

Be S.H.A.R.P. in Witnessing to the Cults

S – Search the Scriptures daily. Know the Word of God and read it in context. Hosea 4:6 says: *“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.”* We need to be constantly hiding the Word in our hearts. History attests to the tragedies that occur when God’s Word is neglected. Remember that the unspeakable mischief and misery in Salem in the 1690’s was the acceptance of “spectral evidence” (that is, that Satan could take the form and shape of innocent persons) which did not have a shred of biblical evidence. Many innocent people died. We must search God’s Word. There are eight spiritual revivals in the Old Testament. Everyone of them was centered on the Word of God. True revivals are based on the reception of God’s Word. It is the foundation for any true and lasting revival.

H – Hold on to God in prayer for wisdom and discernment. Herbert Lockyer reminds us: *“Craftily and cleverly, Satan hides his snares, and we have to constantly pray that we may always be aware of his tricks.”* Jesus said: *“Men ought to pray and not faint”* (Luke 18:1). Ephesians 6 makes clear that prayer is a vital part of our “armor” and “protection.”

A – Accept no claims of man at face value no matter how compelling or slickly presented. Remember Jeremiah 12:6: *“For even your brothers, the house of your father, even they have dealt treacherously with you; yes they have called abundantly after you. Do not believe them, even though they speak smooth words to you.”*

This is not being paranoid, only discerning and cautious. Obviously if the teacher has a long proven track record, we can be more accepting. Proverbs 15:14 is a timely word, but the prudent considers well his steps.” Remember that the person passing on the information may be deceived.

R – Require documentation (two or three witnesses) and proofs for stories and illustrations that are claimed to be true. Accept no less. Do not assume something has happened because someone says so or it is in a book or video. Even sincere believers may be misinformed and be passing on misinformation. Think how long the Crying Wind, John Todd, Betty Malz, Mike Warnke and Y2K lies were circulated and accepted. Christian bookstores and Christian ministries helped circulate these. Demand evidence, remembering that extraordinary claims require extraordinary evidence.

P – Pursue only reputable ministries, teachers and commentaries. Insist on doctrinal statements and detailed financial reports. Take seriously documented reports of false teaching, mismanagement of money, outlandish claims and poor doctrine. Even the secular press can only report what is there. It is unfortunate that they have become the watchdog of the scammers. The church should be doing the job.

Always stay SHARP! Don’t be tricked by deceitful teachers!