

7 Terrific Tactics to Counter Satan's Deceptive Schemes

When does love stop being love and become enabling?

How far do we extend grace to those around us before we've crossed the barrier of grace into the realm of tolerating sin?

The answers to these questions are crucial for us in these last days as false teachers are growing in number and there is a greater tolerance of sin in the body.

While First John calls us to greater maturity, loving the body of Christ in this culture of hate, he moves on his second and third letters to put some parameters around this command.

When the body is facing these circumstances, strong measures must be taken to protect the body.

Measures that to some may seem unloving or lacking in grace; but in reality are one of the greatest expressions of love and grace.

Because those pastors and church leaders are ready to lay their lives and reputations on the line to protect their sheep from those who would devour and destroy them.

It is in these moments when a shepherd is truly fulfilling his God-given role.

Second John addresses those who preach another Christ

Third John addresses church leaders who rebel against their spiritual leadership and refuse to be under authority, while abusing their own authority to manipulate the body into submission.

Jude urges the church to contend for the faith against:

- Sexual immorality
- Rebellion
- Blasphemy (using Cain, Balaam and Korah as examples)

Jude follows up John's warnings with an even stronger message and then gives us seven ways Christians can avoid this kind of deception.

There are times when love of the body requires protection of the body.

There are times when loving the body means rejection of those who would:

- Damage the body
- Lead the body astray
- Bring disease and death to the body
 - Grumblers
 - Complainers
 - Sensual behavior
 - Manipulative and flattering words
 - Those who cause divisions and factions in the body

7 Ways Christians Can Avoid Deception

The challenge we face in heeding John's and Jude's warning is that we maintain a proper heart and attitude, because it would be very easy for us to grow cynical and critical toward the body.

After all, the body is made up of flawed and broken people.

People with baggage.

People with a lot of water under the bridge. People who are in the process of being sanctified, just as we are in the process of being sanctified. There is a great difference between those who have sincere heart to love God and keep His commands and occasionally mess up and

those who habitually sin.

• **1. Build yourself up in your most holy faith.**

This is why daily time in the Word and prayer is essential! How can we avoid deception when we are not intimately acquainted with the truth?

You must not rely on your pastor, favorite blogger or favorite YouTube preacher to build you up.

You need to [grab your Bible](#), get on your knees and ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to see the truth of His Word for yourself.

Build yourself up in your most holy faith!

• **2. Pray in the Holy Spirit.**

When we are saved and we are baptized in water by immersion. But there is another gift that God has for us.

The gift of the Holy Spirit.

Being baptized in water, we are dipped into the water. This is different than being baptized in the Holy Spirit. When the pastor baptizes you in water, he doesn't say, "Open your mouth and let me pour the water in."

But this is exactly what happens when we're [baptized in the Holy Spirit](#).

It's more than immersion, it's a saturation!

And a sign of that immersion is a [spiritual language](#); the ability to pray in the Holy Spirit, allowing the Holy Spirit to pray through us the will of the Father. But more than that, praying in the Holy Spirit gives

ordinary people the power to do extraordinary things! It enables us to better understand the Word of God. We need the Holy Spirit, our Comforter, our Teacher. He empowers us, protects us, and teaches us all things, so that when we encounter false teachers, we can immediately discern their spirit.

▪ **3. Keep yourself in the love of God.**

1 John showed us how we can keep ourselves in the love of God.

- Walk in the light
- Walk in obedience
- Love our brothers and sisters in Christ
- Keep our hearts from being entangled with the world
- Overcome the world through faith
- When we keep Christ's commands, we will keep ourselves in the love of God. However, I want to emphasize that our motive for keeping Christ's commands is crucially important!

If we keep Christ's commands so that He loves us, we are not keeping ourselves in the love of God.

We don't keep His commands to make Him love us. He already loves us. He loved us before we were ever saved. That's what the cross is all about!

We keep His commands out of love for Him! When we love Him so much that we desire to keep His commands, we keep ourselves in His love.

▪ **4. Look for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads unto eternal life.**

The word "looking for" in the Greek actually means, to accept or be accepted into, to receive

or to expect something promised.

We can actually restructure this to say, "Receive, accept, or expect the mercy (kindness, goodwill) of our Lord Jesus Christ that leads unto eternal life."

It is the kindness of the Lord that leads us to repentance.

Without His mercy, we'd all be destined for hell. Hopeless.

So, while Christians have already received the mercy and kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ that has led them unto eternal life, we need to continually remind ourselves that we have eternal life *only* because of the mercy of God.

There is a great temptation that comes with time to suppose that somehow we've managed to become good enough to receive the compassion and mercy of God.

Whether or not we realize, we all battle against this tendency.

Even more, there are those who minimize the blood and sacrifice of Christ in order to elevate the good works of man as a means of redemption.

These are false teachers, from whom we must run.

5. Have compassion, but with discernment.

Discernment is a sign of maturity.

I have been in congregations where compassion was given freely, but often without discernment. The result was chaos.

- Everyone teaching their own kind of doctrine.
- Manipulators preying on the unsuspecting.
- The few dominating the attention of the pastor, so those truly in need didn't get the attention they needed.
- Yes, as Christians we are called to give grace, to have compassion, to spread the love of Jesus, but with discernment.
- There are those who will come into the church, not as sheep, not as lost souls searching for answers, but as wolves, devourers and opportunists seeking to disrupt and infect the church.

Perhaps they themselves are not even aware, but are being used as a tool of the enemy to hinder the effective work of the church to win the lost.

This is why true discernment of the Holy Spirit is needed; so we know where to pour out our compassion.

So the work of the Holy Spirit through us reaches those who are ready and willing to receive the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life.

6. Rescue others with fear, pulling them out of the fire.

I like to interpret this verse not only as rescuing unto salvation, but also those who have fallen prey to false teaching or even blasphemy. Rescue them! "If anyone sees his brother commit a sin which does not lead to death, he shall ask, and He shall give him life. This is for those whose sin does not lead to death" (1 John 5:16).

- "When we walk in the ministry of reconciliation, given to us by God, we are continually reminded of the danger of sin and the mercy of God.

"All this is from God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ and has given to us the ministry of

reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18).

7. Hate sin.

The question I ask myself often is, "Do I really hate sin?" Do I truly despise, detest, abhor those things that nailed Jesus to the cross?

Because here's the thing:

If we don't really hate sin, if we play around the edges of sin a bit, the enemy is opportunistic enough that he will use that as leverage to gain a foothold in our life.

When rescuing those around us, we have to be so careful that we don't become so familiar with their sin that we begin to compromise in our own life.

And this happens more often than we would think!

▪ There is a quote by Alexander Pope:

"Vice is a monster of so frightful mien/
As to be hated needs but to be seen;/
Yet seen too oft, familiar with
her face,/ We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

The danger is, when we see sin too often and become familiar with it, we begin to endure it. Then, we begin to have compassion on it—compassion without discernment.

Finally, we embrace it.

This is why Jude urges: "but others save with fear."

In the fear of the Lord, rescue the lost, those who have wandered; knowing that if you don't fear the Lord, you will become too familiar with their sin!

My dear sisters, I believe this is a serious and yet necessary warning for us all. We are living in a time

when many false prophets and false teachers are distracting God's people from their true call and purpose.

They are preaching another Christ!

- They are watering down the gospel; they are minimizing the blood of Jesus, they are minimizing the seriousness of sin, and they are minimizing the blazing of hell.

We must protect ourselves from these.

We must protect those God has entrusted to us from these.

We must walk in compassion with discernment—not cynicism, not judgmentalism—but discerning the spirit of those in our path.

We must save the lost, but maintain the fear of the Lord, so that while living and walking among sinners, we don't fall into the trap of sin. {eo}

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