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A shopper strolls down the aisle of a grocery store, picks up each brand of a product, and reads the ingredients on the label until she finds the one that seems the best to her. But why does she bother taking the time to investigate each item? Isn't one bottle, say, of pure olive oil, the same as another? This shopper has learned otherwise. By experience, she has found that oftentimes items that are labeled "pure" include a mixture of ingredients, or what is labeled "natural" includes preservatives. So she diligently checks the labels, and this gives her peace and confidence that she's doing the best for her and her family. What about knowing how to choose our standard for doctrine and practice?

*Colossians 2:6-8:*

*As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.*

*Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain [empty] deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.*

That same diligence is required in knowing what is a true doctrine or practice and what is empty, deceitful philosophy. The world is fraught with aisles of mislabeled "truth." God's archenemy, the Devil, takes truth, adjusts it slightly so that its likeness is very near to that of the genuine, and falsely labels it truth. The word "spoil" in verse 8 of Colossians 2 literally means to carry off as plunder or booty. We can see that our adversary wants to deceive people and carry them off, leading them away from genuine truth with worldly philosophy that promotes his counterfeit version of "truth."

So how can a believer recognize genuine truth from the counterfeit? We want to be "rooted and built up" in Christ. And we do that by learning God's Word concerning what Jesus Christ accomplished for us and walking out on it.

We can be assured that the true God never mislabels. What He calls pure is 100 percent pure. His Word is truth, and we can trust in it at all times.

*Psalms 12:6:*

*The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.*

*Proverbs 30:5:*

*Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.*

Jesus Christ taught his disciples how to know the truth.

*John 8:31,32:*

*Then said Jesus to those Jews [Judeans] which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know [by experience or effort] the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*

By continuing in God's Word, by living it, we become experientially acquainted with the truth, and this results in our being made free. We are made free from the bondage of any physical, mental, or spiritual prison of the adversary when we know the genuine truth and live it. Knowing the truth is how we recognize a counterfeit doctrine or practice.

II Corinthians 2:11 tells us, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." Let's not be ignorant of the adversary's devices. Here are two simple questions to ask when trying to determine if a doctrine or practice is genuine or counterfeit: Who gets "the glory," or the attention? and What is the profit? Let's compare two situations from God's Word.

*Acts 8:9-11:*

*But there was a certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery, and bewitched [confused] the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched [confused] them with sorceries.*

Using sorcery, Simon confused the people of Samaria, affirming that HE was an extraordinary person. Do you see how he was leading them away from the truth? The people then gave their attention to HIM, as someone endowed with great supernatural power. Who got the glory? Simon. And what was the profit to the people? They were confused by his sorcery. And we can know from reading Galatians 5 that witchcraft, or sorcery, is a work of the flesh. The profit to the people was not God's will.

Now, let's look at the example of Jesus Christ.

*Matthew 15:30,31:*

*And great multitudes came unto him [Jesus], having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them:*

*Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.*

Jesus Christ healed many people of various diseases, but who got the glory? Who did the people glorify? They glorified God, his Father. And what was the profit to the people? They were delivered from their bondage. We know from Luke 4:18 that this is what God wanted Jesus Christ to do for His people. Once we recognize who gets the glory and what is the profit of a doctrine or practice, we can line that up with the Word to determine what is genuine or counterfeit.

In The Way Ministry our focus is rightly dividing the Word of Truth and teaching the inherent accuracy of God's Word. II Timothy 2:15 exhorts us to "study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." We teach keys to understanding the Bible so that we can absolutely know the truth, put it into practice in our lives, and be made free. This gives us the peace and confidence of knowing we're doing the best for ourselves, our families, and our friends. As we keep ourselves knowledgeable of God's rightly divided Word, we too can learn to recognize the genuine from the counterfeit.

*For more information, visit [www.theway.org](http://www.theway.org)*

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