

Let's Not Drop Our Guard

I. Introduction:

A. We all know that our brethren are those whom are fully obedient to our Lord (**Mark 3:31-35**).

1. Knowing that, we know that someone calling themselves "faithful", "members of the church", "Christians", etc. doesn't mean very much (**Matthew 15:7-9**).

2. Thus, we know to examine those professing to be our brethren (**Revelation 2:1-2**).

B. We'd also do well to be reminded that those whom we really need to be concerned about are those whom are skillfully deceptive (**II Corinthians 11:3-15**, **Galatians 5:7-9**, and **II Peter 2:1-3; 18**).

1. We have to remember that those posing as our brethren, desiring to teach things that are false, can be crafty and we would be at fault to fall for it (**Ephesians 4:14; 5:6-11**).

2. Know that they don't even feel bad about being liars (**I Timothy 4:1-2**).

II. Body: Lessons Such As This NEED Taught (**Colossians 2:4-8; 18-23**).

A. Let's continue training our minds to be ready to stand against those whom would creep in unawares (**Jude 1:3-4**).

1. We must maintain a militant mindset (**Ephesians 6:10-17** and **Philippians 1:27**).

2. The mindset of not giving them even an hour amongst us (**Galatians 2:1-5**).

3. Also, remember that any one of us could fall and decide to divide from the inside (**Acts 20:29-31**).

B. We have to be fruit inspectors (**Matthew 7:15-20**).

1. If those professing to be our brethren really are our brethren, they'll fully understand why we're on guard (**I Thessalonians 5:21** and **Revelation 2:14-16**).

2. We can only be unified with those whom are truly; Scripturally, like-minded (**Philippians 3:16** and **II John 1:6-11**).

3. We have to be prepared to aggressively, with proper discernment (**John 7:24**; cf. **Proverbs 17:15**), act against those whom bring about contrary things amongst us (**Romans 16:17-18**).

C. You have to be aware of what to look and listen for (**II Timothy 2:14-18**), so consider a couple of things...

1. The faithful are open, honest (**II Corinthians 2:17; 4:2**) while the false are subtle and use trickery (**Galatians 3:1**).

a. This would include those whom twist Scriptures (**II Peter 3:15-17**).

b. This would include those whom place unscriptural burdens on others (**Acts 15:24**).

c. This would include those whom have impure motives behind their questions (**Mark 12:13-14**; cf. **II Timothy 2:23**).

2. Ignorant people who try to teach or those who try to bring about senseless discussions (**I Timothy 1:3-7**).

D. It is impossible to cover everything, so we let add in this.... We know anyone coming from a "denomination" are NOT Christians (**John 14:6**, **Acts 2:47**, **Acts 4:10-12**, etc.). So, wolves are those within or pretending to be members of the church.

1. Therefore, we would do well to keep up on the "trends" amongst the erring churches of Christ to be aware of what to listen for and watch for.

a. Divorce and remarriage issues are huge. Be armed to defend **Matthew 19:3-12**, **Romans 7:1-6**, **I Corinthians 7:1-15**, etc.

b. Know the authorized means whereby we may use the Lord's money. Be prepared discuss how aiding needy saints (**Romans 15:25-27** and **II Corinthians 8:1-9:14**), supporting faithful evangelists (**I Corinthians 9:1-14** and **Philippians 4:10-18**), supporting faithful elders (**I Timothy 5:17-18**), and supporting widows indeed (**I Timothy 5:3-16**) is all we have clear authority to spend the funds collected on the first day of the week (**I Corinthians 16:1-4**).

c. Know how to defend that **Romans 14:1-15:7** is concerning AUTHORIZED liberties rather than doctrinal unity in diversity.

d. Know how to look for traditionalism (**Mark 7:1-9**) versus those whom really follow only the Scriptures (**Colossians 3:17**).

e. Watch out for those who think the church is a building or is dependent on one. The church is the assembly, the people (**I Corinthians 12:27**). We can meet anywhere that is not sinful in itself (**Acts 2:42-46**, **Acts 20:7-11**, **Romans 16:3-5**, etc.).

f. Watch out for those whom practice institutionalism rather than their own individual responsibilities. I.E. Orphan/widow home supporters instead of individual responsibility (**James 1:27**), etc. Preaching schools, colleges for bible teaching, worship, etc. instead of individual training (**II Timothy 2:2**) and the organization of the local church (**Ephesians 4:16**).

g. Those who follow preachers, drop names of preachers like that is a sign of faithfulness (**I Corinthians 3:21-4:6**).

h. Locally, each end of the month and in other classes, we discuss various errors (on my website too). Pay attention (**Mark 13:5**).

III. Conclusion: Like Paul (**I Corinthians 11:1**), Let's All Be Set For The Defense Of The Gospel (**Philippians 1:17**).