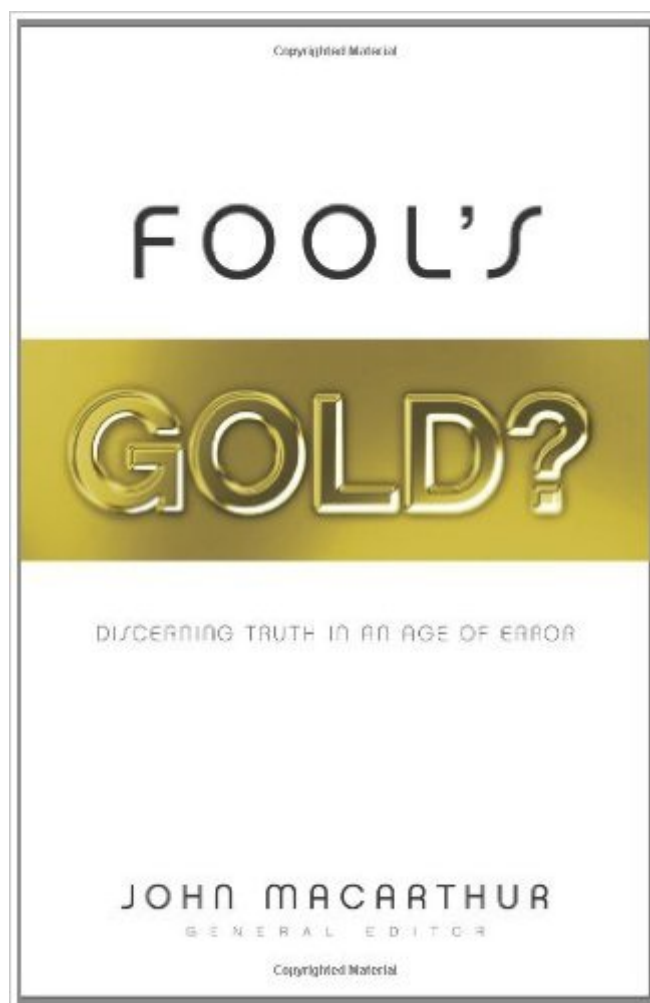


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Fool's Gold?: Discerning Truth In An Age Of Error



Synopsis

"Eureka!" In an age of open-mindedness, many believers accept too much with too little discernment, resulting in great confusion and compromise. But God's Word makes it clear that not everything that glitters is gold. False teaching is at every turn, and the temptation to embrace it is great. As God's people we are called to sift through the overwhelming number of traditions and trends and use the truth of Scripture to determine which are the true treasures-and which are "fool's gold." General editor John MacArthur and the contributors of this uncompromising book define the principles of biblical discernment and use them to address several contemporary Christian issues. They provide straightforward, biblical critiques of some popular but unfortunate Christian trends, such as watered-down preaching and doctrinally questionable best-selling books. Dr. MacArthur ends with a practical plan for cultivating discernment in the Christian life. It is the duty of every Christian-not just pastors and elders-to follow the biblical command to cling to what is good and to reject what is not. This book will equip you with a foundation for biblical discernment that will enable you to make careful distinctions in your thinking about truth.

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Customer Reviews

It is rare these days to find a book on Christian discernment when everyone appears to be jumping on every band-wagon of the Evangelical church that comes along. MacArthur has assembled an excellent set of essays by the staff of Grace Community Church, including several young men who are recent graduates of the Master's Seminary. I found the most insightful chapters to be the ones in

the middle of the book dealing with some of the hottest sellers in the Christian Bookstores (not to mention everywhere else). Nathan Busenitz' critique of "The Purpose Driven Life" is one of the best I have read. Although there are perhaps some redeeming features of the book, they are very few. It is a snapshot of just how shallow American Evangelicalism has become and the degree to which professing Christians are unable to tolerate serious engagement with a truly Biblical Worldview. Daniel Gillespie's review of "Wild at Heart" was also excellent. John Eldredge has zeroed in on a narrow and spurious definition of masculinity, the notion that men need to tap into our wild and carefree ambitions; a throw-back to our so-called primal instincts that can be renewed if we just get back to the untamed wilderness of nature and find ourselves again. Gillespie points out that Eldredge skews the Biblical evidence in favor of his own thesis and fails to deal with explicit texts of the Bible that deal directly with masculinity (namely, because they contradict his thesis). Perhaps the most shocking expose of the book is Rick Holland's review of the new Bibzines, "Revolve" and "Refuel"; New Testaments for teenagers designed to look like magazines (inside and out) for those who are afraid to carry traditional looking Bibles because they are too "freaky." The chapter focused on "Revolve" for girls.

"Bravo!" I don't think I said the word aloud when I finished reading Fool's Gold, but it may have slipped out. John MacArthur is the general editor of this new book from Crossway, and contributing authors are several of his ministry associates. The theme of the book is spiritual discernment; not set forth in a didactic way, but in a series of topical snapshots. Section one lays the foundation for the chapters to follow: a call for biblical discernment, and the consequences of a weak proclamation of Christianity. MacArthur makes the point that discernment is not just the responsibility of pastors and Christian leaders, but of every Christian. He covers the favorite verse of many in today's church: "Judge not, lest ye be judged." (Matthew 7:1) and compares that with 1 Thessalonians 5:21: "Test everything." In the second chapter he lists fifteen negative effects of superficial preaching, whittled down from an original list of sixty-one! My only reservation is with the twelfth point, and his comment about the difficulty of exercising church discipline where there is no commitment to the authority of God's Word. I'm not sure that very many churches even practice biblical church discipline, according to the teaching of Matthew 18:15-19. Perhaps a brief exposition of this passage, and an example of how this is practiced in his church is in order. The final two chapters of the book, "A Doctrinal Framework for Developing Discernment" and "A Practical Plan for Developing Personal Discernment" are excellent. I particularly appreciated the exhortation on page 201: "Discernment is not enough apart from obedience." The rest of the book is a series of chapters looking at current

doctrinal trends in the church and in Christian books.

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