



Be watchful and seek

# *Spiritual Discernment*



**CHARIS**

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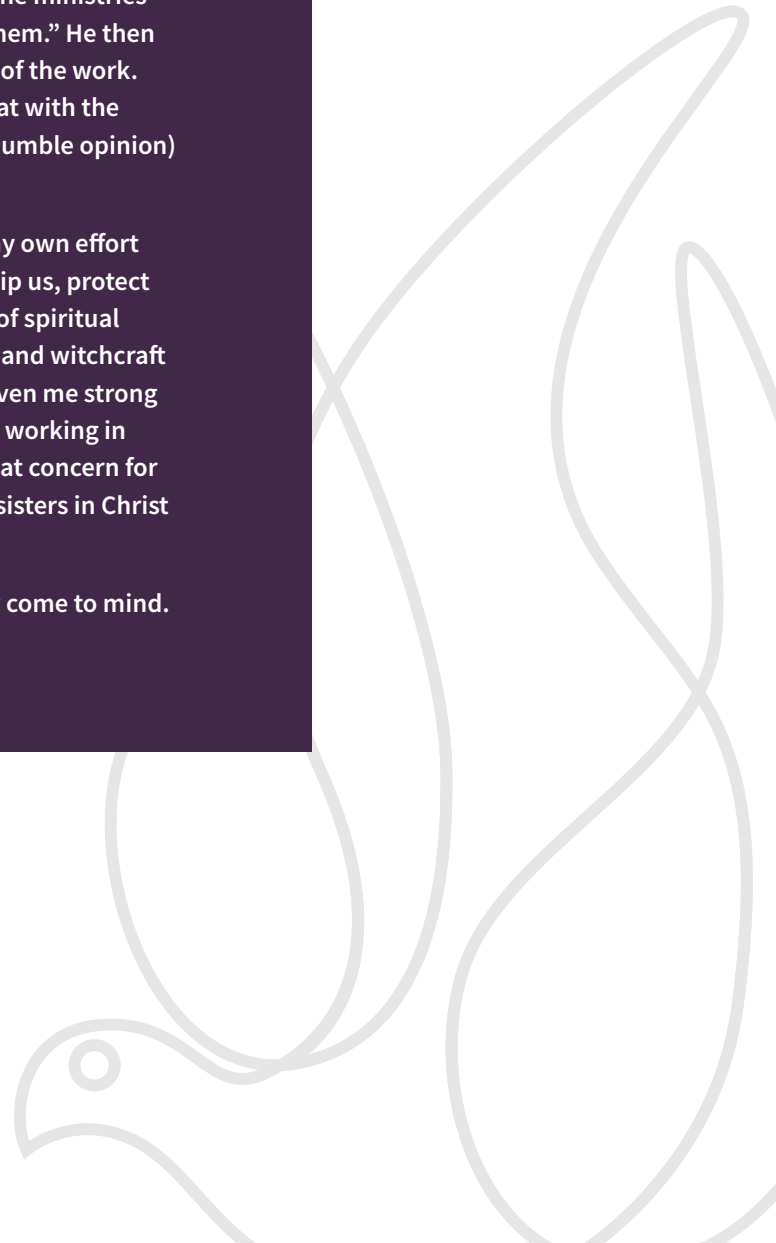
Charis Family,

I apologize for the tardiness of this newsletter that should have been printed and distributed a few weeks ago. Honestly, I have been wrestling with God about writing this because the topic may offend some of you. Please, believe me when I say that God has pressed me to write this and the burden of all He is showing me is great. I pray, as you read this, that you allow the Holy Spirit to instruct and guide you in “working out your own salvation with fear and trembling,” as the Scripture says in Philippians 2:12. We should all continually thank God for His Word as it reveals things clearly to us with the purpose of preventing us from being deceived.

There is so much going on in our world right now. Images of war, sporting events, political debates, social issues, and social media continually bombard our minds and senses. Beyond these daily secular considerations, there are additional events — both current and recent — that claim to be Christian. These include: TV shows, movies, and even revivals. As you all know, I have been called by God to be a foreign missionary, specifically to those who work within the occult where religious practices require frequent ritualistic interactions with demons. According to Ephesians 2:10, God calls us into the ministries that He “prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” He then equips and empowers us to meet the spiritual demands of the work. When the calling on your life requires literal, daily combat with the demonic realm, the most important gift needed (in my humble opinion) is spiritual discernment.

Admittedly, I cannot practice spiritual discernment by my own effort or by taking a class. It is a gift from God purposed to equip us, protect us, and instruct us in spiritual matters. Without this gift of spiritual discernment from God, a ministry focused on the occult and witchcraft could be dangerous, and at times, even fatal. God has given me strong spiritual discernment. Just as I depend on this gift while working in Haiti, I also find use for it here. I have great cause for great concern for the church in America and for many of my brothers and sisters in Christ by what I am witnessing lately.

On the next page, there are two verses that immediately come to mind.



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*“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.”*

*–1 John 4:1*

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*“Now The Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons.”*

*–1 Timothy 4:1*

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## Is it from God?

These two verses, among many others I could have chosen, reveal truths to us. The instructions contained within these verses are undergirded with warnings that are written for us to heed. The instructions are:

- 1. Do not believe every spirit.**
- 2. Test the spirits to determine whether or not they are from God.**

The warnings are:

- 1. Many false prophets will come into the world.**
- 2. Many that we think are in the faith will depart from it.**
- 3. The departure of these people from the faith will be due to the deceit of spirits and demonic teachings, so beware of these things.**

I think that when we read verses like these, we tend to either overlook them or consider their relevance isolated to the past with limited worth for us in today's world. I don't believe that any one of us does this purposefully, rather we do this as a defense mechanism to relieve ourselves of any possibility that we could be living as victims of these verses. The sad fact is that many of us are victims of the unfortunate realities that these verses are warning against. Let's consider these warnings and instructions together to come to contemporary truths that we MUST start living by.





## Let no one deceive you

Foundational to this entire discussion is the fact that the closer we get to Christ's return the greater Satan's deceptions will become. Paul warned us of this in 2 Thessalonians 2:3. We will look at the Amplified Bible's translation of this because I feel it's easier to comprehend. (Note: "that day" in this verse refers to the day that Christ will return.)

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*"Let no one in any way deceive or entrap you, for that day will not come unless the apostasy comes first [that is, the great rebellion, the abandonment of the faith by professed Christians], and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction [the Antichrist, the one who is destined to be destroyed]."*

*-2 Thessalonians 2:3*

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I have always considered this verse within the boundaries of the far future, but I fear that future is here/now as we are seeing unprecedented numbers of people who profess Christianity abandoning the faith. The Greek word for *apostasy* in this verse is "apostasia" which means "defection from" or "revolt." I believe that when many of us hear the word apostasy, we isolate its reference to those who obviously and blatantly turn from Christianity and enter atheism or another religion all together. While apostasy definitely includes this type of defection, we regrettably fail to see the full extent of this term and those it includes.

In reference to the definition of apostasy, what exactly is being *defected from*? We know that the verse above is referring to Christianity. However, it would be wrong to give this answer without defining the exact meaning of Christianity in the context of the verse.

Christianity has an orthodoxy attached to it. By orthodoxy, I mean an authorized or generally accepted doctrine, or practice. The orthodoxy of Christianity is founded solely upon Scripture. Therefore, if we are found joining churches and "Christian movements," and sitting under church leaders that are not preaching and teaching Biblical (orthodox) Christianity, then we are defecting from the faith, from the Truth, from the Word, from Christ. The words of the prophet Isaiah reveal this,

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*"And the Lord said: "Because this people draw near with their mouth and honor Me with their lips, while their hearts are far from Me, and their fear of Me is a commandment taught by men, therefore, behold, I will again do wonderful things with this people, with wonder upon wonder; and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the discernment of their discerning men shall be hidden."*

*-Isaiah 29:13-14*

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Throughout the entire Old Testament, Israel confessed to be God's people, but their practices, desires, and lives were not aligned with God and His commandments. As punishment, God would take wisdom and discernment away from them. I believe we are seeing this same thing happen today. God takes this very seriously and, unfortunately, I don't think we do.

As we consider all the "stuff" that is being presented to us in the name of Jesus — movies, television series, celebrity pastors, music/musicians, Christian celebrities — are we just blindly running to these things, supporting them, and listening to them? Or are we observing and applying the instructions written for us in Scripture? In other

words, are we just passively believing and approving everything and everyone claiming to represent Christ, or are we closely examining these things as we listen to God Who warned us that **many** false prophets and false/demonic teachings will be unleashed upon the world? Are we testing the spirits that stand behind these so-called Christian shows, movies, pastors, churches, and musicians? In doing so, are we aligning ourselves with God's Word that warns of deceitful spirits and many falsehoods — even though they claim Christ but in truth are not from God?

## Spiritual discernment and Biblical knowledge

I urge all of you to seriously scrutinize what the world is calling "Christian." I don't want to point out anything specifically. I pray that all of us will examine ourselves and the things we are watching, listening to, going to, and supporting in effort to determine whether or not they are from God. To do this successfully though, we need two things: spiritual discernment and Biblical knowledge.

As stated above, spiritual discernment is a spiritual gift from God, that 1 Corinthians 12:10 refers to as, "the ability to distinguish between spirits." This must be asked for in prayer. There is no doubt in my mind — as I view the strength of the deceptions aimed at Christians in our country — that God will not refuse such a prayer. He commands us to discern, and He won't command what He won't provide — so pray for this!

Secondly, we need Biblical knowledge. Since many of us don't read our Bibles to the degree that we should, unfortunately we fall short in this area. Not knowing the Bible results in an improper standard. By what standard are we judging these things in the world if we don't have a mature and deep understanding of the Bible as the standard? The answer is that our standards will fall in line with what the world is actively and aggressively indoctrinating us to believe. That standard is worldly, flawed, and Satanic (since Satan, according to Jesus' own words in John 14:30, is the "ruler of this world").

My brothers and sisters in Christ and ministry, I can't express enough how important this is, and how (at the very least) our sanctification and (at the very most) our salvation depend on being in right, biblically-instructed relationship with God through Christ in the Holy Spirit. All Satanic deceptions aimed at Christians are catered to our flesh, customized to our desires, and designed with powerful spiritual illusions. Paul clearly tells us this in his letter to the Thessalonians.

*"The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. Therefore, God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness."*

*-2 Thessalonians 2:9-12*

Notice here that as the coming of the antichrist ("the lawless one") approaches, Satan's deceptive activity will increase as he will be allowed to perform powerful signs and wonders. People who profess to be Christians will be successfully deceived because of their lust for the supernatural and desire to hear what their itching ears want to hear. Because these individuals fail to believe the truth (the Bible), God will not only "send them a strong delusion," but will surrender them to their worldly desires ensuring that they will believe the lie. This will result in their justified condemnation because they had the truth but had no pleasure in it. Do we see how serious this is? I will give you a single example with the hopes that this will spur you on to look at all of these so-called "Christian" offerings in our country right now and judge if they are Godly or Satanic.



## Maverick City

Maverick City is the biggest and most successful Christian music group in America — possibly in the world right now. Many Christians in America listen to them, support their music, attend their concerts, and sing their music in church. Maverick City was invited to attend the Grammy Awards due to the fact that they were nominated to win a Grammy. There aren't many award shows that could be further from Christ than the Grammy Awards, which functions to reward and recognize the best of the world's music.

This televised Grammy program is a worldly, carnal, sexually-charged event with many overtly demonic performances by demonically-influenced artists. This is the same show that headlined Billy Eilish last year who had just performed a song named "All the Good Girls Go to Hell" at the Apple Music Awards and has numerous videos that represent her as demon possessed. This year, Sam Smith performed his song "Unholy" with Kim Petras (a transgender woman) in a sexually-charged performance on a set that was designed to look like hell as he danced in a devil costume, had girls in cages, and both men and women that were scantily dressed (and that's an understatement).

The entire performance was demonic from start to finish, to the point that even secular influencers slammed the performance as evil and inappropriate. Oli London, one of the biggest internet personalities in England who identifies as "transracial" and has undergone countless plastic surgery procedures to make him appear Asian, tweeted this about Smith's Grammy performance. "Last night, Sam Smith performed a satanic show filled with sexual references, fetish gear, a strip tease and a grotesque imitation of sex acts on stage while children were in the audience." This is coming from one of the most secular internet influencers in England. Even those who represent the world system were offended! While that debauched, pornographic performance was occurring, Maverick City sat in the audience and remained there. And it just gets worse.

Later in the Grammy Award show, Sam Smith was announced as the winner in the pop duo/group performance category for his song "Unholy" that I just referenced above. So, the world, in the form of a

Grammy Award, was rewarding, congratulating, and affirming Smith's performance and his song, appropriately titled "Unholy." Interestingly, guess who also won a Grammy along with Sam Smith at this event? You guessed it — Maverick City!

First of all, why didn't Maverick City get up and walk out of Smith's performance? As Christians, are we supposed to subject our eyes, ears, and senses to such filth? If we were to judge both the spirit of this event in its totality and Sam Smith's performance, would we find God's Holy Spirit or would we find a legion of demonic spirits? By sitting there and not leaving, Maverick City was giving their passive approval of this abomination of a performance.

Secondly, doesn't anyone find it strange and disturbing that the award the world gives to some of the most Satanic performers/singers on the planet — as a sign of success within this world music system — is happily accepted by the world's biggest "Christian" group? To put this in perspective, let us imagine Paul in Ephesus. Paul performed miracles by the power of God nearly everywhere he went, but Ephesus had magicians too. Every year, Ephesus had a sorcerers award show and they invited Paul. It didn't matter that all the other magicians did magic through the power of Satan and Paul's miracles were through the power of God. Paul goes to the event and sits there while some of the more popular sorcerers do a show of sorcery and praise the various demons for the power they give to perform these things. Then they call up one of the demonic sorcerers and give him an award. The very next award goes to Paul. He walks up, accepts it, and gives a speech of gratitude to the Satanic organization that put on the show.

*This is obviously ridiculous and beyond probability as Paul would have never even stepped foot in such an event.* But is this any different than Maverick City — who purports to sing for Christ — accepting an award that had just been given to a singer who sings for Satan? Shame on Maverick City. In my humble opinion, this brings into question (at the very least) Maverick City's motivation for singing and (at the very most) the spirit behind Maverick City. Is this really a group that we should be heralding, supporting, paying money to go see, and singing their songs in our churches every Sunday morning?



Sam Smith performing at the 2023 Grammy Awards (© Sonja Flemmings / CBS)



Maverick City receiving multiple awards at the 2023 Grammys (© CCM Magazine)



## What would Paul do?

It is not my desire to offend any of you, but rather to plead with you to discern these things. A very simple test is this: if the world embraces something labeled as “Christian,” and if social media platforms are pushing it, then you can know with full certainty that the topic in question is false and not from God. How can I say this? I can’t say anything, but the Bible speaks loudly:

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*“If the world hates you, know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.”*

–John 15:18-19

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*“You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”*

–James 4:4

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*“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life is not from the Father but is from the world.”*

–1 John 2:15-16

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*“Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets... Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.”*

–Luke 6:22-23, 26

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We could go on and on with more passages of Scripture, but the truth is clear here:

- 1. The world will hate true Christians (note: they will not embrace them as proven by giving them a worldly award).**
- 2. If we are friends with the world (system), we are enemies of God.**
- 3. If we love the world or any aspect of it, the love for God the Father is not in us.**
- 4. We are blessed when the world hates and excludes us on account of our allegiance to Jesus.**
- 5. We are at risk and in a dangerous spiritual place when the world speaks well of us.**

Now superimpose these truths over the situation with Maverick City and we can appreciate and understand how serious this all is to God according to His Word. We can also use these Biblical litmus tests to examine all of these Christian offerings that the world is pushing and celebrating right now to determine what spirit is really behind these things. I don’t want any of us to be deceived in a world of spiritual deception right now, and sadly I am witnessing SO MANY people who profess to be Christians falling into deceptions that endanger our very souls. This is not a game or something to show indifference toward. This is very important and please hear my heart as I plead with you all.

## Focus on our mission

What does all this have to do with Charis, Haiti, and missions? Joy and I find ourselves living within a difficult dichotomy. In America, everyone is happy, entertained, and secure. We love to see Christ being portrayed everywhere (on TV, on the movie screens, in the mouths of so-called “Christian” celebrities, etc.), and things feel good. Then we get the phone calls and reports from Haiti, and a very different set of emotions overtake our hearts. At the bottom of the page are some of the current stats put out by Haiti last month.

With these realities present in Haiti, our hearts are absolutely broken for the Haitian people. The requests for prayer and financial help are beyond our capacity to meet — but we meet these needs to the extent that we can. This is my plea for this newsletter: please let's quit running to everything that claims to be Jesus and Christian in our culture right now. Rather, let's choose to be like Christ to those whom God has put in the center of our ministry attention.

The reason that I am writing this newsletter and you are reading it is because God has assigned us to the people of Haiti. These people have no voice outside of ours. They are literally starving to death while at the same time being in desperate need of the Gospel. We can meet both their spiritual and physical needs if we choose to focus our spiritual eyes on what is important and refuse to be distracted and deceived by what is not important. Please join Joy and me in praying without ceasing for Haiti, and helping to meet the food, shelter, and medical needs of these precious people through financially helping — anything helps. We love all of you. Joy and I are beyond thankful that we have such a big ministry family in this mission effort. God has chosen to express His love, hope, and salvation to Haiti through all of us — let us all realize what a great and awesome honor this is. Thank you for your time spent reading this newsletter and thank you for your consideration of Haiti and its people. You can believe me when I tell you that they thank you all greatly. God bless all of you and your families, and once again thank you!

## The state of Haiti is dire

The data below reflects the state of Haiti within the first three months of 2023 according to the advocacy committee of the **Haiti Health Network**.



**562** daily Haitian deaths due to starvation



**53%** annual food inflation rate (cost increase in food)



**9%** of families have given up children to servitude to meet food needs



**78** Haitian police officers killed in the first three months of 2023 (pop: 11.5 million)



**12** American police officers killed in the first three months of 2023 (pop: 334 million)



**85%** of healthcare facilities reporting shortages in staff and supplies



**857** annual kidnappings in Haiti (pop: 11.5 million)



**650** annual kidnappings in Mexico (pop: 130 million)



**200** individual armed groups/gangs operating in Haiti



**0** elected officials in Haiti (All have fled or quit in fear. This means anarchy.)

## Mission Statement

Charis (Greek for God's Grace) operates in complete obedience to God, giving Him His rightful place in determining the path and goals of His ministry that He has, by grace, allowed us to perform. Charis primarily focuses on the unseen spiritual needs in Haiti, and secondarily on the seen physical needs, always remembering that our success is completely dependent on the will of God, the gospel of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit working effectively through us, His willing servants.

