

A. Guard against Counterfeits: Know TRUTH & Deal with SIN

1 John 2:27-28 (ESV) *..But as his anointing teaches you about all things and as that anointing is true, not counterfeit—just as it has taught you, remain in him. And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears, we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.*

- **ABIDING In CHRIST** – John said in his gospel – this is the WAY to bear FRUIT! It is also a key way we know TRUTH and spot COUNTEREITS.
- **Small groups & The Way Abide** – *GREAT STARTING POINTS!*

Ephesians 4:12–14 (ESV) ¹² *to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,* ¹³ *until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,* ¹⁴ *so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.*

- **GOAL** → Unity of Faith → Knowledge of Jesus → Maturity → Measuring stick for grow is JESUS = Firm FAITH & protection from DECEPTION.
- **QUESTION:** Are you a student of the Bible? Can you self-feed? Prayer Summit, Bible Study, Set Free,– we do these **KEY PRACTICES IN COMMUNITY** – so we can grow as a CHURCH together but also as INDIVIDUALS. **We learn, and grow, much faster in COMMUNITY.**

Matthew 24:10–12 (ESV) ¹⁰ And then many will fall away and betray one another and hate one another. ¹¹ And many false prophets will arise and lead many astray. ¹² And because lawlessness will be increased, the love of many will grow cold.

- **Deception** → sin increases → love grows cold = people abandoning their faith.

Two things we are going to focus on: DEALING WITH SIN! & Study to know truth and spot deception!

B. DEALING with Sin, Hurts, & Brokenness (TOGETHER)

Isaiah 59:1–2 (NLT) ¹ Listen! The Lord's arm is not too weak to save you, nor is his ear too deaf to hear you call. ² It's your sins that have cut you off from God. Because of your sins, he has turned away and will not listen anymore.

- **Example:** Have you ever felt the chill in a relationship because of undealt with conflict or hurts?

Amos 5:14–15 (NLT) ¹⁴ Do what is good and run from evil so that you may live! Then the LORD God of Heaven's Armies will be your helper, just as you have claimed. ¹⁵ Hate evil and love what is good; turn your courts into true halls of justice. Perhaps even yet the LORD God of Heaven's Armies will have mercy on the remnant of his people.

RUN from SIN (repent) → THEN → God will be your HELPER

Proverbs 28:13–14 (ESV) ¹³ Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy. ¹⁴ Blessed is the one who fears the Lord always, but whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity.

Hiding Sin = Consequences in THIS life → Confessing SIN = MERCY! Praise God!

Acts 3:19–20 (ESV) ¹⁹ Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, ²⁰ that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus,

Repent – turn from sin! THEN → Times of refreshing will come from the Lord!

1 John 1:9 (ESV) ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Confess your SIN = Jesus will wash away EVERY stain! CLEAN!

James 4:5–10 (ESV) Scripture says, “He yearns jealously over the spirit that he has made to dwell in us”? ... Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Jesus yearns for YOU! → Therefore → Confess your SIN

John 13:6–10 (ESV) Jesus washes the disciples feet and commands them to do this for each other. WHY?

Jesus Expectation = Church would confess sin together

James 5:15–16 (ESV) ¹⁵...And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶ Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

Confess SIN together → Pray together = HEALING → DEALING with SIN = Power in PRAYER

Psychology & brain science: Unresolved memories act like trauma on the brain.

- BAD things you have experienced – e.g. abuse, singular events, etc.
- GOOD things you missed – or small things you just aren’t processing.

For example: we live in an age where MANY use distraction with devices to avoid dealing with stress in their lives... This COMPOUNDS the stress and can eventually lead to ANXIETY and/or depression.

- **How do you process hurts, stress, failures? SHARING WITH OTHERS – who are understanding – CONFESSION IS THIS!**

Addictions – the first step any addiction program will tell you is, “break denial structures” or similar. What does this mean? This is a confession to someone else!

SHAME, PAIN, & CONNECTION: Here is the problem... if I asked everyone, “from 1-10” how much pain do you want to feel? (loneliness, rejection, shame, fear, etc.) NONE? 3? 4? What about if I asked, “from 1-10, how high do you want to feel positive emotions?” (joy, peace, happiness, CONNECTION, etc.) 10??? Would anyone want less?

- **PROBLEM: When you set up mental barriers to protect yourself from pain, you set up walls that keep people out and rob yourself of CONNECTION.**
- E.g. addiction – is the result of medicating PAIN – such as rejection, loss, hopelessness, shame, abandonment... these are some of the worst things we FEEL. Usually, the pain is the result of a RELATIONAL break somewhere in your recent or distant past.
- **The problem is YOU NEED RELATIONSHIPS TO HEAL.**

1. Set Free! 1 week away!

My Story: My best friends – We ALL confess to each other, My marriage didn’t get healed till we dealt with our sin, I didn’t find freedom from addictions until I confessed with others (regularly), freedom from anxiety came slowly – but I didn’t HIDE – I confessed (shared with others!)

C. KNOW Truth: Be a Student of Scripture: Study, obey, discern

Acts 17:11 (ESV) ¹¹ Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

Actively listened to teaching → Examined Scripture DAILY

James 1:22–25 (ESV) *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. ...But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.*

STUDY – REFLECT – OBEY = Protection from DECEPTION (blessing)

2 Timothy 3:16–17 (ESV) ¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Study & Apply Scripture = COMPLETE & EQUIPPED for LIFE

QUESTIONS from Southlanders! “Good Bereans!”:

1. **Jesus is God – I stated as a qualifier along with this verse - 1 John 4:2 (ESV)** ² By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God,
 - **John is referencing his own gospel when he writes here... so we go back...**
 - **John 1:1–5, 14 (ESV)** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God... And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
 - **1 John references John = Jesus came in flesh, is God, is the Christ**
2. **Hell – Is Southland Annihilation or Eternal Conscious Torment?**
 - **Matthew 25:45–46 (ESV)**... And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”
 - **Irenaeus also believed and taught the eternal nature of the soul & heaven & hell**
 - **IMPORTANT:** judgment is real, final, hell is a place of torment and punishment that we deserve, and the suffering there is worse than anything you could experience on this earth – with these agreed to. We debate DURATION. Debate it PASSIONATELY! But don’t condemn the other as a heretic!
3. **Biblical Inerrancy – this one received multiple questions! GOOD! What did I mean?**
 - **First**, the doctrine of biblical inerrancy has five main views.
 - **Second**, all five agree that the Bible is the Word of God.
 - **Third**, the debate is over how we define Word of God, inerrancy, inspiration.
 - **THIS is what I was referring to!**
 - **Two summaries of the debate of inerrancy:**
 - i. The Bible is the Word of God and is true in what it *means* to say.
 - ii. The Bible is the Word of God and is true in what it says.
 - **You can be saved and differ on those two statements.** That said, I think “means” to say has and is currently leading many people down a dangerous path.
 - **Who determines what it means to say?** Often it starts with a date, custom from the OT, etc. then slides to a culturally acceptable interpretation. DANGEROUS.
 - **There are Christians who love Jesus and hold both views.**
 - **God cannot err; the Bible is God’s Word; therefore, the Bible cannot err.**

Three Categories when Discerning Teaching/Doctrine/Christian Music:

1. **Salvation Issues**
 - **Antichrist spirit teachings fit this level.**
 - **Denying Jesus is God, the Christ, who came in the flesh.**

- **Offering an alternate way to Salvation** – By the grace of God, we receive the forgiveness of sins and eternal life when we place our faith/belief/trust in Jesus for salvation. **KEY** – Jesus is the Son of God, God, Messiah, Christ, died for our sins, rose from the dead, ascended into Heaven and is coming back to judge the living and the dead and establish a Kingdom that will have no end.
 - **What about the Bible?** What if people do not believe it is the Word of God?
 - i. **John says Jesus is the WORD** – Paul said to TIMOTHY – SCRIPTURE is GOD BREATHED.
 - ii. **DENYING JESUS IS SALVIFIC – LEVEL 1. Defining Inerrancy isn't that.**
 - **Revelation 22:18–19 (ESV)** 18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, 19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.
 - i. This is a SERIOUS warning. But, applies to Revelation!
 - **2 John 7–11 (ESV)** 7 For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist. 8 Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward. 9 Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, 11 for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.
 - **Those that persist in antichrist teachings – DISUNIFY – NO FELLOWSHIP – CAREFULLY.**
2. **Aberrant issues – are CRITICAL issues. These would be doctrines that could quickly lead to salvific issues above.**
- **Biblical inerrancy** - could fit nicely here. What is meant by inspired? CAREFUL.
 - **Hell debate** – Ann vs ECT ONLY IF judgement is being removed! Moving → UNIVERSALISM! (level 1)
 - **ALERT but UNIFIED**
3. **Secondary issues – even though they come third, they are called secondary issues. We are not given a fourth category!**
- Baptism age? Age of the Earth? Timing of the rapture? ANN vs ECT (duration)? Gifts of the Spirit? PARTS of the Biblical inerrancy debate!

Ephesians 4:1–6 (ESV) 1 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

(if possible) Unity on the Essentials (salvation)! Grace in everything else!

CLOSING: are YOU → Dealing with the sin, brokenness and hurts in your life? Are YOU → studying the Word? Are YOU → Obeying the Lord – a DOER of the WORD?