

false teachings (**Titus 1:5-11; I Timothy 4:1-6; II Timothy 2:14-16; 3:5-6; 4:1-4**). The preacher is to be a watchman on the wall and sound the alarm to warn the saints of God when the enemy is coming (**Ezekiel 33:1-9; Isaiah 58:1**). The minister of God is to perfect the saints so that they be not tossed too and fro with every wind of doctrine (**Ephesians 4:11-15**).

Conclusion

The Lord said in **John 8:32** that the truth shall make you free. Some ways to avoid being deceived are to study the Scriptures for yourself (**II Timothy 2:15**), pray and seek the will of God (**Proverbs 3:5-7**), and find a good fundamental Bible believing church and stay with it (**Hebrews 10:25**). Quit church hopping and stop listening to the many voices of the false prophets that are in the world. God will honor your faith and obedience and thereby save you and your family from deception.

“Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.”

I John 4:1

False Prophets

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

Matthew 7:15

+ Counterfeits +

False prophets are mentioned many times throughout the Scriptures. There is much warning given in reference to false teachers and false doctrine. A false prophet is someone who claims to speak for the Lord while teaching untruth and living a false life. They are in the churches, among God's people, and trying to lead them astray. The Bible is no more than a glorified phonebook directory to them in their effort to destroy people's lives spiritually. One thing to remember, every false prophet is a confirmation that Jesus Christ is the true prophet, because every counterfeit bill is a testimony to the reality and value of the genuine bill. Amen.

“It is neglect of the Bible which makes so many a prey to the first false teacher whom they hear.” J.C. Ryle



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*“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.”
Acts 16:31*

This article will speak of the danger and nature of false prophets and also the remedy for them. The text of **Matthew 7:15**, where we are told to beware of false prophets, is a part of the Sermon on the Mount by our Lord and Savior as He teaches wonderful truths to His disciples about the Kingdom. He also gives warning to the false.

THE DANGER OF FALSE PROPHETS

The word beware in **Matthew 7:15-29** means to take heed, take warning or be on guard, *“Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.”* According to **verses 13-14**, the false prophet leads people in the broad way to destruction which is contrary to the narrow way of true Christianity. They will influence the masses and they will deceive great numbers. We are told in **verse 15** that they will come in sheep’s clothing even though they are ravening wolves. They will appear harmless and righteous by their false meekness and humility. Remember, a wolf may wear wool but he cannot grow it. In **verse 20**, we are told that we can know them by their fruits. The test is his life and his converts. It is not what they say, but what they are and what they do. It is not what they know, but what they produce because justification and sanctification are connected together and cannot be separated. In **verses 15-29** of our text, we see false prophets, false professions, and false foundations. A profession of salvation alone is not enough. There must be possession.

The Bible, in **Matthew 16:6 & 12**, speaks of the doctrine of false prophets, and in **Matthew 15:14** the Lord calls them blind leaders of the blind. The Lord speaks of the rise of false prophets and false christs in **Matthew 24:3-5, 11, 24**. Deception is the devil’s chief weapon and he uses his ministers to preach his doctrines. He knows he can destroy truth by counterfeiting it more so than by openly attacking it. According to **II Peter 2:1-3, 12**, there were false prophets in the Old Testament times and also in the times in which we live. False prophets and apostasy are in contrast to holy men of God who teach the truth (**II Peter 1:21**).

Balaam is a good example of what a false prophet really is. The Bible speaks of the way of Balaam (**II Peter 2:15**), the error of Balaam (**Jude 11**), and the doctrine of Balaam (**Revelation 2:14**). Money was his real god, He blessed Israel and at the same time taught Balak, the king of Moab, how to corrupt them so God would judge them. The Lord spoke to Balaam (**Numbers 22:9, 12, 20; 23:4, 5, 16**),

Balaam prophesied of Christ (**Numbers 24:17**) and yet he is called a soothsayer (**Joshua 13:22**). Balaam, wicked and evil, hid his true intentions, loving the wages of unrighteousness (**II Peter 2:15**). He was an enemy of God and was killed by God’s people (**Numbers 31:18**).

THE NATURE OF FALSE PROPHETS

One of the characteristics of false prophets is that they preach another gospel (**II Corinthians 11:1-4**). False prophets are deceivers while appearing to be representatives of Christ (**II Corinthians 11:13-15**). They oppose the truth in their perverted teaching of the gospel (**Galatians 1:6-11**). False prophets bring bondage on their hearers while preaching freedom (**II Peter 2:19**). They also serve their own interest (**Romans 16:17-18**). All that they do is for personal gain and to promote self. Many of them speak eloquently, that is, they are knowledgeable, intelligent, and have the gift of gab (**II Peter 2:18**). They prey on the weak and immature, as a lion or wolf would do (**II Timothy 3:6-7**). False prophets appeal to the flesh, emotions, material things, or entertainment (**II Peter 2:10**). They infiltrate churches to destroy them (**Matthew 7:16-20** and **Acts 20:28-31**). These false prophets do not have the Spirit of God and thereby are morally corrupt and spiritually bankrupt (**Jude 19**). They seek a following, but God said in **Isaiah, 8:20**, *“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”*

THE REMEDY FOR FALSE PROPHETS

In **Jude 3-4**, the Christian has clear instruction, *“Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.”* We are told in **I John 4:1-4**, to try the spirit of men for many false prophets are gone out into the world. The apostle Paul admonished the elders of the church at Ephesus about their ministry and warned them about false prophets that would come into the church from the outside, and also those who would rise up on the inside (**Acts 20:28-31**). One of the chief duties of a pastor is to teach, warn, and protect the flock of God from false prophets and