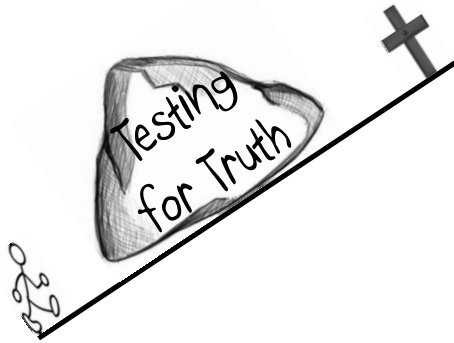


# Sharing with Latter-day Saints— Rock 2



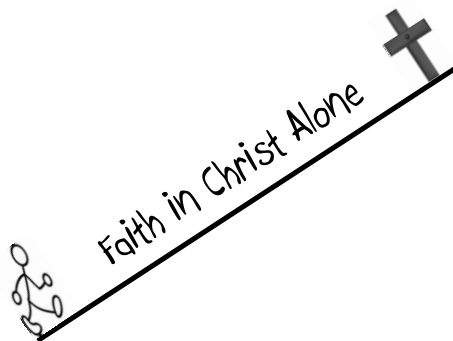
*Testing for Truth becomes an obstacle when we are unaware of the RELIABLE biblical Rx.*

## Clearing Rocks from the Road to Redemption

**The above diagram** depicts one of the common obstacles or “Rocks” that Latter-day Saints (LDS) frequently encounter when discussing matters of faith with biblical Christians.

**The below diagram** represents the ideal sharing scenario—the Rock has been cleared from the road to redemption. In other words, the only thing standing between LDS and being forgiven of ALL their sins is faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ ALONE to freely secure their salvation.

Note that the road to redemption is NOT on level ground, but is an uphill climb. This is because many LDS risk incredible loss (e.g. family, friends, social status, financial security, etc.) when contemplating leaving the LDS Church for a saving relationship with the Jesus Christ of the Bible.



## I. Rock 2 at a Glance

### A. The Purposes of Rock 2

1. One aim of this lesson is to identify four common tests for the truth of the LDS Church and its founding prophet, Joseph Smith, that are used by Latter-day Saints and which the Bible reveals as relatively UNRELIABLE. ***It is important to note that while three of these tests—namely, prayer, heartfelt convictions, and dependence upon the Holy Spirit are indispensable in navigating Christian life,*** they ARE NOT the biblical prescription (Rx) for authenticating alleged prophets of God.
2. The other aim is to identify the most RELIABLE test for alleged prophets—namely, their doctrines of God, Jesus and the Gospel as compared to biblical revelation. Granted, this is a negative test which exposes the fraud and doesn't necessarily authenticate the genuine, but if an alleged Christian church or prophet of God can't pass this test, it doesn't matter where else they may appear to pass with flying colors.

## II. Two Key LDS Scriptures

### A. Moroni 10:4 (Book of Mormon - BoM)

**4** And when ye [the Lamanites] shall receive these things [the record of the BoM], I would exhort you that ye would ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.

### B. Doctrine & Covenants 9:8-9 (D&C)

**8** But, behold, I [God] say unto you [Oliver Cowdery – Joseph Smith's scribe for translating the BoM], that you must study it [the BoM translation] out in your mind; then you must ask me if it be right, and if it is right I will cause that your bosom shall burn within you; therefore, you shall feel that it is right.

**9** But if it be not right you shall have no such feelings, but you shall have a stupor of thought that shall cause you to forget the thing which is wrong; therefore, you cannot write that which is sacred save it be given you from me.

1. From **Moroni 10:4** and **D&C 9:8-9** come at least four common LDS tests for truth: (1) prayer—"ask God" and "ask me"; (2) heartfelt emotions—"a sincere heart," "your boson shall burn," "you shall feel that it is right" or "no such feeling"; (3) dependence upon the Holy Spirit—"by the power of the Holy Ghost"; and (4) the Book of Mormon itself.

2. Four other frequent LDS tests for truth include: (5) fulfilled prophecy; (6) miracles; (7) blessings; and (8) the “fruit” of good deeds. **Moroni 10:4** and **D&C 9:8-9** may not be directly associated with these relatively UNRELIABLE tests; nevertheless, they warrant investigating.

### III. Prayer Is Relatively Unreliable

#### A. James 4:1-3 (NIV2011)

<sup>1</sup>What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?

<sup>2</sup>You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God.

<sup>3</sup>When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

1. The underlying principle here relates to praying with “wrong motives.” Simply stated: The more we stand to gain or to lose when asking God to reveal His will and truths to us, the more likely our selective hearing kicks in when listening for the answer.
  - a. Say, for example, we have two job offers and both are great career opportunities. Job A is close to home, pays really well, and is where many friends also work. Job B requires a long, crowded freeway commute, pays so-so, and the co-workers are virtual strangers. And so we pray for God to reveal which of the two jobs is His will for us. In other words, is Job A or Job B truly His will?
    - 1) How difficult would it be to hear God's answer to our prayer if Job B is His will?
  - b. Similarly, if we are praying to know the truth or falsity of Joseph Smith and the LDS Church, how difficult would it be for us to hear (let alone heed) God's answer if it costs us everything we hold valuable—including our very lives (see **Mt. 10:34-40; 16:24-26; 24:9-11**)?
2. Prayer is relatively UNRELIABLE because many people of faith have prayed to know the truth of Joseph Smith and the LDS Church and come to contradictory conclusions. (This is especially true of many lifelong, devout Mormons who are now former Mormons.)
  - a. **LDS Point:** Those who come to anti-LDS conclusions DO NOT pray with “real intent” (**Moroni 10:4**).

**Counterpoint:** Those who come to pro-LDS conclusions DO NOT pray with “real intent.”

- 1) Both sides beg the question by arguing in a circle. Clearly, prayer is a relatively UNRELIABLE test for truth in this regard.
- b. **LDS Point:** The Bible urges us to pray for God’s wisdom in **James 1:5**.

**James 1:5 (NIV2011)**

<sup>5</sup> If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.

**Counterpoint:**

- 1) The context of **James 1:5** is praying for God’s wisdom in the face of trials to develop spiritual maturity (see **1:2-4, 12**). The trials James specifies are poverty and exploitation by the rich (see **1:9-10; 2:5-6**). God’s wisdom in action is NOT a hot-headed response to these trials, but holding one’s tongue (see **1:19-20; 3:1-12**).
- 2) Praying to know the truth or falsity of an alleged prophet or church of God is NOT the point of the passage.

## IV. Our Hearts Are Relatively Unreliable

A. **Jeremiah 17:9 (NIV2011)**

<sup>9</sup> The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

B. **Proverbs 28:26 (KJV)**

<sup>26</sup> He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool: but whoso walketh wisely, he shall be delivered.

1. The relative UNRELIABILITY of prayer and heartfelt convictions to discern truth go hand-in-hand—they are both highly subjective and susceptible to selfish, sinful motives.
  - a. For example, why are the friends, loved ones, or enemies of the plaintiff or defendant disqualified from jury duty in their trial?
2. Heartfelt convictions are relatively UNRELIABLE because many people of faith have come to contradictory beliefs regarding the truth of Joseph Smith and the LDS Church. (This is especially true of many lifelong, devout Mormons who are now former Mormons.)
  - a. **LDS Point:** Those who come to anti-LDS conclusions DO NOT believe “with a sincere heart” (**Moroni 10:4**).

**Counterpoint:** Those who come to pro-LDS conclusions DO NOT believe “with a sincere heart.”

- 1) Both sides beg the question by arguing in a circle. Clearly, heartfelt convictions are an UNRELIABLE test for truth in this regard.

C. **Hebrews 4:12 (NIV2011)**

<sup>12</sup> For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

1. It is God’s Word that judges our hearts, not vice versa! Because our sinful hearts are bent on deceiving us, God has graciously given us Holy Scripture as a moral compass and anchor for His will and truths. The written Word of God is concrete and objective—it is NOT as susceptible to distortion as are the subjective emotions of our hearts.
  - a. For example, why might it be dangerous to counsel Christians to let our hearts be our guide on the issues of premarital sex, divorce, homosexuality and same-sex marriage?
  - b. With what are church leaders expected to expose lies and correct deceptive beliefs and sinful behaviors (see **2 Tim. 3:16**)?

## V. **The Spirit Is Relatively Unreliable**

A. **2 Corinthians 11:3-4 (NIV2011)**

<sup>3</sup> But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent’s cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

<sup>4</sup> For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it easily enough.

B. **1 John 4:1 (NIV2011)**

<sup>1</sup> Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

1. The believers to whom the apostle Paul writes in Corinth were plagued by “false apostles” (**2 Cor. 11:13**). John’s readers were plagued by “false prophets.” Both Christian audiences were at risk of being deceived by and receiving demonic spirits (see **1 Jn. 4:3**; **1 Tim. 4:1**) while at the same time trusting it was God’s Spirit who was guiding both them and these imposters.

- a. Clearly, dependence upon the Holy Spirit is an UNRELIABLE test for truth in this regard.

## VI. The Book of Mormon Is Relatively Unreliable

### A. The INTRODUCTION to the Book of Mormon (Excerpt)

1. Concerning this record the Prophet Joseph Smith said: “I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts, than by any other book.”

We [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] invite all men everywhere to read the Book of Mormon, to ponder in their hearts the message it contains, and then to ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Jesus Christ if the book is true. Those who pursue this course and ask in faith will gain a testimony of its truth and divinity by the power of the Holy Ghost. (See **Moroni 10:3-5**.)

### B. Three Dangers of the BoM Test for Truth

1. The LDS Church “invite[s] all men everywhere” to use its own unique latter-day revelation to substantiate its claims of divine authority. This is akin to substantiating a consumer product on the sole basis of the manufacturer’s claims, but with far less serious implications!
2. The independent testing encouraged by the LDS Church (e.g. prayer, heartfelt convictions, and dependence upon the Holy Spirit) is highly subjective and fraught with UNRELIABILITY.
3. The BoM test ignores the biblical prescription (Rx) for authenticating an alleged representative of God and their revelation—namely, modern revelation MUST pass the test of (and NOT contradict) previous revelation in the Bible. This test especially applies to revelation that bears directly on our salvation.

### C. The RELIABLE Biblical Rx for Truth Testing—3 Examples

#### 1. Modern Revelation (to Be Tested)

##### Genesis 3:1-4 (NIV2011)

<sup>1</sup> Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”

<sup>2</sup> The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,

<sup>3</sup> but God did say, ‘You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.’ ”

<sup>4</sup> “You will not certainly die,” the serpent said to the woman.

### Previous Revelation (Does the Testing)

#### Genesis 2:16-17 (NIV2011)

<sup>16</sup> And the LORD God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;  
<sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

- a. The serpent’s modern revelation directly contradicts God’s previous revelation thereby RELIABLY exposing him as a liar (see **Jn. 8:44**).
- b. Note also that God’s previous revelation is well understood by Eve in **Genesis 3:3**. And despite having direct access to and a sure understanding of God’s Word, she is still deceived and succumbs to her selfish desires.
  - 1) If Eve could be deceived under these circumstances, how much more vulnerable to deception and sin are we who rely on dangerously UNRELIABLE tests for truth?

## 2. Modern Revelation (to Be Tested)

#### Mark 12:18-23 (NIV2011)

<sup>18</sup> Then the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question.  
<sup>19</sup> “Teacher,” they said, “Moses wrote for us that if a man’s brother dies and leaves a wife but no children, the man must marry the widow and raise up offspring for his brother.  
<sup>20</sup> Now there were seven brothers. The first one married and died without leaving any children.  
<sup>21</sup> The second one married the widow, but he also died, leaving no child. It was the same with the third.  
<sup>22</sup> In fact, none of the seven left any children. Last of all, the woman died too.  
<sup>23</sup> At the resurrection whose wife will she be, since the seven were married to her?”

### Previous Revelation (Does the Testing)

#### Mark 12:24-27 (NIV2011)

<sup>24</sup> Jesus replied, “Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God?”  
<sup>25</sup> When the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven.  
<sup>26</sup> Now about the dead rising—have you not read in the Book of Moses, in the account of the burning bush, how God said to him, ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the

### God of Jacob'?

<sup>27</sup> He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are badly mistaken!"

- a. The Sadducees, who exercised considerable authority and influence over the Jews of Jesus' day, rejected the doctrine of an afterlife. Their modern, anti-resurrection doctrine directly contradicted God's previous revelation in **Exodus 3:6**, which Jesus quotes in **verse 26** to expose their "error" (**v. 24**). Tragically, the Sadducees and those who embraced their teachings were destined to be damned (see **1 Cor. 15:12-19**).
  - 1) Once again, it is "the Scriptures" (more specifically, previous revelation in "the Book of Moses") that Jesus uses as the RELIABLE truth test. An appeal to prayer, heartfelt convictions, and dependence upon the Holy Spirit is curiously absent.
- b. That the LDS doctrine of eternal marriage contradicts Jesus' pronouncement in **verse 25** is of minor significance relative to the LDS doctrine of eternal progression to which it is bound.
  - 1) Joseph Smith declares: "God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens! That is the great secret." (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, by Joseph Fielding Smith, Salt Lake City, UT: Deseret Books, 1977, p. 345.)
  - 2) If the God of Joseph Smith and the LDS Church contradicts God's revelation of Himself in the Bible, then how Mormons feel about the Book of Mormon (or any other LDS truth test for that matter) is moot. There is NO salvation in a false god (see **Ex. 20:3; Isa. 44:6; John 17:3**).

### 3. **Modern Revelation (to Be Tested)**

#### **Acts 17:1-3 (NIV2011)**

<sup>1</sup> When Paul and his companions had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a Jewish synagogue.

<sup>2</sup> As was his custom, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures,

<sup>3</sup> explaining and proving that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. "This Jesus I am proclaiming to you is the Messiah," he said.

- a. Devout Jews of the apostle Paul's day couldn't fathom the resurrection of an individual BEFORE the general resurrection at the end of the age, let alone that of a CRUCIFIED Messiah! To be sure, Paul's modern revelation was unorthodox and unprecedented.



b. It is critical to see that Paul substantiates his claims by appealing to “the Scriptures,” that is, our Old Testament. (Once again, previous revelation does the RELIABLE testing—NOT Paul’s own revelation!)

- 1) An appeal for his Jewish brethren to pray for wisdom, seek a heartfelt conviction, depend upon the Holy Spirit, and merely take him at his word is curiously absent.

### **Previous Revelation (Does the Testing)**

#### **Acts 17:10-12 (NIV2011)**

<sup>10</sup> As soon as it was night, the believers sent Paul and Silas away to Berea. On arriving there, they went to the Jewish synagogue.

<sup>11</sup> Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.

<sup>12</sup> As a result, many of them believed, as did also a number of prominent Greek women and many Greek men.

a. In Thessalonica the emphasis is on Paul’s use of “the Scriptures” to prove his claims concerning the Messiah. In Berea the emphasis is on the Jews’ daily examination of “the Scriptures” to RELIABLY authenticate his claims.

- 1) Again, there is no mention of the Bereans praying for wisdom, seeking a heartfelt conviction, depending upon the Holy Spirit and/or taking Paul merely at his word.

## VII. Fulfilled Prophecy Is Relatively Unreliable

### A. Deuteronomy 13:1-3 (NIV2011)

<sup>1</sup> If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a sign or wonder,

<sup>2</sup> and if the sign or wonder spoken of takes place, and the prophet says, “Let us follow other gods” (gods you have not known) “and let us worship them,”

<sup>3</sup> you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul.

1. Two things are apparent in this passage: (1) any prophet or dreamer who incites rebellion against the LORD God is NOT truly God’s representative; and (2) Moses’ warning strongly implies that the prophecy or dreams of an imposter may come to fruition, and this, for the express purpose of deceiving God’s people.
2. Clearly, predictive prophecy or any unnatural event or vision that may come to pass is an UNRELIABLE test for truth in this regard.

## VIII. Signs & Wonders Are Relatively Unreliable

### A. Exodus 7:8-12 (NIV2011)

<sup>8</sup> The LORD said to Moses and Aaron,

<sup>9</sup> “When Pharaoh says to you, ‘Perform a miracle,’ then say to Aaron, ‘Take your staff and throw it down before Pharaoh,’ and it will become a snake.”

<sup>10</sup> So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and did just as the LORD commanded. Aaron threw his staff down in front of Pharaoh and his officials, and it became a snake.

<sup>11</sup> Pharaoh then summoned wise men and sorcerers, and the Egyptian magicians also did the same things by their secret arts:

<sup>12</sup> Each one threw down his staff and it became a snake. But Aaron’s staff swallowed up their staffs.

1. Note also that Pharaoh’s Egyptian magicians imitated the plagues of blood (7:20-22) and frogs (8:5-7) “by their secret arts.”

### B. Matthew 24:23-25 (NIV2011)

<sup>23</sup> At that time if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Messiah!’ or, ‘There he is!’ do not believe it.

<sup>24</sup> For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

<sup>25</sup> See, I have told you ahead of time.

1. From the church age down through “the end of the age” (**24:3**), false representatives of God are the scourge of professing Christians. And if severe persecution doesn’t incite apostasy, then utterly deceptive miracles will (see also **24:9-13**).
2. Clearly, signs and wonders are an UNRELIABLE test for truth in this regard.
  - a. **LDS Point:** Some LDS reason that the signs and wonders of false representatives of God are identifiable, that is, they are a different “kind” and used for un-Godly purposes.

**Counter Point:** This is certainly true as it concerns un-Godly purposes (see **Deuteronomy 13:2** above: “let us follow other gods ... and let us worship them”), but it is the “kind” of miracles that makes them utterly deceptive. Consider the following:

- 1) Again, the miracles and plagues performed by Aaron and Moses were imitated by Pharaoh’s Egyptian magicians, that is, they appeared to be the same kind.
- 2) As Elijah called fire down from heaven (see **1 Kgs. 18:10-39**) so too will the false prophet of the Antichrist (see **Rev. 13:11-14**; note also that the false prophet will imitate Christ’s resurrection by healing the Antichrist’s “fatal wound”—**13:3, 12**).
- 3) It is this kind of signs and wonders to which Jesus refers when He declares that frauds would “deceive, if possible, even the elect” (**Mt. 24:24**).

## IX. Blessings Are Relatively Unreliable

### A. **Matthew 5:43-46 (NIV2011)**

<sup>43</sup> “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’

<sup>44</sup> But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,

<sup>45</sup> that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.

<sup>46</sup> If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?

1. Sunshine and rain in a first-century, predominantly agrarian culture was of inestimable value. The implication here is that God the Father demonstrates incredible love, even for His “enemies,” by physically blessing them.
2. Jesus demonstrates this same love by physically healing ten lepers, despite that only one “returned to give praise to God” (**Lk. 17:11-19**).
3. Clearly, blessings experienced are an UNRELIABLE test for truth in this regard.

## X. The “Fruit” of Good Deeds Is Relatively Unreliable

### A. Matthew 7:15-16a (NIV2011)

<sup>15</sup> “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.

<sup>16</sup> By their fruit you will recognize them.



1. This is an excerpt from Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount (**Mt. 5-7**)—arguably the most influential discourse on morals and ethics in human history. “Sheep’s clothing” may therefore be understood as Christ-like words and deeds that false prophets use to hide their true identity.
  - a. Note the hypocrites “give to the needy” (**6:1-2**); “pray in the synagogues and on the street corners” (**6:5**); and “fast” (**6:16**).
  - b. While the evil deeds of false prophets are easily recognizable, they are NOT so easily seen, that is, their inward motives and behind-closed-doors deeds are well hidden or camouflaged.
2. To illustrate the deceptiveness and UNRELIABILITY of good deeds as a test for truth, consider the following illustration.

Which prophet would most people identify as the **TRUE** and **FALSE** Christian prophet?

**Prophet A**

Lives by “the Golden Rule”  
Teaches Jesus’ spirit was resurrected

**Prophet B**

Sacrifices babies  
Teaches Jesus’ body was resurrected

- a. Most people would likely identify Prophet A as true and Prophet B as false. The reason being that Prophet A lives by “the Golden Rule” by doing unto others as he would have others do unto him (**Mt. 7:12**)—obviously the fruit of good, Christian deeds. Prophet B sacrifices babies—obviously the fruit of evil, unchristian deeds.
- b. The tragic truth is that BOTH Prophets A and B are false! Prophet A wrongly teaches Jesus’ spirit was resurrected and NOT his physical body (as Prophet B rightly teaches).
  - 1) Jesus declared that He would raise His body (“this temple”) in three days (**Jn. 2:19-22**). (See also **Lk. 24:37-39**.)
  - 2) The apostle Paul teaches that “if Christ has not been raised, [our] faith is futile; [we] are still in our sins” (**1 Cor. 15:17**).
  - 3) A false doctrine of Christ’s resurrection (of which most people are ignorant, including many Christians!) is what RELIABLY exposes Prophet A as a wolf in sheep’s clothing.
    - Latter-day Saints and biblical Christians should know that the Jehovah’s Witness (JW) religion teaches this false doctrine of Christ’s resurrection—namely, that Jesus was raised as a spirit only and NOT literally and physically.
3. Clearly, the “fruit” of good deeds is an UNRELIABLE test for truth in this regard. And this brings us to the “fruit” of damnable doctrine.

## XI. The “Fruit” of Damnable Doctrine Is Reliable

### A. **2 Peter 2:1 (KJV)**

<sup>1</sup>But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

1. To recap: The “fruit” of evil deeds and the “fruit” of damnable doctrine are both RELIABLE tests for exposing false representatives of God. The key to our being deceived, however, is NOT that evil deeds escape our attention, but that damnable doctrine frequently does! The reasons are as follows:
  - a. False prophets urge us to rely on highly subjective, UNRELIABLE tests for truth (e.g. prayer, heartfelt convictions, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit).

- b. False prophets urge us to rely on their own UNRELIABLE special revelation as a truth-test. (Because God’s Word in the Bible RELIABLY exposes their doctrines as damnable, false prophets also distort and discredit biblical Scripture!)
- c. False prophets amaze, distract, and deceive us with UNRELIABLE tests for truth (e.g. prophecies, visions, dreams, signs and wonders).
- d. False prophets distract and deceive us with their “fruit” of good deeds as an UNRELIABLE test for truth.
- e. Finally, it is WE who are ultimately responsible for NOT being good students of God’s Word in the Bible—we have been warned (see **Mt. 7:15-16; 24:23-25; Lk. 12:48**). Latter-day Saints and biblical Christians have little to no excuse for neglecting biblical Scripture and the multitude of resources at our disposal.

## 2. The Biblical Rx for Truth-Testing

- a. Because a false doctrine of Jesus’ resurrection RELIABLY exposes false prophets AND bears directly on our salvation, it should be one of the first tests for truth in our arsenal. Other critical doctrinal tests include: (1) the doctrine of God; (2) the doctrine of Jesus; and (3) the doctrine of the Gospel.

### B. A False & Damnable Doctrine of God

#### Deuteronomy 13:1-3 (NIV2011)

<sup>1</sup> If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a sign or wonder,

<sup>2</sup> and if the sign or wonder spoken of takes place, and the prophet says, “Let us follow other gods” (gods you have not known) “and let us worship them,”

<sup>3</sup> you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul.

1. Note that what exposes false prophets is their inciting the Israelites to “follow other gods” and “worship them.”
  - a. These “other gods” are “(gods [they] have not known),” meaning what God has previously revealed of Himself and that distinguishes Him from ALL false gods, is what the Israelites were accountable to use as their RELIABLE truth-test.

- b. Therefore, it is critical to know and embrace the God of biblical revelation (in ALL its essentials) to ensure we are NOT deceived into following and worshipping a false god. (See also **Ex. 20:2-6** and **Jn. 17:3**.)
2. Note again, the absence of prayer, heartfelt convictions, and dependence upon the Spirit of God as part of the Rx.
  3. Clearly, the doctrine of God is the RELIABLE test for truth in this regard.

**C. A False & Damnable Doctrine of Christ**

**1 John 4:1-3 (NIV2011)**

<sup>1</sup> Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

<sup>2</sup> This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God,

<sup>3</sup> but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

1. Note that what exposes false prophets is their doctrine of Christ—in this case, the teaching that Jesus Christ DID NOT “come in the flesh.” (See also **2 Jn. 7**.)
  - a. This modern revelation contradicts the apostle John’s previous revelation—namely, that Jesus Christ had, in fact, come in the “flesh” (**Jn. 1:1, 14; 1 Jn. 1:1**).
  - b. Therefore, it is critical to know and embrace the Jesus of biblical revelation (in ALL its essentials) to ensure we are NOT deceived into believing in “a Jesus other than the Jesus [the apostles] preached” (**2 Cor. 11:4**; see also **Jn. 8:24; 10:33**).
2. Note the absence of prayer, heartfelt convictions, and dependence upon the Spirit of God as part of the Rx.
3. Clearly, the doctrine of Christ is the RELIABLE test for truth in this regard.

**D. A False & Damnable Gospel Doctrine**

**Galatians 1:6-9 (NIV2011)**

<sup>6</sup> I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—

<sup>7</sup> which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ.

<sup>8</sup> But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God's curse!

<sup>9</sup> As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God's curse!

1. Note that what exposes the false teachers is their gospel doctrine—in this case, that justification (i.e. acquittal of all sin-guilt) comes NOT by faith in Christ, but “by works of the law” (2:15-16).
  - a. This false gospel contradicts the apostle Paul’s previous gospel, that is, “the one we preached to you” (1:8).
  - b. This specific doctrinal test is so powerful and RELIABLE, in fact, that the apostle Paul subjects himself to “God’s curse” should he “or an angel from heaven” contradict it post facto (1:8).
  - c. Therefore, it is critical to know and embrace the Gospel of biblical revelation (in ALL its essentials) to ensure we are NOT deceived into believing in “a different gospel—which is really no gospel at all” (1:6-7; see also 2 Cor. 11:4).
2. Note the absence of prayer, heartfelt convictions, and dependence upon the Spirit of God as part of the Rx.
3. Clearly, gospel doctrine is the RELIABLE test for truth in this regard.