

Where Are False Prophets?

Matthew 7:15-23 (NKJV)

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.”

16 “You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?”

17 “Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.”

18 “A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.”

19 “Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

20 “Therefore, by their fruits you will know them.”

21 “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in

heaven.”

22 “Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’”

23 “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”

Some people may say, “Don’t preach these kinds of messages, just teach people to repent and become Christians. That’s enough, isn’t it?!” But the real question is, once someone accepts Christ, is that the end of their spiritual journey? The answer is no—becoming a Christian is only the beginning of the journey. You need to grow spiritually, and growth requires feeding on the right spiritual nourishment. The Bible teaches that there are many teachings that build up believers, but there are also false teachings that tear down and destroy faith. The eternal well-being of your soul depends on your ability to discern which teachings you should consume. This is why it is essential to identify the difference between true and false prophets.

We live in perilous times—times unlike any before. The age in which we now live is marked by an incredible mix of true prophets and false prophets, all working with the goal of either gathering souls for heaven or deceiving them to hell. We must carefully examine which spiritual “fruit” we are being harvested for, lest we unknowingly fall prey to spiritual deception.

THE DECEPTION OF THE MODERN CHURCH:

The challenge many Christians face today is the confusion caused by false prophets who live in blatant sin yet continue to perform signs and wonders. These false teachers may live in immorality, practice drunkenness, indulge in worldliness, and even slander others—but still, they might raise the dead, heal the sick, prophesy accurately, and perform mighty miracles.

This confuses many believers, especially new or immature ones. “How can someone living in sin still have God’s power working through them?” they ask. “How can they heal the sick, raise the dead, and prophesy accurately if they are not from God?”

Here’s the truth: Not every miracle is a sign of divine approval. Satan can perform false signs and wonders (cf. 2 Thessalonians

2:9-12), and sometimes, even true prophets of God may misuse the power given to them. But miracles alone do not define a true servant of God. God may use anyone—even sinful people—to accomplish His purposes (cf. Numbers 22:21-31, when God used Balaam, a sorcerer, to bless Israel).

The key to discerning the truth is not miracles, but the alignment of a prophet's message with the Word of God. A true prophet will speak in accordance with God's will, while false prophets often lead people astray with teachings that contradict Scripture.

Theological Explanation of Deuteronomy 13:1-5

Let's dive deeper into Deuteronomy 13:1-5 (NKJV), which provides a crucial warning:

1 "If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder,

2 and the sign or the wonder comes true, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods'—which you have not known—and let us serve them,"

3 “you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the Lord your God is testing you to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul.”

4 “You shall walk after the Lord your God, fear Him, keep His commandments, obey His voice, serve Him, and hold fast to Him.”

5 “That prophet or dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the Lord your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put away the evil from your midst.”

The Bible makes it clear that the presence of signs and wonders is not enough to confirm the authenticity of a prophet. If the message they preach leads people to turn from God’s commands, it is a false message. This is an important principle in the Bible: God will not contradict His Word. Even if a prophet performs genuine miracles, if their message contradicts God’s Word (e.g., teaching that sin is permissible or that salvation can be earned through works or worldly success), their message is not of God.

In our modern context, this is crucial because we are living in a time where signs and wonders are used to validate ministries and leaders, even if their teachings deviate from Biblical doctrine. The Bible provides us with clear criteria to measure these things, and the primary criterion is the alignment of the message with Scripture.

THE TEST OF THE TRUE PROPHET:

In Matthew 16:24-26 (NKJV), Jesus sets the standard for what it means to follow Him:

Matthew 16:24-26

“Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?’”

True discipleship is marked by self-denial and cross-bearing. Any gospel that promises wealth, comfort, or worldly success without requiring repentance or the pursuit of holiness is not the gospel of Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself defined the cost of following Him—self-denial, cross-bearing, and loss of earthly gain.

The Importance of Holiness:

In Hebrews 12:14 (NKJV), we are warned:

“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.”

Holiness is not optional for the believer. It is essential for salvation. The gospel is not about material wealth or temporal success but about salvation from sin and the transformation of the believer into the image of Christ. A false gospel that ignores this essential truth will always focus on superficial aspects like prosperity or personal success, rather than eternal righteousness.

Discerning the True Prophet:

Matthew 7:16 (NKJV) teaches us that we will recognize false prophets by their fruits:

“You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?”

The fruit of a prophet is their doctrine and their lifestyle, which must align with the teachings of Jesus Christ. If a prophet's message does not align with the full counsel of God's Word, then we must recognize that they are a false prophet.

How to Protect Yourself from False Prophets:

The Bible repeatedly warns us to test all things and hold fast to what is good (cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:21, 1 John 4:1). As believers, we must be grounded in the Scriptures so that we can test every spirit. Jesus has already warned us that there will be many false prophets in the last days (cf. Matthew 24:11). And the Apostle Paul warned the early church to be wary of wolves in sheep's clothing (cf. Acts 20:29-30).

In Conclusion:

We are living in a time of great spiritual deception. Many people today are being drawn into false teachings, and it's crucial that we, as Christians, learn how to test the spirits. We need to be grounded in the Word of God, discerning the difference between true and false prophets, and understanding that miracles alone are not proof of divine approval. Only when a prophet's message aligns with the whole counsel of Scripture can we confidently recognize them as a true servant of God.

So, ask yourself today: Are you being led into deeper holiness, repentance, and love for Christ? Or are you being drawn into a superficial gospel that makes you comfortable in your sin? The stakes are high, and the consequences of following a false prophet can be eternal.

2 Peter

Do You Recognize False Prophets?

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