

Be careful of what you read

‘Divines who have studied the Scriptures have left us great stores of holy thought which we do well to use. Their expositions can never be a substitute for our own meditations; but, as water poured down a dry pump often starts it working to bring up water of its own, so suggestive reading sets the mind in motion on its own account. Here, however, is the difficulty. Students do not find it easy to choose which works to buy, and their slender stores are often wasted on books of a comparatively worthless kind. If I can save a poor man from spending his money for that which is not bread, or, by directing a brother to a good book, may enable him to dig deeper into the mines of truth, I shall be well repaid.’

- C.H. Spurgeon in his foreword to *Commenting and Commentaries*, a catalogue of theological works. Quoted from *C.H. Spurgeon - Autobiography: Volume 2 - The Full Harvest*, The Banner of Truth Trust, 1995, p. 157. -

During the nineteenth century the colporteur or book-salesman travelling from village to village played an important role in putting solid Christian literature in the hands of ordinary people with the emphasis on saving lost souls and promoting spiritual growth. However, times have changed a lot since the days of Spurgeon. Today the colporteur and small bookshop have been replaced by the mega-shop providing an almost endless variety of Christian books, CDs and DVDs. The average believer also has more money in his pocket for spending on such commodities. It is therefore no surprise that in most cases financial gain has replaced the once noble goal of salvation and spiritual growth. Christian literature has become a big money-making business and in order to promote sales potential clients are being provided with ‘Christian’ literature soothing the fleshly nature instead of contributing to spiritual growth. In the process Truth is currently being replaced by apostasy and false doctrine on a scale not known before. Water of such a contaminated nature is now being poured down the proverbial well in such quantities in order to get the pump going that the well is actually being polluted.

For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision: Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake. (Titus 1:10-11 KJV)

...men who are corrupted in mind and bereft of the truth, who imagine that godliness or righteousness is a source of profit [a moneymaking business, a means of livelihood]. From such withdraw (1 Timothy 6:5 AMP).

Today the believer needs discernment as never before in order to identify publishers and bookshops which provide solid Christian literature. Various discernment ministries may also be of great value in identifying authors promoting apostasy and false teaching.