

"Modern Day False Prophets"

Part 1

Introduction: Last week in our study of Ephesians I spoke of the survey done by George Barna and how he had explained that 70% of Americans call themselves Christians but only 7% of the 70% have a Biblical World View. That means that 7% see the events of the world through the lens of Scripture. One of the reasons for these numbers is that many of the 70% are not saved. They call themselves Christians maybe because they are affiliated with a church, they have parents that were connected with a church, or they are just see themselves as religious. Many of them have never repented of their sins and come to place their faith in Jesus Christ. This low number certainly fits with what our Lord said in the Sermon on the Mount.

Matthew 7:13-14

¹³ Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

¹⁴ Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

For those of us who do know the Lord we need to be fully aware of what is happening around us.

Matthew 10:16

¹⁶ Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.

Jesus tells us we are to be wise as serpents and as harmless as doves. He also says that we are as sheep in the midst of wolves.

Now the Bible gives us clear warning that as our world moves toward the Kingdom of the Anti-Christ that there will be more and more deception.

Jesus spoke of the deception in the Tribulation in Matthew 24.

Matthew 24:24

²⁴ For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Paul warned Timothy concerning what people would be like as the world approaches the Tribulation.

1 Timothy 4:1

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

2 Timothy 4:2-4

² Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.

³ For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

⁴ And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

In the days in which we live there are seducing spirits and doctrines of devils and we believers MUST be aware of what this teaching looks like and who it is that is teaching it.

Let me also say that as believers we must be spiritually sharp and spiritually alert. Satan is going to do all he can to deceive God people and we must be able to identify his attempts.

Today we are going to look at a message that will focus upon False Prophets.

Now when we think about false prophets, we think of someone who comes preaching a false gospel or someone who teaches something that is contrary to the Word of God. We think of false prophets as people who stand behind the pulpit and preach false doctrine. But all false prophets are not in churches. All false prophets are not standing behind pulpits.

I. Identifying a False Prophet

I want to go to an Old Testament passage to show you the perception that many believers have. In the Old Testament there were several ways to recognize a false prophet.

Deuteronomy 18:20-22

²⁰ But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die.

²¹ And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken?

²² When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.

This is how we would perceive a false prophet. We would see them as someone who makes a prediction concerning the future and it does not come to pass. But there is more to be understood concerning false prophets.

Notice Deuteronomy 13:1-3

There is much for us to learn here. God tells His people that there will be times when a false prophet speaks a word, and it will come to pass.

Application:

Let me stop here and just be very clear that signs and wonders are NOT the EVIDENCE of God's Truth or are they the EVIDENCE of His hand. Let me show you a verse.

Mark 16:15-18

¹⁵ And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.

¹⁶ He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

¹⁷ And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

¹⁸ They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.

Signs follow us, we do not follow signs!

We don't speak in tongues; we don't handle deadly snakes, and we don't drink poison. The signs that follow us are the signs of a changed life.

Let me point out another reason why it is dangerous to follow signs.

2 Thessalonians 2:8-9

⁸ And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

⁹ Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.

This is in the Tribulation, but we can see from this that Satan will deceive many with signs and wonders.

Notice Deuteronomy 13:1-3 again.

We need to notice that God would permit the false prophets to be accurate in their messages so as to test His people.

Application:

I have said this for years and I will say it again, the True Church in the United States has never been tested. We have had personal trials and tests but as a whole we have never been tested. I believe we are in the middle of a testing period right now. If we do not know the Scriptures, then we can easily be misled by the false prophets of our day. When I say that we are tested I want you to understand that we are being tested in knowledge and faith.

Now let us notice the True mark of a false teacher.

Notice Deuteronomy 13:1-4

The True mark of the false prophet is someone who attempts to lead us away from being obedient to God's Word. No matter how attractive the deception was for Israel they were not to follow anyone who led them away from God to follow other gods.

Application:

I want you to notice in verse 4 that we are to CLEAVE unto God. Let me show you another place where the word is used, and we can then understand its meaning.

Genesis 2:24

²⁴ Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall CLEAVE unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

The idea of CLEAVE is TO BE ONE WITH. Israel was to cleave to God in the sense that they were to live as He would live. They were His earthly representatives.

We too are one with our Lord. We ambassadors for Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:20

²⁰ Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.

Philippians 1:20-21

²⁰ According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

²¹ For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

You and I that know Jesus Christ are called to magnify Christ and walk in obedience to His Word. Let me show you some particular commands.

Hebrews 10:24-25

²⁴ And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

²⁵ Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

We are command to gather together with one another.

James 1:27

²⁷ Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.

We are commanded to visit the fatherless and the widows.

2 Thessalonians 3:10, 12

¹⁰ For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.

¹² Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

Now we need to stop and consider a thought here. When the pandemic started to you remember how many churches were told they had to close and that we were not allowed to gather with family and to visit the sick and the dying? Do you remember how many were not permitted to work? I am submitting to you that these were false prophets. Were

trying to get us to bow to another god and that was the government. There is a push for SOCIALISM, and they want everyone dependent on the government.

Notice the words of **Karl Marx**:

"The first requisite of the happiness of the people is the abolition of religion."

The reason why religion must be eliminated is because the government must be the highest authority which the people look to and trust in. Socialism is really idolatry because the government takes the place of God in the lives of the people.

Notice the words of **Martin Luther King**:

"No Christian can be a Communist because Communism leaves out God. It regards religion as wishful thinking and the product of fear and ignorance."

Getting back to the point, false prophets are focused upon keeping us from walking in obedience to the Word of God. One of their greatest tools is fear.

Nehemiah 6:10-14

¹⁰ Afterward I came unto the house of Shemaiah the son of Delaiah the son of Mehetabeel, who was shut up; and he said, Let us meet together in the house of God, within the temple, and let us shut the doors of the temple: for they will come to slay thee: yea, in the night will they come to slay thee.

¹¹ And I said, Should such a man as I flee? and who is there, that, being as I am, would go into the temple to save his life? I will not go in.

¹² And, lo, I perceived that God had not sent him; but that he pronounced this prophecy against me: for Tobiah and Sanballat had hired him.

¹³ Therefore was he hired, that I should be afraid, and do so, and sin, and that they might have matter for an evil report, that they might reproach me.

¹⁴ My God, think thou upon Tobiah and Sanballat according to these their works, and on the prophetess Noadiah, and the rest of the prophets, that would have put me in fear.

Fear was the tool which was used against Nehemiah to stop him from doing what God called him to do.

Now let me tell you how the false prophets will come. They come in the name of HEALTH, or in the name of LOVE, or in the name of COMPASSION. But I am telling you that no matter what name they come in they must be seen for who they are. If they are

attempting to lead us away from walking in obedience to the Lord, they are false prophets.

We can expect the enemy to use fear to stop us.

Acts 11:21, 12:1-2

²¹ And the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number believed, and turned unto the Lord.

Now about that time Herod the king stretched forth his hands to vex certain of the church.

² And he killed James the brother of John with the sword.

We are not to live by fear, but we are to live by faith. There will be times when serving the Lord and walking in obedience will look foolish and dangerous to the world. Think of Esther's situation to go before the king. Think of what the Apostles faced.

Conclusion:

Matthew 7:15-16, 20-23

¹⁵ Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

¹⁶ Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

²⁰ Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

²¹ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

²² Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.