the Lord and I was very, would have been happy to have that happen, or I was happy to continue working with them if they would like, but

instead they decided that their agenda was a little bit different than what I thought the Lord's agenda was, so therefore they drew men after themselves and basically what we had was what happens unfortunately in the body of Christ very often is a division or a split and we basically split in half. I saw it coming long before and approached the Lord as what to do and follow His guidance and much of that was just to stay in prayer and not do too much as far as, certainly not to go against this, well, within a few months, nearly everybody had come back. The few that didn't, were months after and some even to this day were scattered. This person that did this, I really honestly believe has the gift inside of a pastor, but they were being disobedient to the Lord in operating in that and drawing men unto themselves and what happened was exactly what happens to false pastors. That is the sheep are scattered. That is just the opposite of what a true pastor does, which is bring the flock together and then leads the flock where they need to go to pasture to be fed. So that example is what I saw and so therefore by the fruit we know where the pasturing really is being done because where are the people still being fed and where are they together? And where have they been scattered. So by the fruit we'll know them.

So we've talked about false apostles, false teachers, false evangelists, false shepherds. I want to read you some great information, actually it was just given to me this morning. It's just wonderful how the Lord always supplies. This is something that the Lord taught Rick Joyner in the context of false prophets, but really I would say it is in any of the counterfeit gifts that this is going to be true.

The majority of the book of Jude is talking about counterfeit gifts, basically. Men that are leading people astray. Woe unto them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core (Jude 11). Those three men in the Bible, you probably know who Cain is and you probably know who Balaam is and Core or Cora is the one false prophet that rose up when Moses was up on Mount Sinai and got the golden calf to get going and all that good stuff that he did as a favor to God and so then the people that followed after him were destroyed. I think there were about six-thousand of them that were swallowed up.

But each of these three categories, by looking at these examples of these three men. Cain: that means maker or fabricator. Cain's sin was that he refused to do the will of God. He was self-willed. He had his own agenda. More ministries have been pulled aside, probably, because of somebody had their own agenda and refused to submit that. We're supposed to lead every thought captive unto Christ, but when we lead most thoughts captive unto Christ, but we won't bring this one little agenda that we have that we're so sure we're doing a favor to God by keeping it away from Him, what we have done is the sin of Cain because we've gone off and then many times the Lord will bring reproof. In Cain's case He spoke to him Himself, but it was still rejected because of that personal agenda. Because he has self-will rather than the will of the Lord first. Remember when Jesus prayed, "Nevertheless not My will be done, but Thy will be done." That's not the kind of prayer that Cain prayed. So you have that one, the self-willed person.

Then you have Balaam which means a devourer or a conqueror of people. If you remember the record of Balaam, he was able to receive as a prophet information from

both sources. He received information that was earthly, sensual, and devilish. He received information that was just glorious. Some of the greatest blessings that were ever spoken over the Children of Israel came through the mouth of Balaam. But he still died with the enemies of God. Balaam is after riches and he's after honor and glory. He's after that which he can gain in this world. Honor and glory forever and ever unto the Lord of hosts. In Romans 13 it says to give tribute to whom tribute and honor to whom honor. Honor many times is not always financial, but they are tied together so much, that incense that goes to heaven and also that honor that goes to heaven, but it goes to heaven through the leadership. When the writer of Hebrews, whom I believe is Paul, when he wrote the book of Hebrews and reproved those Hebrew Christians on the tithe he did not reprove them for giving the tithe and get on them and say, "Listen you are not under the law, what are you doing giving your tithe?" He didn't even, no, the tithe is still to be given and he pointed that out to them, but what he pointed out to them is "Why are you still giving it according to the old law?" In other words, why are you still taking it down to the temple and giving it to these Levites that haven't confessed Jesus as Lord? Is that smart? Instead we have a new high priest that set up under the order of Melchizedek, who doesn't come from the lineage of Aaron. Now he pointed out that, "Yes, the honor and the incense goes through that direction, but let's get it straight with Jesus Christ as the Head." So in other words he's after the glory and the esteem and the incense and all that goes with that and it includes the money and it includes the honor and the esteem and Jesus said to be real careful with that because if you receive your reward now, you don't receive it in heaven. It doesn't mean that we don't give reward and we don't give honor and tribute to whom tribute.... and it says that he that preaches the gospel should live of the gospel. There's nothing wrong with that, but we don't go after filthy lucre. We don't divide the people like they are merchandise. That's what Balaam does. He merchandises the people and makes merchandise out of them. Well he's got power. He walks in power and that's why he is in demand.

Then you have Cora which means uncovered. As we talked about it in the section on apostles and it's come up before that every ministry has its limits. It has its Godly limits and the authority that's been set by the Lord. Cora does not stay within his limits. Cora goes beyond his limits and tries to say that he has authority in places where he has no authority. I've seen this happen. I've seen apostles that have Godly authority in certain areas where the Lord has even ordained them to teach in certain areas and to complete a task, let's say, of bringing the people of God into a more fullness of the understanding or action in their lives in a certain area and within that area they walk in their true apostleship. But then when they try to stretch that apostleship into other areas where they may have teaching authority, but not apostolic authority, what happens then is deception. What happens then is basically you might say their anointing is not in that areas of the apostle. So if they stay within that area of that apostleship the church is blessed. We grow nigh unto the Lord. The church grows up in all things unto Him who is the Head. Then they want to move over into this other area. If they want to operate within the authority they have as a teacher, the church once again will be blessed, will be drawn unto the Lord, will grow up into all things unto Him who is the Head. But when they try to take this authority of the apostles and bring it over here, then we have trouble. When Paul came to Jerusalem and brought the money as a messenger with the money, the offering to

give to the needy in Jerusalem, he was received with open arms. But see he had been told while he was in the temple by the Lord saying, "Don't stay here. Get out of here because they're not going to receive your testimony" but when he came back years later, not as a messenger bringing finances, but as he came back as an apostle endeavoring to walk in his office of the apostle within that church in Jerusalem, what happened? Lots of trouble. It wasn't received. See the Lord had given him limits. Go to the gentiles. Now he could come back on a visit, possibly, but when he came back on a visit and tried to use apostolic authority and his heart was right to bring unity, but what happened. It wasn't the results that he would have like to have seen. Those three things were very, very wonderful and I thank God for bringing those to me this morning.

Really within what we call counterfeit gifts or false apostles or false gifts and really you could break that down into two categories: you might call them the false gifts and the fallen gifts. The Bible just says, false, but you in your mind could see that some that never had received Christ, even. And then some that have, but have fallen.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven (Matthew 7:21). Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? (v.22) And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (v.23).

Jesus said, "I know my sheep and they follow after Me." He knows His own. But these guys get up there and they say, "Hey, let us in," and He says, "I never knew you." These men never confessed Jesus as Lord.

I heard a story very recently about a man who got a bunch of tapes. He got Oral Roberts, Billy Graham, Hagan, a lot of different men and he just learned their sermons. He went out and started preaching and made some good money until this scandal was shown and actually he went to jail. While he was in jail he started reading the Bible and he confessed Jesus as his Lord and he got born again. But had he died before he got thrown in jail and confessed Jesus as Lord, he'd have been in this category. Because even though he was out there preaching the gospel, men and women may have even gotten born again under the words that he preached, but he had never confessed Jesus as Lord. Yep. Jesus said, "I know My sheep" in John 10:14.

"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us (1 John 2:19). But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things" (v.20). These men had been with them but they refused to stay. They had been within the brethren, but they decided not to stay with the things of the Lord and they went on. He was even pointing out that they had an unction from the Holy Spirit and you can tell right from wrong.

Many times true ministers go astray because of personal ambition and pride. Their gift will still be real, but operating in accordance with 1 Corinthians 13:1. Unless it is

operating in that same way with love they don't receive a reward. The anointing will be gone and most often the power will be replaced with knowledge and doctrines to cover for the absence of empowerment. They will seek to exercise control over uncorrupted ministers in a sense to take virtue from them or to have their ministry help up by these others.

There are a few things we can do to help prevent this: "Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses (1 Timothy 5:19). Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear" (v.20). This is one thing that took me a while to learn. I was taught in accordance with Matthew when your brother sins against you, you go to him. You talk to him and if he receives you, you've won your brother and if he doesn't then you go before witnesses. Then you take it to the whole church. Finally one day I saw this distinction. When my brother offends me I go to him. But if it is an elder, if it is a church issue, you don't go to him personally, you take it before witnesses. You know why that is? In the Word of God because so many offenses have been buried because it went one on one and it got covered instead of repented for. So when it is an eldership issue, when it is a leadership issue, when it affects the church, witnesses. That section in Matthew 18:15-17 you can look through there. That deals with your brother, not with an elder.

"But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain (Titus 3:9). A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject (v.10); Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself" (v.11). The NIV in verse 9 says, "But avoid foolish controversies and genealogies, and arguments and quarrels about the law, because these are unprofitable and useless". So you can prevent some of these things by not allowing these things to continue on when we see them come up.

"And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage" (Galatians 2:4). Do you see the difference? Liberty or bondage, we have one or the other. But the liberty comes through the Holy Spirit, where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. Where the Spirit of the Lord isn't, there is bondage. That doesn't mean present, that means also in operation.

"To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you" (Galatians 2:5). Verse 5 in the NIV says, "We did not give into them for a moment so that the truth of the gospel might remain with you. We didn't even listen to them because it was wrong and it would have brought you into bondage". That's a true overseer. That's a true pastor. What Paul was doing was protecting the people from that.

Another thing we can do is preserve. Preserve the unity that we have. "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Corinthians 15:33). The NIV says, "Do not be misled, bad company corrupts good character". So handing out with bad company will eventually start to wear off on you. It's like some of these times you meet with some

of the bad characters and say, "I've been slimed." If you'll understand that in terms of discerning of spirits, it's the Lord trying to tell you something. That the bad company corrupts good character. What Paul said in Galatians about these kind of guys: "I would they were even cut off which trouble you" (Galatians 5:12). You know what he was talking about, don't you? They were preaching the circumcision and he said, "I wish they would just get cut off." I don't know if Paul would make it as a television evangelist or not.

"Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2 Thessalonians 3:6). In other words to help preserve the unity that we have and preserve that which we have from the Lord Jesus Christ withdraw ourselves from those that are disorderly. You know one of the things I just see in the East many times they have olive gardens and olive trees in their vineyards and a lot of times it is the old olive tree is still giving forth fruit but it was rotted at the trunk and it would fall over except for the fact that they let the shoots that had come up that were around the trunk hold that tree up and therefore that tree was standing even after it was rotten because of the good shoots that were there holding it up. Many times we see that in the body of Christ. We have something that at one time was fruitful but now is corrupt and rotten, but because we won't withdraw from it like Paul said to, what are we doing? We are holding it up instead of letting that natural pruning take place.

"And if any man obey not our word by his epistle; note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed" (2 Thessalonians 3:14). See by holding him up, he never has that opportunity to have the true reprove and correction from the Lord. But what could happen is if we withdraw and pull that support back is then they can be ashamed. If they'll repent then Godly sorrow leadeth us into repentance. Actually that is good. You've helped the Lord do His job.

"And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it" (2 John 6). We continue to walk in His commandments and don't stop.

"Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself" (1 Timothy 6:5). I've actually heard this where I kind of joked about it earlier, but I've actually heard this one, "Well it had to be right. Look at the size of the offering." I'm like, "Whoa." They suppose that gain is Godliness. That all the wealth that we're bringing in and all the cars that we have and all the condos or whatever... the prosperity is good. He wants us to prosper and be in health, but even as our soul prospers and just looking at that prosperity is not a judgment of Godliness. We need to understand that and when that's starting to be taught, withdraw ourselves.

How can we purify ourselves from this after we've come into contact with us? "Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (Titus 1:9). To have that sound doctrine so

inside of you and held so fast that you are able to exhort and to convince even those that are gainsayers.

"Warn a divisive person once and then warn him a second time; after that have nothing to do with him knowing that he that is such is subverted and sins being condemned of himself" (Titus 3:10-11 NIV). Now remember we are talking about a person here, we're not talking about an elder. That way we need witnesses for it. But if we will follow these rules that the Lord has given us, they are for a reason, to keep us pure and to help us purify. This is how we protect from this in the church.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned (of us); and avoid them" (Romans 16:17). It doesn't say to take a gun and shoot them, but avoid them. "For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple" (v.18). I don't think that's meaning simple being simple-minded, but the pure hearted. Those that really, most Christians are very pure-hearted. We can't have that. We need to avoid this.

You know I had an individual one time, a minister, that we were discussing some things where I thought he was teaching some things that had bad fruit and then he turned right around and told me, that asked me if I would like to have him come speak at my church. That was an illogical question because if I see bad fruit, why would I want to bring him in and have the people there have to sort through it? I would rather have him sort through it first and then if the door was to open... See in other words, I'm going to avoid that. I'm not going to put myself or the people that the Lord has asked me to watch over into a position like that.

Romans 16:17 in the NIV says, "I urge you brothers to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teachings you have learned and keep away from that". That's very simple.

"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24:24). In other words, if you make it possible, they may do it.

"I have written to you in my letter, not to associate with sexually immoral people, (1 Corinthians 5:9) not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and the swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world (v.10). But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat (v.11). What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? (v.12) God will judge those outside. Expel the wicked man from among you" (v.13).

Remember the record where in the book of 1 Corinthians he talks about some of the things that were going on at that church at the time. They actually had a man who was

doing some things here that weren't so good and they finally, after having gone through the process and talked to them, he wouldn't receive the reproof so they expelled him. Well, by 2 Corinthians, Paul is writing them and saying, "Hey. Okay he repented. Let him back in." But they actually did him a favor because he refused to repent so by putting him back out he was like, "I miss the fellowship of the saints. I'm missing something out here." We all do because we are part of a body. So he eventually the Lord was able to work with him because they were not supporting him like that olive tree example I gave you so therefore he did repent and then Paul was saying, "Okay. Now you can let him back in."

In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; (2 Corinthians 11:26). So you have your own countrymen, your own brethren, and the false brethren crept in unawares that can put you in peril. Paul obviously being a watchman of the first order, was still put in peril because of these coming in. So I think we can learn a lot from Paul. If Paul had his life put in jeopardy, then we also need to be very aware and watchmen for this so that we can catch it and we can follow the word and reprove and rebuke when necessary, but the main thing is to protect and to purify and to keep those of us that want to stay under the Lordship of the Lord Jesus Christ with pure hearts and simplicity can do that.

"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Colossians 2:8). See we need to be watchmen. We need to be aware because we are all human beings and we all have our weaknesses and we all have those things that we need to rely upon others to teach us. I would like to think that I could be humble enough and meek enough in my heart that I could receive any member of the body of Christ if they had something for me from the Lord. In other words if the Lord chose to work through that little child even, and they had something from the Lord, I would hope that I would be meek enough to receive it. I have to be able to do that knowing that I don't know it all and I need to receive it from the Lord however He chooses to bring it to me. At the same time I need to be aware when those things come and they're not from the Lord. I have to be able to try them.

"Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom (James 3:13). But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth (v.14). This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish (v.15). For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work" (v.16). See, most of the division that you see comes in first subtly and then you see the envying and strife comes in and then is division. Sometimes that goes through that fast and sometimes it takes a little bit more time, but if we will be very much like Paul was and beware and be watchmen, we can stop this because I don't believe that any of it has to happen. Now individuals may fall, but churches don't have to because the Lord is the Shepherd and He's watching out and He's the One that can say, "Hey, beware. You lost your first love now repent before I come and take the church. I like to tell the story of how I taught my daughter about discerning of spirits, basically. Or discerning of doctrines you might call

it. Basically when you are listening to that which is being taught or propounded or spoken of, remember out of your belly shall flow river of living water. Your spirit, that which is your inner-most core of your being, I just told her to listen to her tummy. If you're starting to hear things or see things and your stomach is starting to go 'errr' it's time to start judging, meaning discerning, that word for judgment. Paul says we're going to judge the church and judge angels. It's not the word that Jesus used when He said, "Judge not lest ye also be judged." The word Jesus uses is the word "to criticize" but the word Paul uses is the word for discernment or to discern like truth from error. So to discern. So use your spirit and listen to it. Train yourself to where it is like: "Wait a minute. This is not easy to be entreated here."

Now I'm not talking about in your mind where you might have to push yourself to learn something new, but I'm talking about in your spirit, in your inner most part of your being, in your belly or your tummy. It works real good.

"Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed" (2 Corinthians 6:3). I just like to end by going to Ephesians 4:11 and reading about the true gifts in operation.

It says that after Jesus ascended up on high He gave gifts unto men. That's why they're called the ascension gifts because they were given after He ascended. "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" (Ephesians 4:11). The reason being for the perfecting of the saints so that we as saints could be perfected. For the work of the ministry, so that we can be prepared for the work of the ministry. So that the saints can be prepared to do the work of the ministry. Not that the gifts could do the work of the ministry, meaning those gifts over the church, but that the saints can be prepared so they can do the work of the ministry within the church. For the reason being the edifying of the body of Christ (v.12). So these ministries, the giftings in operation, in the church will bring unity, perfect the saints, prepare the work of the ministry, and edify us. The reason that we have this and we have it until we all come in the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man.

I like to joke when somebody tells me that there are no prophets or no apostles then I always read that to them and it says that we are going to have these ministries until we come into the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man. So then I always ask them if they are the perfect man it is talking about. Because there has to be one of them. But actually the perfect man it is talking about is the body, the man, the body of Christ in terms that we are all working in that unity of purpose with the great mystery working and operating in its fullness and showing forth by the church the manifold wisdom of God unto the principalities and powers. So we need to grow up in that and the full measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Ephesians 4:14). We don't want to be children so the ministries in operation will grow us up so that we aren't children. But they also will not allow us to be tossed to

and fro by every wind of doctrine. They will be like an anchor that helps to stabilize us over the teachings and the true doctrines of Jesus Christ which is the Rock and we won't be blown by the wind like the little grain of sand, but we'll be built upon the rock and this is what we have when the ministries, the five ministries, are truly in operation. The true ministries were built upon the Rock. We're growing up in all things and we're not blown about by every wind of doctrine. We're not children but we're growing up into the men and women that the Lord would have us to be.

"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Ephesians 4:15). This really ought to be our prayer every day for each and every individual as well as for those of us corporately as the church that we would grow up in all things unto Him who is the Head even Christ and this is why we go through this type of training and understanding these things so that we could truly be watchmen and see those things that the Lord has taught us through His Word that are good for us, easy to be entreated and good food so that we can be strong and be prepared and yes, can grow up in all things unto Him who is the Head and know Him who is the Truth, even Jesus Christ. As we know Him, experientially, then that Truth makes us free.