

How Do We Avoid Serious Error?

Throughout the whole of society error and truth travel the same highways, work in the same fields and factories, shop in the same stores and even attend the same churches.

So skilled is this Satan instigated error at imitating the truth that the two are constantly being mistaken for each other.

Even the disciples failed to spot the traitor among them, the only ones who knew who he was was Jesus and Judas himself eventually.

The soft-spoken companion with whom we feel so much at ease may be an instrument of Satanic error.

While the plainspoken person whom we shun, may be God's very prophet sent to warn us against danger and eternal loss.

It is therefore critically important that every Christian takes full advantage of every provision God has made available to save them from this delusion.

1. Prayer

Prayer is **not** a surefire protection against error for the reason there are many kinds of prayer and some of them are worse than useless.

The prophets of Baal got in a frenzy of prayer but their cries went unregarded because they prayed to a god who did **not** exist. [1 Kings 18:25-30]

The Pharisees prayed to a God who did exist, but He refused to listen to their prayers because of their self-righteousness and pride.

This is a lesson we need to learn from.

Prayer can be a powerful way to get right with God, stay right and stay free from error.

James 1:5 [NIV] *“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”*

All other things being equal, the person who receives godly wisdom is less likely to be led into error.

Luke 18:1 [NIV] *“Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up.”*

The person who is constantly in conversation with their Creator is less likely to be drawn into error.

2. Faith

Ephesians 6:16 [NIV] *“In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.”*

Paul calls faith a shield that protects us from the deceptions that Satan fires at us.

A simple confidence in God protects us from error for God loves to be trusted and puts all the power of heaven at the disposal of those who trust Him.

When we talk of faith we need to know exactly what faith really is.

Faith is **not** optimism, although it may breed optimism.

Faith is **not** a vague sense of wellbeing.

Faith is confidence in God's self-revelation as found in the Christian Bible.

Romans 10:17 [King James] *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."*

The scriptures purify, instruct, strengthen, enlighten and inform, as to the very character of the God we can have faith in.

If we meditate on the scriptures every day that will be a good protection against error.

3. Obedience to God's Word

To be entirely safe from the Satan's deception we have to be obedient to the Word of God that we meditate on.

James 2:14-20 [NIV] *"What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, "Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed," but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, **faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.** But someone will say, "You have faith; I have deeds." Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that, and shudder. You foolish man, do you want evidence that **faith without deeds is useless?**"*

Faith in the Word of God that is **not** worked out in our lives, is of no use.

The driver on the highway is safe, **not** when he reads the signs but only when he obeys them.

So it is with scriptures, they are only effective when obeyed.

4. Humility

There is a close relationship between humility and the perception of truth.

Psalms 25:9 [NIV] *"**He guides the humble** in what is right and teaches them his way."*

In the Christian Bible I find no shred of encouragement for the proud.

John 10:14-16 [NIV] *"I am the good shepherd; **I know my sheep and my sheep know me**, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father, and I lay down my life for the sheep."*

This is an illustration of tame sheep **not** rebellious wild sheep, for tame sheep are the only type that can be led.

Luke 9:46-48 [NIV] *"An argument started among the disciples as to which of them would be the greatest. Jesus, knowing their thoughts, took a little child and made him stand beside him. Then he said to them, "**Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For he who is least among you all, he is the greatest.**"*

Only the humble childlike human can expect the guidance of the Father's hand.

When all the evidence is in, it may be found that none but the proud ever strayed from the truth into error and that self-trust was behind every heresy that ever afflicted the Christian church.

5. We Must Think

Human thought has its limitations, but where there is no thinking there is not likely to be any large deposit of truth in the mind.

Scripture takes it for granted that all Christians will be serious-minded thoughtful people.

The Hebrew word “*selah*” comes from the root word “*câlâh*” meaning to hang up or weigh.

We find this word over 100 times in Psalms and 3 times in Habakkuk.

Simply translated it means “*pause and think about what you have just read..*”

Scriptures never leave the impression that it is sinful to be a thinking person.

6. Illumination of the Holy Spirit

Thinking apart from the inward illumination of the Holy Spirit is not only futile, it is likely to be dangerous as well.

John 14:26 [NIV] “*But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.*”

Holy Spirit is given to us to teach us and remind us of the words of Jesus Christ.

John 16:12-13 [NIV] “*I have much more to say to you, more than you can now bear. But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.*”

Holy Spirit will lead us into all truth away from all error.

The Holy Spirit is our spiritual eyes and our spiritual understanding, we dare not try to live a Christian life without Him.