

Following the serpent's lead, adherents of false doctrines add to or remove from the Word of God. Some legalistic heretics seek to remove Paul's epistles from Scripture. Often they hold the Old Testament as superior to the New Testament.

Other heretics take the opposite approach and elevate Paul's writings or the New Testament over the Old.

Still, others want to ADD to the Bible writings that have been rejected from the canon of Scripture.

Anything that seeks to change the Bible is heresy.

*"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."*  
(Matthew 4:4)

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### Minimizing God's Holiness

The God of the Bible is immeasurably **HOLY**. The debt of sin against such holiness must be paid. Most cults denigrate God's righteousness by **minimizing His wrath against sin**.

Heretics often proclaim their false doctrines in connection with the afterlife of unrepentant sinners. The enemy **deceives** people into denying the existence of hell or redefining the definition of hell. Here are some examples:

- Jehovah's Witnesses change hell from eternal torment to annihilation - unbelievers simply cease to exist
- Mormons teach that after a person dies, they may be offered another chance to receive Jesus
- Others teach universal salvation - everyone will be saved based on the Blood of Jesus without the necessity of faith in this earthly life

Each of these approaches to the afterlife portrays God as **LESS HOLY**. According to the Bible, **ONLY** faith in the Blood of Jesus can satisfy God's **HOLY WRATH** against sin.

These heresies make the Blood of Jesus **EQUAL** with other things. Annihilationism, for example, causes the sinner's death to be **EQUAL** with Jesus' sacrifice regarding God's punishment for sin. Universalism says that faith in Jesus during one's lifetime is **NOT NECESSARY**. Everyone will be saved. This makes faith in the death of Jesus meaningless.

All eternity in the torments of hell is **NOT** enough to pay the debt of sin against the **HOLINESS** of GOD.

*"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."* (John 3:36)

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### Conclusion:

We are definitively told to **recognize** and **deal** with heresies. The above is not an exhaustive list of all heretical thoughts. Rather, these are areas of doctrine that are frequently perverted by heretics.

**Study the Word of God** and combat the doctrines of devils.

*"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."* (2 Timothy 2:15)

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### Reject Heretics

*"A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject;"* (Titus 3:10)

What do we learn about heresy from this verse?

- God expects us to **recognize** heretics
- God expects us to **correct** heretics
- God tells us to **reject** unrepentant heretics

By definition, a "heretic" is a divisive person. False doctrines always result in disunity and confusion. Those who are spiritually mature are responsible for protecting the young and weak in the faith.

It is **NOT** loving to allow preachers of lies to continue within the flock of God. They are wolves seeking to steal, kill, and destroy the sheep.

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### Recognizing Heresy Is Expected

As noted above, God expects us to recognize and expose heresies. God earnestly wants us to contend for the truth. Sadly, if Joseph Smith (Mormonism) or C. T. Russell (Jehovah's Witnesses) were developing their cults today... many Christians would "lovingly" embrace them, claiming that would be the way Jesus would want us to respond to them.

But what did Jesus say to the false doctrine preachers of his day? In John 8:44, He says, **"Ye are of your father the devil..."**

# HERESY DETECTOR

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*“Beware of **false prophets**, which come to you in **sheep’s clothing**, but inwardly they are **ravening wolves**.” (Matthew 7:15)*

Heretics must be exposed for the protection of God’s sheep.

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## No Trinity - The Godhead Rejected

Cultists almost always attack the nature and character of God. These preachers invariably assail the Trinity as a pagan doctrine. Anyone proclaiming that the God of Scripture is not the Trinity should be understood to be a heretic.

(Note: the Trinity is clearly seen in these verses. Deuteronomy 6:4 says there is one God. Jude 1:1 says that the Father is this one God. John 1:1 says that Jesus is this one God. Acts 5:3-4 says that the Holy Spirit is this one God.)

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## Jesus PLUS

Most heresies **diminish the value of Jesus**. Heretical claims routinely teach that faith in Jesus is **NOT GOOD ENOUGH**. Imagine believing that the Blood of Jesus is insufficient to pay the debt for sin.

Anything that ADDS to the finished work of Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection is a false doctrine.

Some examples would include:

- Jesus PLUS keeping the law is necessary for believers
- Jesus PLUS water baptism is mandatory
- Jesus PLUS church membership is required

There is **NO LACK** in Jesus! Faith in Jesus and His

loving sacrifice is the requirement.

*“Who are **kept by the power of God through faith** unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”*

(1 Peter 1:5)

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## The Holy Spirit - Not A Person

Another doctrine against the Godhead of Scripture is to **deny the Personhood of the Holy Spirit**. Heretics often minimize the Holy Ghost to being nothing more than the spiritual working of God or His active force.

You will **NEVER** find the Holy Spirit called “**IT**” in the Bible. He is referred to with personal pronouns (He, Him, etc.)

*“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, **HE** shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” (John 14:26)*

The Holy Spirit is the third member of the Trinity.

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## Lost Truth Restored - Special Revelation

Claims of “**special revelation**” or “**restored truth**” are clear earmarks of doctrinal lies. Heretics love the accolades they receive because of their unique insights and understanding. Anyone who states that their doctrine is a restoration of Bible truths that have been lost for ages is a heretic and must be exposed and avoided.

God promised to preserve His Word forever, and He did NOT fail. God loves people too much to allow critical truths to be “lost.”

*“The words of the Lord are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. (7) **Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever.**”*

(Psalm 12:6-7)

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## A Different Gospel / Salvation

Scripture is abundantly clear that preaching false gospels are **eternally serious**. Heretics **never** preach the genuine Gospel that is found in the Bible.

*“But though we, or an angel from heaven, **preach any other gospel** unto you than that which we have preached unto you, **let him be accursed**. (9) As we said before, so say I now again, if any man **preach any other gospel** unto you than that ye have received, **let him be accursed**.” (Galatians 1:8-9)*

Heresies often include adding the requirement of works to obtain, maintain, or prove one’s salvation. False gospels are normally **overly complicated**. Any gospel message other than the substitutionary death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus is a lie from Satan.

*“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that **Christ died for our sins** according to the scriptures; (4) And that **he was buried**, and that **he rose again the third day** according to the scriptures:” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)*

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## Bible - Incomplete Or Corrupted

Changing the Bible is another heresy red flag. Since the Garden of Eden, the devil has been impugning the integrity of Scripture.