

FALSE PROPHETS

It is the Pastors Job to protect the flock from false teachers - Acts 20:28-31- 28 **Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers.** Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. 29 I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. 30 Even **from your own number men will arise and distort the truth** in order to draw away disciples after them. 31 So **be on your guard!** Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

Shepherds not being Shepherds are doomed - Ezek 34:1-10 - The word of the Lord came to me: 2 "Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy and say to them: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: **Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not shepherds take care of the flock?** 3 **You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you do not take care of the flock.** 4 You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally. 5 So **they were scattered because there was no shepherd,** and when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals. 6 My sheep wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. They were scattered over the whole earth, and no one searched or looked for them. 7 "Therefore, **you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord:** 8 As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign Lord, because my flock lacks a shepherd and so has been plundered and has become food for all the wild animals, and because my shepherds did not search for my flock but cared for themselves rather than for my flock, 9 therefore, O shepherds, hear the word of the Lord: 10 This is what the Sovereign Lord says: **I am against the shepherds and will hold them accountable for my flock.** I will remove them from tending the flock so that the shepherds can no longer feed themselves. I will rescue my flock from their mouths, and it will no longer be food for them.

These false prophets will introduce false doctrine - 1 Tim 4:1-8 - The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. 2 Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. 3 They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. 4 For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, 5 because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer. 6 **If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed.** 7 **Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.** 8 For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

False prophets are a major part of Satan's attack force - 2 Cor 11:13-15 - 13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. 15 It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their **end will be what their actions deserve.**

God consistently warned us about false prophets and warned them of there outcome–

They are lying when they say they come from God - Jer 14:14-16 - 14 Then the Lord said to me, "The prophets are prophesying lies in my name. I have not sent them or appointed them or spoken to them. They are prophesying to you false visions, divinations, idolatries and the delusions of their own minds. 15 Therefore, **this is what the Lord says about the prophets who are prophesying in my name:** I did not send them, yet they are saying, 'No sword or famine will touch this land.' Those same prophets will perish by sword and famine. 16 And the people they are prophesying to will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and sword. There will be no one to bury them or their wives, their sons or their daughters. I will pour out on them the calamity they deserve.

God is against those false prophets –

Jer 23:30-32 - 30 "Therefore," declares the Lord, "I am against the prophets who steal from one another words supposedly from me. 31 Yes," declares the Lord, "I am against the prophets who wag their own tongues and yet declare, 'The Lord declares.'" 32 Indeed, I am against those who prophesy false dreams," declares the Lord. "They tell them and lead my people astray with their reckless lies, yet **I did not send or appoint them.** They do not benefit these people in the least," declares the Lord.

Ezek 13:8-9 - 8 "Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord says: Because of your false words and lying visions, I am against you, declares the Sovereign Lord. 9 My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying divinations. They will not belong to the council of my people or be listed in the records of the house of Israel, nor will they enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Sovereign Lord.

What they say are worthless but dangerous - Lam 2:14 The visions of your prophets were false and worthless; they did not expose your sin to ward off your captivity. The oracles they gave you were false and misleading.

Some of them believe their own hype -Ezek 13:1-7 - The word of the Lord came to me: 2 "Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who are now prophesying. Say to those who prophesy out of their own imagination: '**HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD!**' 3 This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing! 4 Your prophets, O Israel, are like jackals among ruins. →

→5 You have not gone up to the breaks in the wall to repair it for the house of Israel so that it will stand firm in the battle on the day of the Lord. 6 Their visions are false and their divinations a lie. They say, "The Lord declares," when the Lord has not sent them; yet they expect their words to be fulfilled. 7 Have you not seen false visions and uttered lying divinations when you say, "The Lord declares," though I have not spoken?

They dangerously mislead many - Zech 10:1-2 - Ask the Lord for rain in the springtime; it is the Lord who makes the storm clouds. He gives showers of rain to men, and plants of the field to everyone. 2 The idols speak deceit, diviners see visions that lie; they tell dreams that are false, they **GIVE COMFORT IN VAIN**. Therefore the **people wander like sheep oppressed for lack of a shepherd**.

God lets us know how to recognize false prophets - Matt 7:15-20 - 15 "**Watch out for false prophets**. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. 16 **By their fruit you will recognize them**. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

Characteristics of False Prophets

2 Peter 2:1 - But **there were also false prophets among the people**, just as there will be false teachers among you. They will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the sovereign Lord who bought them — bringing swift destruction on themselves. 2 Many will follow their shameful ways and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. 3 **In their greed** these teachers will exploit you with stories they have made up. Their condemnation has long been hanging over them, and their destruction has not been sleeping. 4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but sent them to hell, putting them into gloomy dungeons to be held for judgment; 5 if he did not spare the ancient world when he brought the flood on its ungodly people, but protected Noah, a preacher of righteousness, and seven others; 6 if he condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah by burning them to ashes, and made them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; 7 and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men 8 (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)— 9 if this is so, then **the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment**, while continuing their punishment. 10 This is **especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise authority**. Bold and arrogant, these men are not afraid to slander celestial beings; 11 yet even angels, although they are stronger and more powerful, do not bring slanderous accusations against such beings in the presence of the Lord. 12 But these men blaspheme in matters they do not understand. They are like brute beasts, creatures of instinct, born only to be caught and destroyed, and like beasts they too will perish. 13 They will be paid back with harm for the harm they have done. Their idea of pleasure is to carouse in broad daylight. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their pleasures while they feast with you. 14 With eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning; they seduce the unstable; they are experts in greed — an accursed brood! 15 They have left the straight way and wandered off to follow the way of Balaam son of Beor, who loved the wages of wickedness. 16 But he was rebuked for his wrongdoing by a donkey — a beast without speech — who spoke with a man's voice and restrained the prophet's madness. 17 These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. **Blackest darkness is reserved for them**. 18 For they mouth empty, boastful words and, BY APPEALING TO THE LUSTFUL DESIRES OF SINFUL HUMAN NATURE, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error. 19 They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity — for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him. 20 If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. 21 It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. 22 Of them the proverbs are true: "A dog returns to its vomit," and, "A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud."

Jude 3-21 - 3 Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. 4 For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord. 5 Though you already know all this, I want to remind you that the Lord delivered his people out of Egypt, but later destroyed those who did not believe. 6 And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home — these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day. 7 In a similar way, Sodom and Gomorrah and the surrounding towns gave themselves up to sexual immorality and perversion. They serve as an example of those who suffer the punishment of eternal fire. 8 In the very same way, these dreamers pollute their own bodies, reject authority and slander celestial beings. 9 But even the archangel Michael, when he was disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against him, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!" 10 Yet these men speak abusively against whatever they do not understand; and what things they do understand by instinct, like unreasoning animals — these are the very things that destroy them. 11 **Woe to them!** They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam's error; they have been destroyed in Korah's rebellion. →

→ 12 These men are blemishes at your love feasts, eating with you without the slightest qualm — shepherds who feed only themselves. They are clouds without rain, blown along by the wind; autumn trees, without fruit and uprooted — twice dead. 13 They are wild waves of the sea, foaming up their shame; wandering stars, for whom ***blackest darkness has been reserved forever***. 14 Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: "See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones 15 to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against him." 16 These men are grumblers and faultfinders; they follow their own evil desires; they boast about themselves and flatter others for their own advantage. 17 But, dear friends, remember what the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ foretold. 18 They said to you, "In the last times there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires." 19 These are the men who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit. 20 But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. 21 Keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.

- Godless men
- Follow natural instincts and do not have the spirit
- Secretly introduce destructive doctrines
- Deny Jesus Christ our only sovereign and lord
- Bring the way of truth into disgrace
- Experts in greed & rushed for profit
- Exploit you with stories they have made up
- Bold and arrogant
- Boast about themselves
- Not afraid to slander celestial beings
- Blaspheme in matters they do not understand
- Eating with you without the slightest qualm (No shame)
- Follow their own evil desires
- Shepherds who feed only themselves
- Flatter others for their own advantage
- Eyes full of adultery, they never stop sinning
- Mouth empty, boastful words
- Appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature
- Seduce the unstable
- Promise freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity
- Change the grace of our God into a license for immorality
- **Grumblers and faultfinders**
- Divide you

The reason false teachers have made so much progress is because we allowed them –

We simply put our guards down and let them in - 2 Cor 11:3-4 - 3 But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ. 4 For if someone comes to you and preaches a Jesus other than the Jesus we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or a different gospel from the one you accepted, YOU PUT UP WITH IT EASILY ENOUGH.

We tend to live for the desires of the flesh - Matt 24:11-14 - 11 and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. 12 **BECAUSE OF THE INCREASE OF WICKEDNESS**, the love of most will grow cold, 13 but he who stands firm to the end will be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

How to stay protected from false prophets

Our overall protection from being misled is a true relationship with Jesus - Col 2:2-8 - 2 My purpose is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that **they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge**. 4 I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments. 5 For though I am absent from you in body, I am present with you in spirit and delight to see how orderly you are and how firm your faith in Christ is. 6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, **CONTINUE TO LIVE IN HIM**, 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. 8 **SEE TO IT** that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

It is our responsibility to test every spirit - 1 John 4:1-3 - Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. 2 **This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God**, 3 but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world. ***Acknowledges** - homologeo (hom-ol-og-eh'-o); to assent, acknowledge

Studying the Word protects us from false teachers - Ps 119:104 I gain understanding from your precepts; therefore I hate every wrong path.

The Word means the Bible ALONE!!! - 1 Cor 4:6 Now, brothers, I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, "Do not go beyond what is written." Then you will not take pride in one man over against another.

Make sure what you're being told is FULLY supported by the WORD - Eph 5:6-7 - 6 **LET NO ONE DECEIVE YOU** with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. 7 Therefore do not be partners with them.

How to deal with the False teachers/prophets

Command them to stop teaching falsely - 1 Tim 1:3-7 - 3 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain men not to teach false doctrines any longer 4 nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. These promote controversies rather than God's work — which is by faith. 5 The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith. 6 Some have wandered away from these and turned to meaningless talk. 7 They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm.

Don't be misled by false Spirituality - Col 2:18-19 - 18 **DO NOT LET** anyone who delights in false humility and the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Such a person goes into great detail about what he has seen, and his unspiritual mind puffs him up with idle notions. 19 He has **lost connection with the Head**, from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow.

Watch for those that hinder your walk and cause division from the Body of Christ - Rom 16:17-18 - 17 I urge you, brothers, to **watch out for those who** cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. **KEEP AWAY FROM THEM**. 18 For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people.

Most importantly, Watch out for YOU - 1 Cor 3:18-21 - 18 **DO NOT DECEIVE YOURSELVES**. If any one of you thinks he is wise by the standards of this age, he should become a "fool" so that he may become wise. 19 For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in God's sight. As it is written: "He catches the wise in their craftiness"; 20 and again, "The Lord knows that the thoughts of the wise are futile." 21 So then, no more boasting about men! All things are yours,

If the prophecy/teaching goes beyond the Bible, distance yourself from them - 2 John 7-11 - 7 Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist. 8 Watch out that you do not lose what you have worked for, but that you may be rewarded fully. 9 Anyone who runs ahead and does not continue in the teaching of Christ does not have God; whoever continues in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take him into your house or welcome him. 11 Anyone who **welcomes him shares in his wicked work**.

Make sure we deal with someone who is determine to teach false doctrine - Titus 3:10-11 - 10 Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. **After that, have nothing to do with him**. 11 You may be sure that such a man is warped and sinful; he is **SELF-CONDEMNED**.