



Don't Buy the Lie: Discerning Truth in a World of Deception (invert)

By Mark Matlock

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This book helps teenagers understand how to think clearly and biblically about supernatural events. Every day we hear of supernatural phenomenon—from Ouija boards to crop circles to psychics on TV—and it's difficult for teens to know how to distinguish between genuine and counterfeit occurrences. Author Mark Matlock, who has conducted a research project with Barna Research on Teens and the Supernatural and is a member of the international community of illusionists, presents clear principles and intriguing examples that teach teens how to respond to the supernatural with wisdom, discernment, and without being duped.

Using the Acts community at Berea as a model, Matlock identifies “thinking traps” that lead to deception, such as not balancing the mind and emotions, mixing truth with lies, and making false association. With clarity, he shows readers how to find Christ, and provides biblical answers to frequently asked questions about such things as Ouija boards, psychics, angels, and demons.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

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About the Author

Mark Matlock has been working with youth pastors, students, and parents for more than two decades. He's the Executive director of Youth Specialties and founder of WisdomWorks Ministries and PlanetWisdom. He's the author of several books including *The Wisdom On series*, *Living a Life That Matters*, *Don't Buy the Lie*, and *Raising Wise Children*. Mark lives in Texas with his wife, Jade, and their two teenage children.

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CHAPTER 1: IN THE DARK

You were just a little kid, but you knew what you had seen. Something had moved in the corner of your room or you'd glimpsed a shape just on the edge of your vision. Maybe you'd heard what sounded like a voice. Was it a monster? A ghost? A 'bad guy'?

Afraid to move and call attention to yourself, you lay perfectly still, eyes squeezed not quite shut, hoping whatever it was wouldn't notice you. Finally, you couldn't take it anymore and called for mom and dad to come and investigate---or ran to their room as fast as you could. By the time they got there, though, the thing was always gone. Or hiding...

A friend reads your horoscope to you out of a magazine. You don't really buy all that stuff, but it does seem to fit your personality. The more you think about it, the more it seems like the horoscope was pretty much right in its predictions about your life. You wonder how someone you've never met can write something that matches your life so closely.

A guy on TV gathers a studio audience together like he's going to do another Oprah-style talk show. Instead, he says that all these spirits are talking to him. Spirits of the dead. He starts repeating to the audience some of the things that one spirit is telling him, looking for the person who would know this spirit. He tells things from the spirit that only that person could know. The person usually ends up crying because they're so glad to have a message from a loved one who has died. And the message is always so hopeful.

You're riding with friends or your family in a car. Suddenly, you realize that you're about to crash. Even though everything feels like it's moving in slow motion, you can't do anything to prevent the accident from happening. Then, at the last possible second, somehow the accident that should have killed or hurt all of you is miraculously avoided. Everyone is fine. You wonder if an angel has just stepped in and saved you.

At a party, someone brings out a Ouija (pronounced 'wee-jee') board. As one or two people hold the pointer, you begin asking the board questions about boyfriends, or relatives who have passed away, or what's going to happen in the future. You hear a noise in the other room, and you all jump and laugh. You know it's just a stupid game, but you can't help feeling a little creeped out.

You've learned in Sunday school and church that God's Holy Spirit comes to all who trust in Jesus. And you know you've experienced moments in which you felt God's presence or you sensed a supernatural ability to do something he wanted you to do---like encouraging a friend or telling someone else what you believe.

You laugh when you see a woman on TV telling people what their pets really think about Aunt Millie or the new baby or the Puppy Chow. Still, she seems to know things the people haven't told her. But how could anyone believe a psychic was communicating with pooches and parakeets?

A friend or a 'friend of a friend' or someone on the Internet tells you that he's part of the Wiccan religion. He says that they worship nature, and that they're learning how to get supernatural power through spells or castings or chanting. Maybe he tells you he's going to become a warlock. You wonder if these people have any kind of power at all. And you wonder what it would be like to have power like that.

A popular TV show features witches, vampires, or demons who save the day---or maybe the world---using their special powers. Although once evil, they now use their darkness to fight against really evil stuff.

Cartoons, books, and movies you've seen describe good witches and wizards who use magic to do the right thing and stop bad witches and wizards. You wonder if maybe witchcraft has been given a bad name.

A missionary comes to your church and talks about seeing people in a foreign country who were demon-possessed. They talked in strange voices saying awful things and hurting themselves. You remember times when you felt like you were in the presence of some kind of evil, and it made you feel afraid.

You've just watched a scary movie. Maybe it was the story of an evil videotape that causes people to die seven days after they have watched it. And you keep waiting for the TV to turn on by itself and a wicked little girl to climb out and get you. Or maybe the movie focused on a broken family that is living in a haunted house and slowly realizing that they are the ones doing the haunting. Or it could be the tale of a vampire or some other secretly evil creature that makes friends with people and then destroys them when their defenses are down.

Whatever it was, you can't sleep now, and you feel just like you did when you were a little kid. Except now you can't call mom and dad to come and help you look for the monsters. You're pretty sure it's all in your head, but part of you still wonders about all that supernatural stuff.

Are ghosts real? Do angels and demons really work invisibly to help or hurt us? Can some people talk to the dead? Are witches and wizards just for storytelling, or can they be real?

Spiritual = Cool Again

Over the last couple of decades, interest in the spiritual and supernatural has been growing. For most of the twentieth century, 'modern' people ignored that world. After all, everything that existed could be explained by science.

The most popular worldview in academics and media was naturalism. People who held this view of the world believed that if you could not taste, touch, smell, hear, or see something, it probably didn't exist. All that mattered was what you could experience with your senses. Even people who believed in God didn't have time or interest in 'unexplained' phenomenon. Most just considered everything beyond nature and their own religious beliefs to be silly superstition.

But the supernatural is back in a big way.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Alysha Johnson:

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