

The Book of Romans

The Gospel of God

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¹⁷ Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.

⁸ For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own appetites; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

¹⁹ For the report of your obedience has reached to all; therefore I am rejoicing over you, but I want you to be wise in what is good and innocent in what is evil.

²⁰ The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.

(Romans 16:17-20)

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¹⁰ If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into *your* house, and do not give him a greeting; ¹¹ for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds. (2 John)

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Watch Out!

- The ever-present danger of false teachers

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Watch Out!

1. The Description of False Teachers

- they cause dissension and stumbling by promoting doctrine contrary to the apostolic teaching
 - *implies that there is a body of teaching that is an essential, non-negotiable expression of the faith* (cf. 1 Timothy 6:3-5)

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Watch Out!

1. The Description of False Teachers

- they cause dissension and stumbling by promoting doctrine contrary to the apostolic teaching
- they do not serve Christ but their own “appetites” (serve themselves – their pleasures or ego)
- they conceal the error of their teaching by attractive and appealing speech

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Watch Out!

2. The Response to False Teachers

- “turn away from them” – do not greet them as fellow-believers but separate from them
 - *implies that unity in the church is never at the expense of the gospel* (contrast Rom. 14-15)

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Watch Out!

2. The Response to False Teachers

- “turn away from them” – do not greet them as fellow-believers but separate from them
- *why this response?* because “they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting”

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Watch Out!

3. The Need for Discernment

- we must be “innocent” in one sense – a freedom from sin and false doctrine
- we must *not* be “innocent” in another sense – a lack of wisdom and discernment about truth and error

“I want to see you experts in good, and not even beginners in evil.”
– J.B. Phillips

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²⁰ Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be babes, but in your thinking be mature.
(1 Corinthians 14:20)

¹⁶ “Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves.
(Matthew 10:16)

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