

# Discernment

## Part 4

### Signs or Trends of the Times

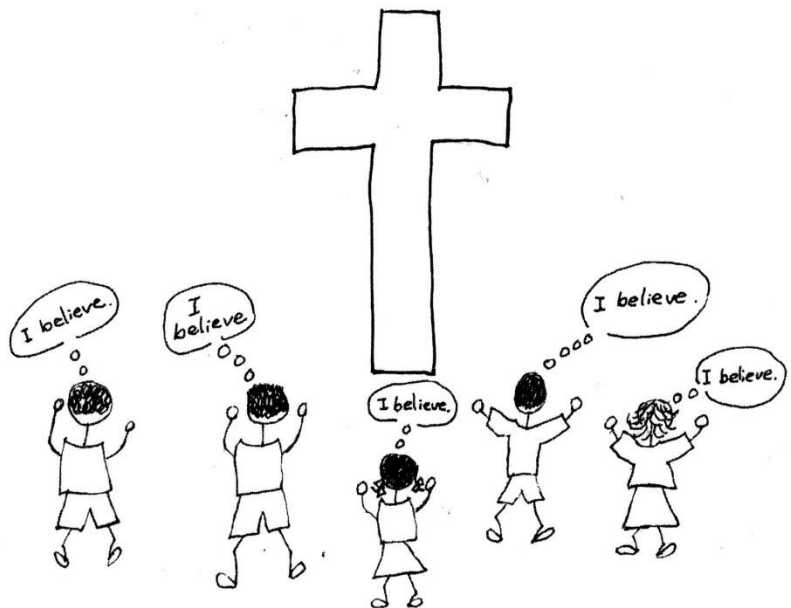
Revised 5-16-2014

Matthew 16:1-3 The Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Jesus, they asked Him to show them a sign from heaven. But He replied to them, "When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.' And in the morning, 'There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times?"



**GOOD NEWS FOR UNBELIEVERS!** Jesus Christ died spiritually on the Cross for everyone's sins. Then He died physically, was buried and rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father! If you are an unbeliever, you have the opportunity right now to believe! Simply tell God the Father that you are believing in His Son Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. If you make the decision to believe in Him in simple faith based on His work on the Cross, you are now a believer! You will spend eternity in heaven with Jesus Christ, your Savior!

*John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life."*



In our spiritual lives, **discernment** means we are able to see and tell the difference between divine viewpoint and human viewpoint. Having the power of God the Holy Spirit and the word of God in your soul, you can **discern** evil trends or courses in Christianity; you can tell the difference between divine viewpoint - what's important to God, and human viewpoint - man's self-centered viewpoint. Here are five evil trends in the world today. We are to stay away from them by using **discernment**!

1. **Ecumenism**, an evil trend which tries to have unity among all religions. Those working toward this are saying, "Let's all just get together and have peace on earth." The issue is not the Gospel! It's about man doing the work for salvation. It's about man forming a religion that makes fake copies of the things of God in order to deceive people. This is so the truth about the Savior will be hidden! Those involved try to make Christians who give the true Gospel\* seem to be the bad guys. They try to hide the very thing man needs - salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ!

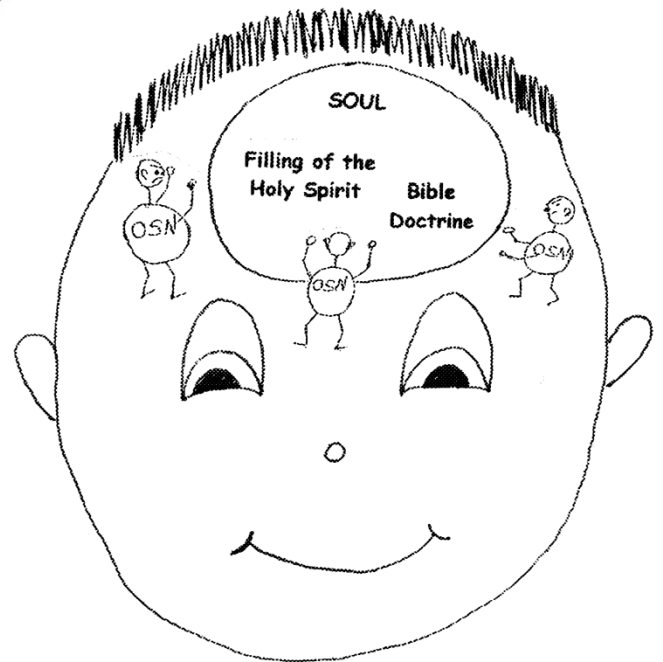
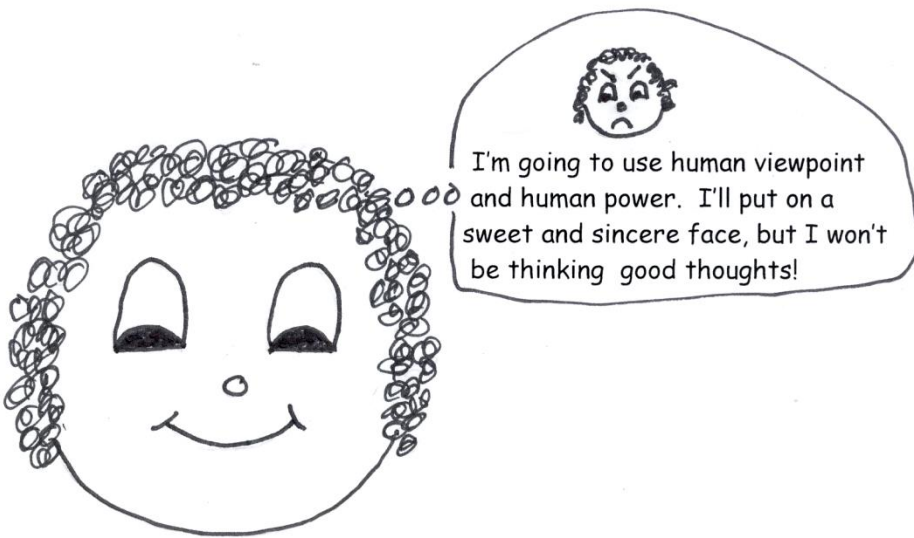
*\* John 3:16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, the whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.*

*Jeremiah 6:14 "They have healed the brokenness of My people superficially, saying, 'Peace, peace,' but there is no peace."*



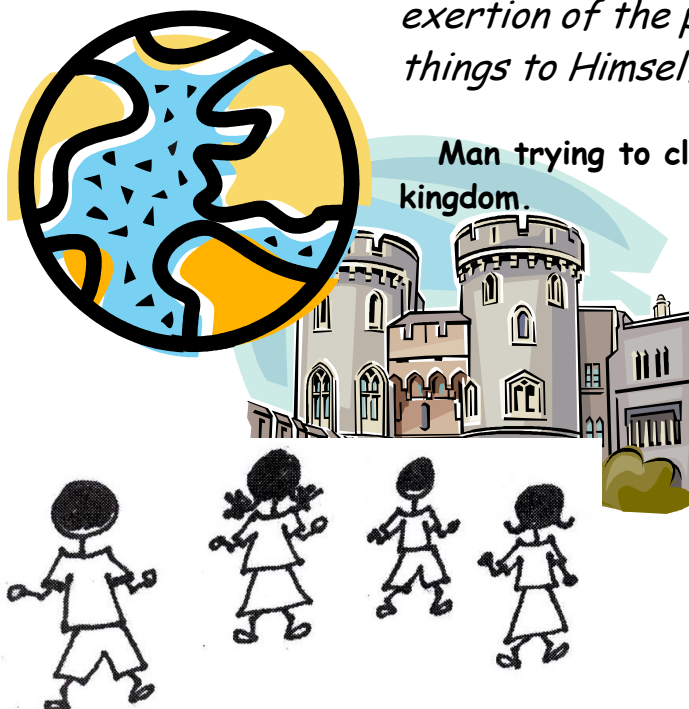
These people are confused!  
They need to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior. They need to learn how much God loves them and that He is in control of everything!

2. **Morality**, an evil trend which is a system of ideas of right and wrong disguised as spirituality. People try to look good on the outside when on the inside they are thinking with human viewpoint! True spirituality is living according to the word of God through the power of the Holy Spirit. *Matthew 23:27-28 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites. For you are like white-washed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. So you, too, outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.*



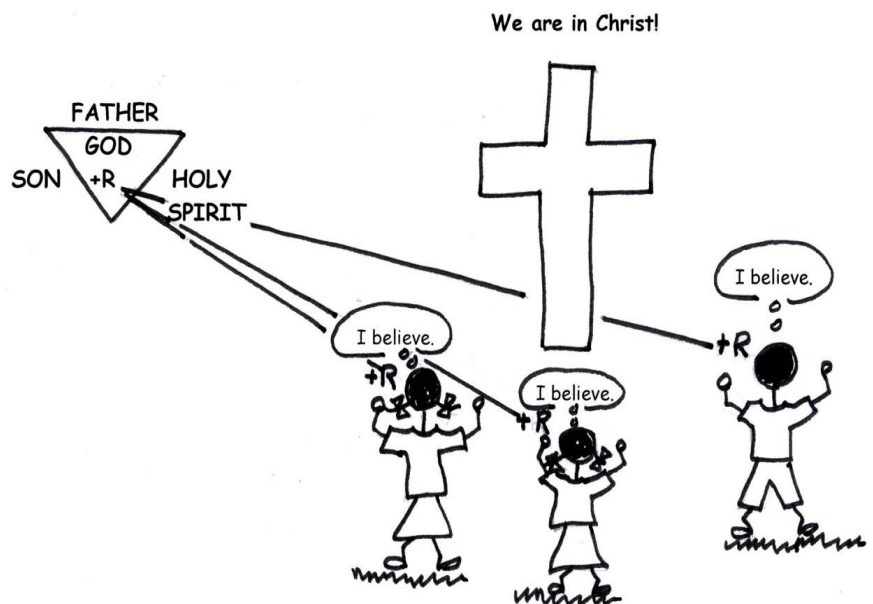
3. There is an evil trend of people setting up an **earthly dominion or rule disguised as the heavenly kingdom**. This is people saying that it is the job of the Church to clean up the world. This is human viewpoint! The phony or counterfeit church wants to take over and control society, countries, the world! These people say, "let us build the kingdom now, and when we have finished, we'll tell Jesus Christ to come on down; the world will be ready for Him." What arrogance! Jesus Christ will set up His kingdom in the Millennium and it will have perfect environment!

*Philippians 3:17-21 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction [sin unto death] whose god is their appetite [emotions], and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ [Rapture]; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.*



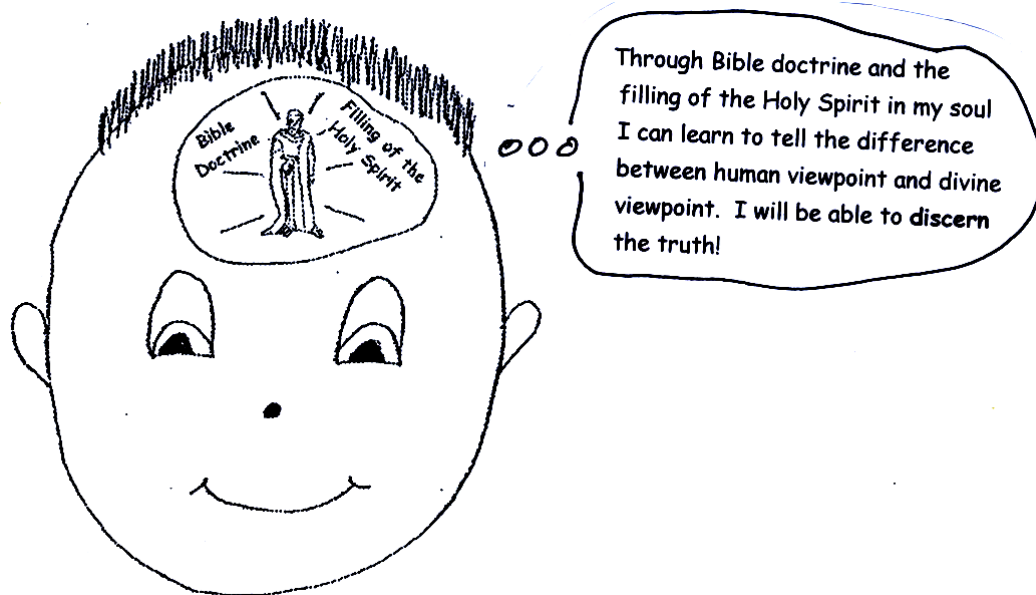
Man trying to clean up the world to be an earthly kingdom.

4. The social gospel replacing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, God's Son, is another evil trend. It's called a social gospel because those giving the gospel want to be socially acceptable! They are afraid to talk about the cross of Christ. They don't want to offend people. The bad people, they say, are those who want to give the correct Gospel, the saving work of Jesus Christ on the cross (John 3:16). Those giving the social gospel reinforce the lie that salvation can be achieved by doing good works. People like to do good works; it makes them feel worthy to receive praise or creature credit! God's word gives no commission or authority to the Church to fix the problems of this world. The job of the Church is to preach the Gospel and teach the word of God. It is God who fixes the problems of this world and it is He Who gets the credit!



Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

5. **Emotion and experiences hiding the truth of the Scriptures** is an evil trend. Satan will try to convince us that what we always wanted to do we can do in the new Christianity which is made up of myths - unfounded or false ideas. They try to do it with phony demonstrations of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit speaks Bible; the false spirit uses emotions and experiences. Satan wants to prevent believers from knowing who they are in Jesus Christ. Don't use emotion and experiences as guidelines; use the Bible!

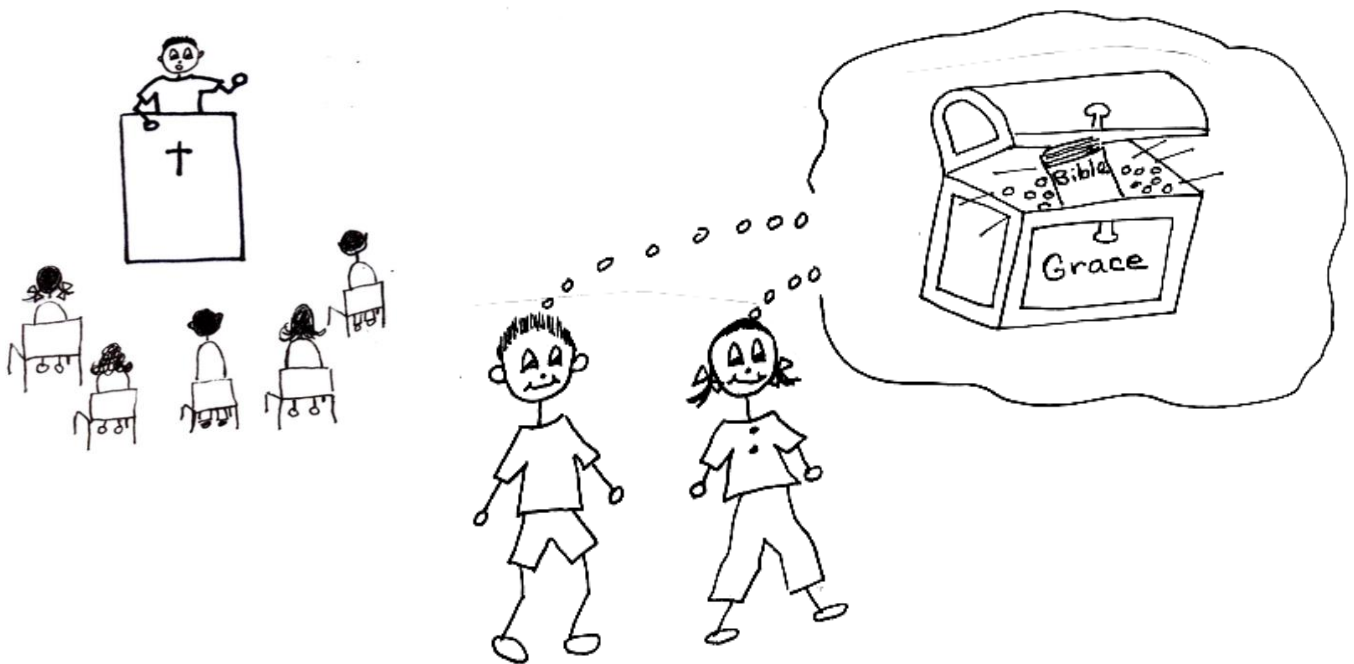


## 2 Timothy

4:1-4 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom, preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. (This is what Christians should be looking for in a Church.) For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears [be turned] from the truth and will turn aside to myths. Page 6



The Bible tells us that apostasy, or a major falling away from God's word, will occur in the time period immediately before the Rapture and the Tribulation period. This apostasy spreads after the Rapture of the Church. There will be a total rejection of biblical Christianity, and it will be replaced by the worldwide, ecumenical religion. However, it will begin its development in the last days of the Church age. Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ have no worries! We can see the trends and know that God said these things would happen. We also know that God will always be with us and give us the way to cope with whatever happens!

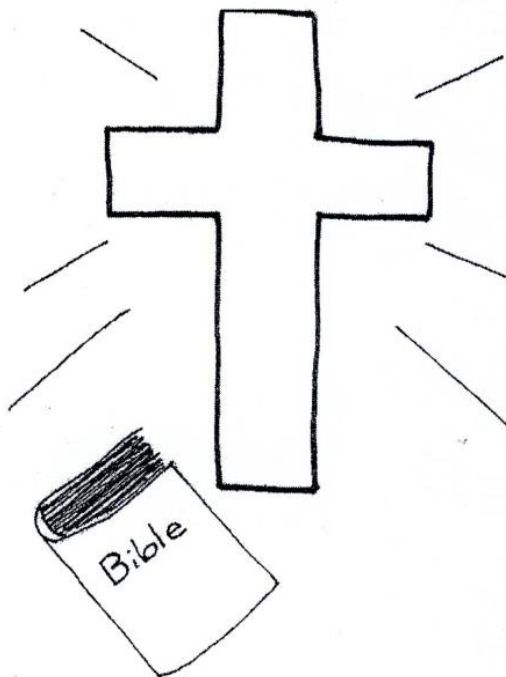


1 Timothy 4:1 But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons.



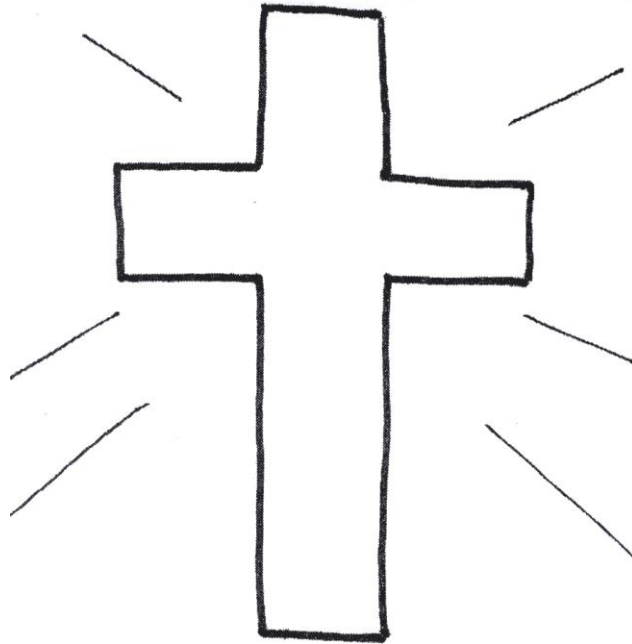
## Points to Remember

1. **Ecumenism**, an evil trend trying to have unity among all religions.
2. **Morality**, an evil trend which is a system of ideas of right and wrong disguised as spirituality.
3. There is an evil trend of people setting up an **earthly dominion or rule disguised as the heavenly kingdom**.
4. **The social gospel replacing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, God's Son**, is another evil trend.
5. **Emotion and experiences obscuring or hiding the truth of the Scriptures** is an evil trend.
6. The Bible tells us that apostasy, or a major falling away from God's word, will occur in the time period immediately before the Rapture and the Tribulation period.



## Questions for Discussion

1. How would you describe the evil trend of "Ecumenism"? Why is it wrong?
2. What is the evil trend of morality? Why is it wrong?
3. What is the earthly rule or dominion people are trying to make? Why is it wrong?
4. What is the social gospel? Why is it wrong?
5. What is wrong in living by emotion and experiences?
6. How would you describe apostasy? Is it growing in our country?



## Discernment Word Puzzle

I M L C K O X D N E R T M L B  
Z A A R X Y J S J Y Y H Y N K  
M S I N E M U C E J E Y W G A  
G E X P E R I E N C E Y S V J  
U H A B E L U R E D I W G A V  
Q H B E I R Y G H G V Q S H Y  
L S R V M Y S D O S R C E P T  
G R E O Z O A J L S I N V L I  
W Q O S S B T C K R P G Q A L  
V F P D C M S I X D O E N I A  
C P L L U J O Y O R N W L C R  
G N H Y E X P T Q N U Q E O O  
C H U R C H A M C E I T W S M  
Y Y W N Q J N O I G I L E R M  
Y Q C V L B O T L W R E Y V E

### Find These Words:

APOSTASY  
EMOTION  
GOSPEL  
RULE  
TREND

CHURCH  
EVIL  
MORALITY  
SIGN  
WIDE

ECUMENISM  
EXPERIENCE  
RELIGION  
SOCIAL  
WORLD

*Discernment Part 4*

*Signs or Trends of the Times*

References: Lighthouse Bible Church  
Pastor John Farley  
[www.lbible.org](http://www.lbible.org)

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