

# The Disputer of This World

- The Nature and Danger of the Disputer
- Contrast Between Human Wisdom and Divine Truth
- Contending for the Faith Without Being Contentious
- Holding Fast the Pattern of Sound Words

The Bible says,

- “Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is **the Disputer of this world** (or age)? hath not God made foolish, the wisdom of this world?” ([1Cor.1:20](#))

Throughout time, there have always been those, who **Question, Challenge, and Debate** the truth of God’s Word — **NOT to learn, BUT to lift themselves up.**

The apostle Paul called such a one “**the Disputer of this world.**”

In contrast, God’s faithful servants, are called to be **Defenders of truth, NOT disputers** of it.

Explanation of 1Cor.1:20:

- The word “**disputer**” means, one who argues for the sake of argument, a professional questioner
- much like the philosophers at Athens, who  
“...spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.” ([Acts 17:18–21](#))

This lesson, helps us discern the difference, between the **Disputer, who argues from pride,** and the **Contender, who defends truth, from love** ([Jude vs.3](#); [Eph.4:15](#)).

To begin, let us understand...

## I. **The Nature and Danger of the Disputer**

— **What** he believes, **How** he behaves, and **Why** we must NOT follow, his example.

Which includes,

### A. **Rejecting the Wholesome Words of Christ**

The disputer begins, by rejecting the authority of Scripture itself.

He does not “consent to wholesome words” — that is, sound, spiritually healthy teaching.

- “If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ... he is proud, knowing nothing.” ([1Tim.6:3–4](#))

Explanation of 1Tim.6:3-4:

- The word “**wholesome**” means, sound, uncorrupted, life-giving — from the same root as “hygiene.”
- To reject wholesome words, is to embrace spiritual disease.

The Bible says,

- “For the preaching of the cross, is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us, which are saved, it is the power of God.” ([1Cor.1:18](#))

In Corinth, the Greek culture prized wisdom, eloquence, and logic.

But the message of a crucified Savior, offended their intellect.

God deliberately used, what seemed “foolish”, to expose the emptiness of worldly pride.

- “But evil men and seducers, shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.” ([2Tim.3:13](#))

Explanation of 2Tim.3:13:

- The disputer, not only rejects truth; he becomes entangled in deception — his own and others’.
- The disputer, is not driven by curiosity for truth, but by pride.

When man refuses the wholesome words of Christ, he cuts himself off, from the only source, of true wisdom and life.

Let us look next, at how this spirit of disputing, works through...

## B. Flattery and Smooth Speech That Deceives

Those who twist the truth ([2Pet.3:16](#)), rarely do so with harshness; Rather, they use charm and eloquence, to make error, appealing.

- “By good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts, of the simple.” ([Rom.16:18](#))

Explanation of Rom.16:18:

- The term “**simple**” here, means innocent or unsuspecting, not foolish.
- These are the sincere, who have not yet learned spiritual discernment.

The Bible says,

- “That we henceforth, be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men.” ([Eph.4:14](#))

Explanation of Eph.4:14:

- Paul compares false teachers to gamblers — “sleight” comes from a word meaning, dice-playing trickery.
- They manipulate words, like a magician uses cards, shifting attention to hide deception.

Paul proclaimed,

- “For such are **false apostles, deceitful workers...**” ([2Cor.11:13](#))

Explanation of 2Cor.11:13:

- A counterfeit coin looks genuine, but the closer you examine it, the more you see its flaws.
- So it is, with false teachers — their message may shine, but it lacks the stamp, of divine truth.

Flattery can be more dangerous, than open hostility.

True love tells the truth, even when it hurts, while deception hides the truth, to gain favor.

We now turn from the smooth tongue of the disputer, to the restless spirit that fuels him — a heart that delights in endless arguments.

## C. Igniting Strife, Through Foolish Questions

Some people seem to thrive on debate, But Scripture warns...

- “foolish and unlearned questions **AVOID**, knowing that they **Do** gender **strifes** (or conflict).” ([2Tim.2:23](#))

Explanation of 2Tim.2:23:

- The word “**foolish**” comes from moros (where we get the word, “moron”)
- meaning dull, senseless, or without reason.

The wisdom of Proverbs says,

- “Answer not a fool, according to his folly, lest thou also, be like unto him.” ([Prov.26:4](#))

Explanation of Prov.26:4:

- There are times when answering a fool, gives his nonsense credibility.
- Wisdom, discerns when to engage and when to remain silent.

The Bible says,

- “The servant of the Lord, must **NOT Strive**; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient.” ([2Tim.2:24](#))

The Lord’s servant is not quarrelsome but gentle — correcting with patience, not pride.

Boldness and gentleness can coexist; Jesus Himself displayed both perfectly (read [Jn.8:3-11](#)).

The **Disputer** rejects truth, **Deceives** through flattery, and **Fuels** strife. He **Seeks** victory in debate, **NOT** conversion of the soul. But the **Faithful Teacher**, uses **Truth** to heal, correct, and restore.

Now that we have seen the character of the disputer, let us notice...

## II. The Contrast Between Human Wisdom and Divine Truth

It is in the heart that...

### A. The Wisdom of Man Exalts Itself

From Eden to now, man has sought wisdom apart from God.  
But human reasoning without revelation, only breeds rebellion.

- And so, “Trust in the LORD with ALL thine heart; and lean NOT unto thine own understanding.” ([Prov.3:5](#))

Explanation of Proverbs 3:5:

- The word “lean” means, to depend for support.
- We cannot lean on our limited understanding, when the Infinite God offers His Word, as a sure foundation.

Paul said,

- “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.” ([Rom.1:22](#))

Explanation of Romans 1:22:

- When man removes God from his thinking, wisdom collapses into foolishness.
- The wisdom of this world, ends in spiritual blindness.

Intellect is a gift from God, but when it exalts itself above God, it becomes idolatry.  
The true wise man, is the one who fears the Lord ([Prov.9:10](#)).

In contrast to man’s self-made wisdom, stands...

### B. The Simplicity and Power of the Gospel

God’s truth is not complicated.  
It confounds the proud, but comforts the humble.

- Paul said, “For I **determined** not to know any thing among you, save (or except) Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.” ([1Cor.2:2](#))

Explanation of 1Cor.2:2:

- Paul didn’t rely on persuasive rhetoric, but the pure message of the cross of Christ.
- The word “determined” means, to make a firm, settled decision.

The inspired apostle Paul proclaimed,

- “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation.” ([Rom.1:16](#))

The gospel’s simplicity, reveals God’s wisdom — salvation through faith IN Christ,  
NOT through intellect, fame, or philosophy.

Human wisdom glorifies self; divine wisdom glorifies Christ.

The gospel is not foolish — it is the greatest demonstration of divine intelligence and love.

Having seen what motivates the disputer, let us now examine, what God expects of us as...

### III. Contending for the Faith, Without Being Contentious

Defending the faith is not optional, we have...

#### A. The Command to Contend

The Bible says,

- “Ye should **earnestly contend** for the faith, which was once delivered unto the saints.” ([Jude vs.3](#))

Explanation of Jude 3:

- The word “contend” means, to struggle intensely — like an athlete fighting to win.
- We are not contending for opinions, but for “the faith” — the body of revealed truth from God.

Paul by inspiration, instructed:

- “**Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life.**” ([1Tim.6:12](#))

Our fight is not physical, but spiritual — fought with truth, love, and endurance.  
The goal is to save, not to shame.

Even in our defense of truth, our spirit must reflect Christ, with...

#### B. Gentleness, Meekness, and Patience

How we contend, matters as much, as the fact that we, **Do Contend**.

- “The servant of the Lord, must not strive; but **be Gentle** unto all men, apt to teach, **Patient.**” ([2Tim.2:24](#))
- “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are Spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of Meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.” ([Gal.6:1](#))

Illustration Thought:

- A surgeon uses a scalpel to heal, not to harm.
- So should our correction, cut sin, not souls.

Gentleness is not weakness — it is strength under control, guided by love and truth.  
We contend for truth, but never with pride.

**Boldness** without love, becomes arrogance; **love** without boldness, becomes silence.  
Both must work together, to honor Christ.

Finally, let us see how we can remain grounded,

### IV. Holding Fast the Pattern of Sound Words

... amid a world, full of disputers.

If we are to stand firm in truth and not be swayed by disputers, we must return to our foundation by...

#### A. Standing on Apostolic Doctrine

The **apostolic pattern** is not a suggestion, but a command to **Preserve Truth**.

- Paul instructed, “**Hold fast**, the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love, which is IN Christ Jesus.” ([2Tim.1:13](#))

The Bible says,

- “**Prove** all things; **hold fast** that which is good.” ([1Thess.5:21](#))

Explanation of 1Thess.5:21:

- To “prove” means, to test or examine.
- Like refining gold in fire — accepting only, what aligns with God’s Truth.

A faithful Christian, is not swayed by trends or emotions, but by what God has spoken.

But holding to sound doctrine, also means...

## **B. Turning Away from Error**

...We cannot cling to truth and tolerate error, at the same time.

Scripture commands us to avoid and expose false teachers, not embrace them, in the name of peace.

- “**Mark** them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and **avoid** them.” ([Rom.16:17](#))

The Bible says,

- “If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, **receive him not** into your house.” ([2Jn.vs.10](#))

True unity, exists only in God’s Truth.

Peace without biblical or spiritual purity, is not peace at all — it is compromise.

Love warns — To protect the flock, is not intolerance, but obedience to the Chief Shepherd, Christ Jesus.

God’s people must cling to His Word, as the final authority.

**When we hold fast to Sound Doctrine, the disputers lose their influence, and the Truth shines brighter.**

## **V. Some Closing Thoughts**

The battle for truth, is not an intellectual competition — it’s a spiritual fight for souls.

We must recognize the difference, between those who argue to win and those who teach to save.

Paul said,

- “**Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine.**” ([2Tim.4:2](#))

May God help us, to be patient, persistent, and pure in our defense of the truth.

The wisest decision one can ever make, is to **STOP** arguing with God and **START** obeying Him.

Jesus calls us NOT to dispute, but to repent and follow Him.

- “He that believeth AND is baptized shall be **SAVED**; but he that believeth Not ([Jn.3:18](#)) shall be **DAMNED.**” ([Mk.16:16](#))

**Come to Christ today**

— leaving behind, the wisdom of this world

— and walk in the wisdom, that leads to eternal life.

**...As together, we stand and sing.**

Source: Adapted from an Article by Joe R. Price  
Edited & formatted by Michael Wright