

Select Biblical Topics

True or False Prophet BY DESIGN

A SERIES FOR THE MATURE DISCIPLE AND NOT FOR
THE WEAK OF CONSCIENCE

Presented by Bill Ireland



What is a True or False Prophet?

Beware of false prophets ...

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits... Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them.” (Matthew 7:15 & 20)

This study will use scripture giving preference to the King James version of the Bible

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Forward

This document is a part of a larger study called the “BY DESIGN Bible Study Series. This is the 8th topic in the series designed for mature disciples seeking deeper understanding and discernment within the Christian faith. The study explores the biblical concepts of true and false prophets, the importance of spiritual discernment, and the dangers of false accusations within the church are examined. The study draws extensively from scripture, with a preference for the King James Version, and aims to empower believers to distinguish between good and evil, truth and deception. Through careful examination of biblical teachings, historical context, and practical applications, this work encourages disciples to grow in faith, uphold integrity, and foster unity within the body of Christ. Unlike the other studies so far there are some elements that draw upon culture to structure some of the conversation.

Summary

This document addresses the challenge of identifying true and false prophets, emphasizing the need for discernment based on scriptural principles. It outlines the "fruit test," which teaches that true prophets consistently align with God’s Word and exhibit moral integrity, while false prophets lead others astray and fail to fulfill their prophecies. Key biblical passages, such as Matthew 7:15-20 and Galatians 5:22-23, are used to illustrate how believers can recognize genuine spiritual leaders by their actions and the fruit of the Spirit displayed in the life of the leaders found in the church.

The study also discusses the seriousness of false accusations, referencing commandments and teachings from both the Old and New Testaments. It highlights the moral and spiritual consequences of bearing false witness, including the erosion of trust and alignment with the adversary (Satan). Practical guidelines are provided for responding to false accusations, such as maintaining faith, practicing forgiveness, seeking justice with pure motives, and upholding truthful integrity.

Historical and archaeological evidence is presented to support the consistency of biblical teachings on truthfulness and justice. The document concludes by stressing the importance of discernment, vigilance, and adherence to scripture when evaluating teachings and teachers. It warns against heresy and false doctrine, encourages believers to remain rooted in sound biblical principles, and offers practical advice for fostering a culture of truth in both personal and community life. An interesting observation is the commandment thou shalt not lie is in the Ten Commandments and maintains an integrity across Old and New Testaments. It is therefore not a good idea to lie.

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Introduction

Discerning between Good and Evil

Has it ever puzzled you why some in the Church are quick to judge if someone else is a false teacher or otherwise a false prophet or equally a ravenous wolf? It is true we as believers are to be mindful of such false teachers who preach something other than scripturally sound doctrine. We know this to be the admonition found in Mathew 7:15-20 as reported in scripture. Rarely have I observed sound teaching on the subject for the body of Christ. This study hopes to offer insight into such deceit and how it should affect the church.

I invite all interested parties to join me in growth in our most holy faith and recommend that through some study on the matter here-in it may be possible to put this in perspective in light of



the scripture as we also know there are accusers of the brethren as in giving of false testimony. In the latter one it is in league with Satan himself. Please consider the following and judge for yourself how to settle the matter of knowing what is and is not True or False with respect to discerning good from evil.

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How to test if a “prophet” is false

What is a Prophet?

Compare True and False Prophets

True prophets are divinely appointed and consistently align with God's word, fulfilling their prophecies, and exhibiting moral integrity. In contrast, false prophets may claim to speak for God but do not fulfill their prophecies, often leading people away from God's commandments, and may use signs and wonders to gain followers. The Bible provides several tests to identify true prophets, such as their ability to fulfill prophecies, receive visions or dreams from God.

Likewise, false prophets may be judged by a fruit test. Before we dive in it seems significant to point out the relevancy of the prophetic ministry in the Church. When we consider John 16:13 we see the role of the Spirit is to guide us into all truth but also show us things to come – that is prophetic knowledge. This is why prophecy in the early Church was evident and now all but ignored – if we say it should not exist then we are stuck - denying the power of God and the scriptural record. Dear Lord, show us these things to come so we shall be prepared to do your will in the steps you set before us.

(John 16: 13)

“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.”

Fruit Test

By their fruits you will know them.

- A good tree cannot bear bad fruit. – a true prophet is a good tree with good fruit
- A bad tree cannot bear good fruit. – a false prophet is a bad tree with bad fruit

Remedy: Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down (by who?) and thrown into the fire (what fire?).

- Who is the one cutting down the tree?
- What defines the fire and what does the fire do to the false prophet?

(Mathew 7:15-20)

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them.”

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False Accusations

The Bible addresses false accusations with clear commandments and teachings. Key verses include:

(Exodus 20:16)

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor."

(Deuteronomy 19:18-19)

"The judges shall inquire diligently, and if the witness is a false witness and has accused his brother falsely, then you shall do to him as he had meant to do to his brother."

(Psalm 35:20)

"For they do not speak peace, but against those who are quiet in the land they devise words of deceit."

These verses emphasize the seriousness of false accusations and the importance of truthfulness in all interactions. The Bible encourages individuals to defend their integrity and seek the truth, rather than engage in false accusations.

How one knows if there is a heretic or false prophet

To identify a false prophet or heretic in the church, one should look for the following signs:

- Disagreement with “foundational” teachings: If a teacher promotes doctrines that contradict the core teachings of the scriptures, they may be a false prophet. An area I would not rely upon is traditional church practices that are not able to be supported by scripture. This study does not assess these as I think they are troublesome on their own especially when entrenched by the dogma of the supposed early church fathers unsupported by direct scriptural reference.
- Promotion of lawlessness: If a teacher promotes practices that are contrary to biblical teachings, they are likely a false prophet.
- Deceptive behavior: If a teacher manipulates others to advance their own agenda, they may be a false prophet.
- Inconsistent behavior: If a teacher's actions do not align with their words, they may be a false prophet.
- Fruit of the Spirit: If a teacher's actions do not reflect the fruit of the Spirit, they may be a false prophet.

By being vigilant and discerning, believers can protect themselves from false teachings and false prophets in the church. When we consider the fruit of the spirit do not forget Jesus came not to bring peace but a sword so there is room to dispute but not quarrel (2 Tim 2:23: But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strife/quarrel).

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The **fruit of the Spirit** according to the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible, specifically: Galatians 5:22-23, includes:

- **Love**
- **Joy**
- **Peace**
- **Longsuffering (Forbearance)**
- **Gentleness**
- **Goodness**
- **Faith**
- **Meekness**
- **Temperance (Self-control)**

These virtues are the characteristics that the Holy Spirit cultivates in the lives of believers.

False Accusers Using Mathew 24:11 to Hide Their Own Error.

There is a danger to cheery pick a verse to suit some personal agenda – marking any as a false teacher. This sadly is the case for a liar that wants to prop up himself and deceive his own flock. In this case it is God who will hold that leader in high account from such deception. Sadly in the church there are also false accusers or betrayers as well as false Christs. It is not truer than considering Mathew 24:11. Please read the whole chapter and then come back to this verse. How is this to be understood from context and how should it be applied? Consider what is being asked by the disciples. The same disciples that asked Christ how we should pray. What did the disciples want to know and did Jesus answer their question? Observe the timeline as this is before the death and resurrection of Christ. The disciples wanted to understand what Jesus could mean that the temple would be torn down in three days and what shall be the sign of thy coming and the end of the world, v3. Remember that Jesus criticized the Jewish leaders that they asked for a sign but Jesus said the only sign they were given was that of Jonah.

(Mathew 12:38-42)

38 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. 39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: 40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. 41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, a greater than Jonas is here. 42 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

Jesus made clear that it was an evil and adulterous generation that seeks a sign. That is quite an indictment. The true response to the lesson of Mathew 12:38-42 would be the need to confront

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one's own sin and repent. Jesus was not as harsh to his disciples as he was to the Jewish leaders here in Mathew 24 asking the same question. The instruction in Mathew 24 was to take heed that no man deceive you, v4. We also know that Satan is the chief deceiver. We have here that many would come to them calling themselves the Christ and will deceive many, v5. Jesus continues to describe the beginning of sorrows, v6-8. Then about all nations harmfully persecuting them and hate and betrayal for Jesus' name's sake that must occur, v9-10.

Though this is not the end Jesus warns that many false prophets shall arise and again warns of the deception of many, v11. The description of woes continues but he tells them that those that endure to the end shall be saved (another verse that challenges once saved always saved). Yet again Jesus brings up there would be false Christs but this time with showing signs and wonders as part of the deception that if possible, even the elect could be deceived (much like the moment that Satan the Tempter was released from the 1000 year confinement noted in Revelation, v 23-24. Finally, Jesus answers the final sign of the Son of Man appearing in the clouds with power and great glory, v30. This could only be compared to the second coming. The remainder of the chapter in Matthew continues with the instruction to be vigilant unto the end else be cut off. And how could one be cut off if not prior attached - It does not sound much like once saved always saved if one returns to lifestyles rooted in lawlessness making the cross of no effect. In the definition of deceit it means to wander or not be grounded in faith. So the real remedy is to be grounded in the word not the defaming of another man that may or may not be a false Christ as God is able to deal with that. Refer to a false prophet in Matthew 17:15-20 where the remedy is that this type of fruit tree will be cut down and cast into the fire making it seem like God or on behalf of God by an angel appointed to separating the wheat from the chaff is the mitigating agent. Of significance is Matthew 24.

(Matthew 24)

1 And Jesus went out and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple. 2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. 3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? 4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, take heed that no man deceive you. 5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. 6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. 8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.

9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. 10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. 11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. 12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. 13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. 14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come. 15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) 16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: 17 Let

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him which is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house: 18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. 19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! 20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: 21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. 23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. 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.

25 Behold, I have told you before. 26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not. 27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 28 For wheresoever the carcass is, there will the eagles be gathered together. 29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: 33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. 34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. 35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. 36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. 37 But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.

38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, 39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. 40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. 42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. 43 But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. 44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. 45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? 46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. 48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; 49 And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; 50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, 51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The gravity of this situation from the scriptures and by Jesus' teaching says one thing, be prepared. Maybe study while you can show yourself approved to God. Do not be a hypocrite is another related concern. Walk in obedience by the Spirit and you will have victory and not have to be anything other than be prepared. And do not think God is slack as to Jesus Christ's appearing. In a related concern James 4 and 5 reveal how one may plan without any concern to being obedient to God's will. It is from an evil heart that when mature it is worse even more as in the people who planned to be successful, that they were successful in this world's goods, but they became exceedingly evil. I would add then, be prepared earlier than later.

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What are the Bible's teachings on false accusations?

False accusations involve knowingly charging someone with wrongdoing when one is aware that the accusation is untrue. Scripture consistently outlines the moral and spiritual seriousness of such an act:

1. The Ninth Commandment

(Exodus 20:16)

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

This command is foundational, appearing in the heart of the Ten Commandments. The biblical narrative, preserved through ancient manuscripts-such as those found among the Dead Sea Scrolls-demonstrates a consistently clear stance: false accusations corrupt justice, harm relationships, and violate a fundamental principle of righteous living. This is the quest that James questions his audience to see if a wise man could be found among them? What conversation or better what reputation exists concerning the church if such wisdom to discern good or evil can even be in their company. (James 4:1-13)

2. The Core Principle: Truthfulness as a Divine Standard

Truthfulness stems from the divine character. In the biblical view, God is the source of truth: “Sanctify them by the truth; Your word is truth.” (John 17:17) Hence, accusing falsely contradicts God’s own nature. Because Scripture describes God as both just and loving, any distortion of truth undermines the fabric of holiness that believers are called to uphold (Ephesians 4:25).

3. Old Testament Teachings and Legal Provisions

Central to the Mosaic Law is the prohibition against bearing false witnesses. This prohibition not only instructs individuals to be truthful in court but also speaks to personal relationships and community integrity. False accusations break the trust that bonds communities together (Deuteronomy 5:20).

4. Consequences for False Witnesses

The Law grants strong sanctions for those who falsely accuse others:

“If a false witness testifies against someone, ... you must do to the false witness as he intended to do to his brother. So you must purge the evil from among you.” This is what the Church should adjudicate, (Deuteronomy 19:16-19).

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Archaeological discoveries-including ancient Near Eastern legal texts-help confirm that Israel was not alone in legislating against false testimony. Yet Scripture is unique in situating these provisions within a theological framework: offending truth offends the One who is truth.

5. Examples in Israel's History

Scriptural narratives often illustrate the destructive power of false accusations. In 1 Kings 21, Jezebel orchestrates false accusations against Naboth to confiscate his vineyard. The account highlights how such deceptive words can rob a person of property, reputation, and even life. Similar cautionary examples appear in the stories of Joseph's imprisonment on false charges (Genesis 39) and Daniel's maliciously contrived accusation (Daniel 6).

New Testament Insights and Warnings

1. The Trials of Jesus

Jesus' own crucifixion resulted partly from false testimonies brought by individuals who aimed to incriminate him (Matthew 26:60-61). This event underscores the grave injustice caused by deliberate lies. On a deeper level this false accusation of a sinless Adamic man Jesus led to the ultimate sacrifice that resulted in the salvation of many.

2. The Apostles and Early Church Believers

After Christ's resurrection (historically attested by multiple lines of evidence, including contemporary witness accounts in manuscripts and corroborating documents), the early Christians faced repeated charges intended to silence them. Stephen (Acts 6:13) and Paul (Acts 24:5-9) were each falsely accused, exemplifying how believers may encounter baseless charges yet are called to respond in truth and courage.

3. Personal Conduct and Community Ethics

The apostolic letters emphasize integrity:

“Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are members of one another.” (Ephesians 4:25)

Early Christian documents-cited by historians such as Josephus and verified by manuscript evidence from the first and second centuries-testify to communities admonishing one another to avoid the corruption of lying recalling Satan is the father of lies.

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Moral and Spiritual Consequences

1. Eroding Trust and Community Harmony

Bearing false witness destroys relationships and sows discord. Proverbs 6:19 lists “a false witness who gives false testimony” among the things God detests. Trust, essential for a healthy society, collapses when individuals cannot rely on honest communication.

2. Accountability Before God

Scripture portrays God as the final judge who weighs hearts (Proverbs 24:12). False accusers face both temporal consequences-legal or relational-and eternal accountability. Even when immediate justice seems delayed, biblical testimony affirms that ultimate justice remains certain (Psalm 9:7-8).

3. Alignment with the Accuser (Satan)

The devil is described as “the accuser of our brothers” (Revelation 12:10). False accusations align with that destructive spirit. Christians are thus doubly warned: stand on the side of truth to avoid partaking in the adversary’s work.

Guidelines for Responding to False Accusations

1. Faith and Endurance

Scripture demonstrates that those wrongly accused, like Joseph or Paul, trusted in God’s vindication. Believers facing such charges can look to these examples for encouragement (1 Peter 2:23).

2. Prayer and Forgiveness

Jesus taught: “But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” (Matthew 5:44) This includes those who spread harmful lies. Prayer offers a way to remain steadfast and avoid bitterness.

3. Seeking Justice, Yet Guarding the Heart

While Scripture endorses appropriate justice measures (Romans 13:1-5), believers are cautioned to ensure their motives remain pure. Protecting oneself or others from false claims aligns with righteous living, but vengeance is forbidden (Romans 12:19).

4. Truthful Integrity in All Circumstances

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Even when wrongly accused, a person's own conduct should remain blameless: "Keep a clear conscience, so that those who slander you may be put to shame by your good behavior in Christ." (1 Peter 3:16)

Historical and Archaeological Corroboration

Numerous biblical manuscripts-fragments from Qumran (Dead Sea Scrolls) and other archaeological finds-show a high level of textual consistency, confirming the veracity of passages that deal with issues such as false accusation. Outside ancient legal systems from Mesopotamia also reveal that false accusations were considered severely destabilizing to society, giving additional context to the strict biblical bans against bearing false witness and of natural law.

Practical Applications

1. Personal and Community Reflection

Individuals benefit from routine self-examination to ensure words are free of manipulation. Congregations and communities regularly promote conflict resolution processes based on truth, distinguishing honest mistakes from deliberate slander. These only exist because of sin and dealing with the root cause is often missed. However, confessing faults to one another is a starting place and there are strongholds that are more spiritual but affect the physical as there is a strong connection in scripture between healing and forgiveness of sins as Jesus could tell you.

2. Modern-Day Relevance

In an era of digital communication, rumors and false reports spread rapidly and so does the damage. The scriptural principles urging caution, verification, and love for one's neighbor remain deeply relevant. The same fundamental moral imperatives that governed the ancient Israelite, Judean, and early Christian communities continue to guide ethical speech today. This kind of talk can often dismiss the authority of scripture under the teachings of hermeneutics that lets you decide if the Bible is relevant and this false teaching should be avoided. The methodology of interpretation goes against that the Bible is of no private interpretation and denies the Holy Spirit's role in realizing Truth. Given what is called step 7 the method of interpretation considers Contextual Analysis: Analyzing the historical, cultural, and linguistic contexts of the text to determine its original meaning and its relevance to contemporary readers. In other words, hermeneutics is the breeding ground for deceivers creating an arrogance in pride being more important than the Bible that allows a dismissing that certain scriptures are irrelevant. Do you discern anything here?

Conclusion

The Bible's teachings on false accusations stress that truthfulness protects communal harmony, springs from God's righteous character, and foreshadows final accountability. From the Mosaic

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Law through the experiences of Christ and the apostles, Scripture reveals that bearing false witness causes deep harm. Some say that no matter how bad something is, ultimately these behaviors cannot thwart divine justice. This is true as to the final throne room judgement but to let things slide when one knows that being obedient to the will of God now is more important than excuses. Some use as an umbrella that God's sovereignty is equipped to respond to false claims with patience, integrity, and that is enough and ignore the sin against another.

But prayer-efforts clearly are to uphold the truth. When we pray "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" we are to take an active role in having God's will come into the earth. Jesus taught we need to make ourselves available to say – use me and then His will that is done in heaven can be done in the earth. No excuses. If we have not figured out how to make peace in the church, then maybe one should not take communion in worship and remembrance of Christ?

Bible Verses About False Teachers and Comments

(Matthew 7:15)

"Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves."

Jesus warns that false teachers often appear innocent but have harmful intentions. This verse encourages believers to be vigilant and discerning, understanding that not all who claim to teach truth have pure motives. Recognizing false prophets is essential for guarding your heart.

(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."

Peter warns of false teachers who introduce harmful teachings. This verse emphasizes the danger of heresies that distort Biblical truth. Believers are encouraged to stay rooted in Scripture, protecting their faith from misleading influences that could deceive or contradict God's truth.

(1 John 4:1)

"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."

John advises believers to discern the truth carefully, testing teachings against God's word. This verse reminds us that not all teachings are trustworthy. Recall we are to study to gain approval from God. By testing the spirits, believers ensure that their faith remains anchored in the truth rather than in false doctrines.

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Recently I attended a study on the book of Revelation. The instructor said it was impossible to understand this book unless you could understand the symbology that he conveniently would tell us. This position of his was contrary to the book of Revelation itself which instructs us to not add to the words of that prophecy. (John 16:13) “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak and he will shew you things to come.” This false teacher did not acknowledge the work of the Spirit to teach us and that he added things not in scripture to the very book that tells one not to do this. It is better to have the Bible expand on itself upon the heavenly events spoken to in the book of Daniel and repeated in Revelation.

(2 Corinthians 11:13-14)

“For such people are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.”

Paul explains that false teachers can disguise themselves as messengers of truth. This verse warns believers that deception can be subtle, sometimes appearing virtuous. By remaining discerning and rooted in Christ, believers can distinguish between genuine teachings and deceptive appearances. I find it illuminating that it adds that there are more apostles beyond the twelve as some claim the numbering of the apostles closed with twelve with an exception for Paul.

(Jude 1:4)

“For certain individuals whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are ungodly people, who pervert the grace of our God into a license for immorality.”

Have you ever been in a church service where a pastor states that he sins multiple times a day as if it is, ok? Why not walk in the spirit? See the series chapter 9 on Two Laws, Two Adams, and Two Choices that points to our victory over sin because of the finished work of the second Adam, Jesus Christ. It is worth noting there is often an immorality issue with false teachers.

Jude warns of those who misuse God’s grace to justify immoral actions. This verse teaches that false teachers often twist the Gospel for selfish purposes. Believers are encouraged to remain vigilant, upholding a true understanding of God’s grace that leads to righteousness by obedience submitting their will to the Father and this all by faith.

(Galatians 1:8)

“But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God’s curse!”

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Paul emphasizes the importance of adhering strictly to the true Gospel. This verse warns against any deviation from the original message of Christ. Believers are encouraged to reject teachings that contradict God's word, understanding that only the true Gospel brings salvation.

(1 Timothy 4:1)

“The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.”

Paul warns that some will be led astray by deceptive teachings. This verse highlights the need for spiritual vigilance, reminding believers that false teachings can weaken faith. By staying close to God, believers can discern truth from deception, protecting their faith from spiritual harm and doctrines of demons.

(Matthew 24:24)

“For false messiahs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.”

Jesus warns that false teachers may deceive even the faithful through impressive signs. This verse reminds believers to rely on Scripture, not on appearances or miracles. By staying grounded in God's word, they can recognize and avoid being led astray by deception.

(Romans 16:17)

“I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned.”

Paul advises believers to be cautious of teachings that cause division and oppose biblical truth. This verse encourages unity in truth, warning against false teachings that disrupt the church. Have you ever been asked to take classes in core beliefs in your local church and find commitment forms to sign and agree to? Be careful of all such as they may make you vow to unbiblical principles. Study to confirm their intent is scriptural and not one of stumbling. Believers are reminded to protect their faith community by rejecting divisive, unbiblical doctrines. Truth in scripture may also disrupt the church as judgement starts at the house of God first. Reading the condition of churches in the book of revelation should give us some pause.

(Colossians 2:8)

“See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the elemental spiritual forces of this world rather than on Christ.”

Paul cautions believers against teachings that rely on human traditions instead of Christ. This verse highlights the need for discernment, encouraging believers to prioritize Christ's message over worldly philosophies. Staying focused on Christ protects against being misled by empty ideas and those who would manipulate you.

Select Biblical Topics

(2 Timothy 4:3-4)

“For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.”

Paul warns that people will seek teachings that justify their desires. This verse emphasizes the importance of sound doctrine, reminding believers to value truth over convenience. Avoiding teachings that appeal to fleeting desires ensures that faith remains pure and God-centered.

(Titus 1:10-11)

“For there are many rebellious people, full of meaningless talk and deception, especially those of the circumcision group. They must be silenced, because they are disrupting whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach.”

Paul describes the harm caused by false teachings that disrupt faith with unnecessary observance in legality terms and not the liberty in Christ. This verse encourages believers to reject teachings that cause confusion and division without a scriptural basis. By focusing on sound doctrine, they preserve unity in the faith and protect their households from harmful ideas. It means consulting the scriptures as unity around a bad teaching is worse. In this passage it is talking about looking to live under the law of sin and death rather than the law of the spirit of liberty in Christ!

(Deuteronomy 13:1-3)

“If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a sign or wonder, and if the sign or wonder spoken of takes place, and the prophet says, ‘Let us follow other gods’... you must not listen.”

This passage warns against following signs and wonders that lead to false gods and idolatry. God calls believers to stay loyal to Him alone. This verse reminds us that miracles do not guarantee truth, and discernment is crucial in remaining faithful to God’s word. A good question today asks who is your Jesus? –What does the scripture say and take great care relying upon any tradition or councils hundreds of years after Christ rose again from the dead. One example of a nonmalignant tradition is an explanation of a divine trinity. This is challenging as the word trinity is never mentioned in scripture. If you say each “member and essence” of the Godhead are three and many other odd justifications like co-equal members, what could you mean? Equal voting, best two out of three? Did Christ put down his advantage as divine to become flesh?

It does say that that which Peter refers to as the Spirit of Christ in the old testament but much more is the virgin birth of Jesus as he became flesh and not a God-man. Else, you give place to the Devil to say Christ avoided sinning because of his prior deity at the same time being flesh. Was Christ tempted? Yes, but only because he was flesh. The temptation had to be legitimate or Satan could call foul. If he was in his authority of deity then he never could be tempted and any co-equal with God or the Father or the Holy Spirit as God declares he cannot be tempted with

Select Biblical Topics

evil. Or when Christ said the Father is greater than he. But Christ who gave up his deity could live as to the flesh and unto death if and only if he was an Adamic man. Divinely created, without sin, with lusts and if sinless unto death he could be the Lamb of God to take away the sin of the World. The co-equality that Jesus had on earth was co-equality with the first Adam.

Therefore, Jesus was coequal to the first Adam and is called by Paul as the second Adam. And Jesus did become sin and did die. Certainly not as God but as to the flesh. Was he both God and man at the same time? No, because he could not be tempted. Did Christ become exulted after his defeat over sin and death and Satan in the center of the earth? Yes, how could he be exalted if he was not formerly without this god-part on earth unless he first left his being deity and become flesh alone as the scripture unambiguously declares. See more details on this in the 10th item in the BY DESIGN and the Doctrine of Excuses. The excuse is to sin rather than live righteously as commanded if Jesus lived sinless by divinity. It would be a baked-in excuse that would say I cannot help but sin as Jesus was God and I am not. But if a man, then no excuses to live righteously without sin in faith.

(Jeremiah 23:16)

“This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘Do not listen to what the prophets are prophesying to you; they fill you with false hopes.’”

God warns against prophets who create false hopes through deceitful words. This verse reminds believers to rely on God’s word rather than the promises of false teachers. By discerning true from false messages, they maintain a faith grounded in God’s unchanging truth.

(Ezekiel 13:9)

“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.”

God declares judgment against false prophets who deceive others. This verse teaches that God does not tolerate misleading His people. Believers are encouraged to reject false teachings, knowing that God values truth and will hold deceivers accountable for their actions.

(2 Corinthians 11:3)

“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.”

Paul expresses concern for believers’ spiritual purity, warning against deception. This verse encourages vigilance, reminding believers that even subtle lies can lead them astray. Remaining devoted to Christ and grounded in Scripture helps protect them from falling into false teachings.

(Micah 3:11)

Select Biblical Topics

“Her leaders judge for a bribe, her priests teach for a price, and her prophets tell fortunes for money.”

Micah condemns leaders who prioritize profit over truth. This verse warns against teachers who exploit others for financial gain. Believers are encouraged to discern motives, rejecting teachings from those who prioritize wealth over integrity, and to value honesty and godliness in spiritual leadership.

(1 Timothy 6:3-5)

“If anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, they are conceited and understand nothing.”

Paul describes those who reject sound doctrine as lacking true understanding. This verse highlights the importance of humility and adherence to Christ’s teachings. Believers are encouraged to avoid prideful teachings that distort the Gospel, focusing instead on teachings that align with God’s word.

(Matthew 15:9)

“They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.”

Jesus criticizes those who substitute God’s commands with human traditions. This verse teaches that false teachers often elevate human ideas over divine truths. Believers are reminded to prioritize God’s word over human doctrines, ensuring their worship remains genuine and aligned with Scripture.

(Acts 20:30)

“Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.”

Paul warns that false teachers may come from within the faith community. This verse encourages believers to be vigilant, recognizing that distortions can arise from trusted sources. Staying rooted in Scripture helps believers discern and protect the truth within their communities.

(2 Peter 2:2-3)

“Many will follow their depraved conduct and will bring the way of truth into disrepute. In their greed these teachers will exploit you with fabricated stories.”

Peter warns that false teachers may mislead others through deception and greed. This verse encourages believers to be cautious, recognizing that not all teachings reflect truth. By staying grounded in God’s word, they can avoid being misled by those with selfish motives.

(Isaiah 8:20)

Select Biblical Topics

“Consult God’s instruction and the testimony of warning. If anyone does not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn.”

Isaiah emphasizes that God’s word is the standard for truth. This verse teaches that teachings inconsistent with Scripture lack divine authority. Believers are encouraged to measure all teachings against God’s word, ensuring that they follow only those aligned with biblical truth. Those that bind their members under what they call big T taking from the early church “Fathers” as non-negotiable doctrines even when there is no scriptural support. They choose to say scripture is unreliable and incompetent to be absolute

(Matthew 23:27)

“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of the bones of the dead and everything unclean.”

Jesus rebukes hypocritical teachers who prioritize appearances over integrity. This verse reminds believers to be cautious of teachings that lack authenticity. Recognizing genuine faith requires discerning beyond outward appearances, valuing leaders who demonstrate true, Christ-like integrity.

(Revelation 2:2)

“I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked people, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false.”

Jesus commends believers who identify and reject false apostles. This verse encourages the practice of discernment, highlighting the importance of testing leaders’ authenticity. By holding teachings to biblical standards, believers protect their community from false influences and uphold spiritual integrity.

(2 John 1:10-11)

“If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not take them into your house or welcome them. Anyone who welcomes them shares in their wicked work.”

John advises believers to avoid supporting those who teach false doctrine. This verse emphasizes the responsibility to protect the integrity of faith communities. Believers are encouraged to distance themselves from misleading teachings, ensuring their influence and resources support only God’s truth.

These verses collectively underscore the importance of discernment, vigilance, and adherence to Scripture when assessing teachings and teachers. By staying rooted in God’s truth, believers can protect their faith from deception, uphold the Gospel’s purity, and foster spiritual growth in their communities.

Select Biblical Topics

Discussion on Heresy

In the **New Testament**, the word “**heresy**” is from the Greek word that translated as “sect,” meaning the belief system of different groups such as Sadducees (Acts 5:17), Pharisees (Acts 15:5), and Orthodox Jews (Acts 26:5). There are so many sects today or simply everybody else’s heresies up to and including everyone can have their own version of the Bible. Even Paul said of his conversion and teaching that it came from God alone concerning the mission to the Gentiles. We also have Simeon who knew that the Greeks and Jews were to be involved in salvation in the Savior and will be the reason for the rise and fall of many.

Definition of Heresy

Heresy is derived from the Greek word "hairesis," meaning "choice" or "faction." In a biblical context, it refers to teachings that contradict fundamental truths of Christianity, particularly those essential to salvation and the nature of God. Heresy is seen as a serious deviation from accepted beliefs and can lead to division within the church.

Biblical Context

The Bible addresses heresy in several passages, warning believers to be vigilant against false teachings. For instance, 2 Peter 2:1 warns of false teachers who introduce destructive heresies, while Galatians 1:6-7 cautions against turning away from the true gospel. The New Testament emphasizes the importance of adhering to sound doctrine and the dangers posed by heretical beliefs.

Historical Significance

Throughout church history, heresies have played a significant role in shaping Christian theology. Major heretical movements, such as Arianism (which denied the full deity of Christ) and Gnosticism (which emphasized secret knowledge for salvation), have been condemned by church councils and have influenced the development of orthodox beliefs.

Implications for Believers

Heresy is not merely a disagreement over non-essential issues; it is a deliberate affirmation of beliefs that undermine core doctrines. This can lead to significant consequences for individuals and communities, including division and the potential loss of salvation. Understanding heresy is crucial for Christians to protect their faith and maintain unity within the body of Christ.

Bible Study Tools

In summary, heresy in Bible study is a critical concept that involves the rejection of essential Christian truths, and it is important for believers to be aware of its implications and to adhere to sound doctrine. A false teacher is someone who misrepresents or contradicts the core teachings of Christianity, often leading others astray with their misleading doctrines.

Select Biblical Topics

Definition and Characteristics

Contradiction of Teachings: A false teacher's teachings often contradict the teachings of Jesus Christ and the core principles of the Bible. They may distort the Gospel message, adding or subtracting essential truths.

Deceptive Nature: False teachers can appear genuine and sincere, but they use deception to lead believers away from the truth. They may masquerade as servants of righteousness while promoting teachings that are contrary to Scripture.

Greed and Exploitation: Many false teachers are motivated by greed, seeking financial gain from their followers. They may exploit their audience with deceptive words and promises that do not align with biblical teachings.

Distortion of the Gospel: False teachers often present a different gospel, one that may sound appealing but lacks the essential elements of salvation through Jesus Christ. They may focus on prosperity, personal fulfillment, or other themes that divert attention from the true message of the Gospel.

Lack of Accountability: They may claim to speak for God without any accountability to the established teachings of the church or Scripture. This can lead to a dangerous environment where personal interpretations take precedence over biblical truth.

Recognizing False Teachers

To identify false teachers, believers are encouraged to examine their teachings against the Bible, looking for consistency with the core doctrines of Christianity. Key questions to consider include:

- What do they say about Jesus Christ?
- Do they believe as the scripture declares the Word became flesh?
- Do they try to claim he was like the first Adam or do they side with some form of tag along divinity in one essence or dual persons God-man or fully God and Fully man.
- Do you accept the scriptural record that Jesus laid down his pre-incarnate divinity to become Jesus the Christ as he took no advantage and was lower than the angels.
- Do you agree with Scripture that at resurrection his deity was restored.
- Do you accept the record that Jesus was born of a virgin and became flesh. Lived sinless as the second Adam, that he became sin and then died with your sins upon him as the lamb of God. That being killed illegally led to the victory over the law of sin and death.
- Do they preach the complete Gospel, including repentance and faith in Christ?
- Are their lives consistent with the teachings they promote?

Select Biblical Topics

If you survive the popular dogma that denies Jesus as the second Adam and makes him a divine being rather than a holy man, then you are being vigilant and knowledgeable about biblical teachings and not swayed by traditions of men. Believers can better discern the truth and avoid being misled by false teachers and doctrines of excuses that permit a sinful life. However, the scriptures call the believer to be without sin when claiming obedience to Christ and the Father.

Conclusion

This important truth on false teachers or heresy is to know first and foremost, that God will cut down this type of tree and cast it into the fire. The fire that prevents anything but the Truth to pass into the resurrection. Therefore, be grounded in the word of God and be obedient until the end under the law of liberty in Christ Jesus as the new man, the born-again believer and share in the victory eternally.

Select Biblical Topics

Prayer: of Truth

Father in heaven,

I acknowledge You as holy and true. Your name is above every name, and Your word is truth. I submit my heart, my thoughts, and my life to You, that I would not walk in deception, presumption, or pride, but in reverence, humility, and obedience to what You have spoken.

Your kingdom come, Your will be done,

in my life on the earth. That I fulfil your will for me with Your purpose, not my preference. Ground me in Scripture, not tradition or opinion. Keep me from wandering, from lawlessness, and from teachings that appear righteous but deny the power of God. Let Your will shape my conduct, my speech, and my discernment.

Give me this day the nourishment I need from Your word.

Teach me to test the spirits and to examine fruit rightly. Let the fruit of Your Spirit—love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance—be evident in me, not as a performance, but as the evidence of Your Spirit at work within me. Keep me from hypocrisy, and let my life bear good fruit.

Forgive me my trespasses,

as I choose to forgive those who accuse falsely, misrepresent truth, or speak deceitfully against me. Guard my heart from bitterness, retaliation, and pride. Help me respond with integrity, endurance, prayer, and truth, trusting You as the righteous Judge who sees all things.

Lead me not into deception,

but deliver me from false prophets, false teachings, and from becoming a false accuser myself. Keep me from twisting Scripture to defend my own errors. Give me discernment to recognize wolves in sheep's clothing by their fruit, not by appearances, signs, or popularity. Keep me anchored in sound doctrine and sincere devotion to Christ.

Prepare me to endure to the end.

Strengthen me to remain faithful when truth is costly and obedience is unpopular. Teach me to watch, to be ready, and to walk upright, so that I am not found asleep, distracted, or unprepared when You call me to be ready or account for the faith.

For Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.

You alone establish truth. You alone judge rightly. You alone separate wheat from chaff and light from darkness. I place my trust not in myself, but in You, and I commit to walk by the Spirit, under the law of liberty in Christ Jesus.

Amen.

Select Biblical Topics

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Select Biblical Topics

WORKBOOK SECTION

(10 True/False • 5 Multiple Choice • 5 Fill-in-the-Blank • 5 Open-Ended • 1 Group Discussion)

TRUE OR FALSE (10 Questions)

1. **True or False:** Jesus warned that false prophets appear in sheep's clothing but are inwardly ravenous wolves.
2. **True or False:** According to Matthew 7, a bad tree can sometimes produce good fruit.
3. **True or False:** Scripture teaches that bearing false witness aligns a person with the accuser, Satan.
4. **True or False:** The fruit of the Spirit includes love, joy, peace, and temperance.
5. **True or False:** Deuteronomy teaches that false witnesses should receive the same penalty they intended for the accused.
6. **True or False:** Jesus said that an evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign.
7. **True or False:** Matthew 24 teaches that many false prophets will arise and deceive many.
8. **True or False:** False accusations only harm the accused and have no spiritual consequences for the accuser.
9. **True or False:** Scripture shows that false accusations occurred in the lives of Joseph, Daniel, Stephen, and Paul.
10. **True or False:** Christians are instructed to respond to false accusations with vengeance, so justice is served quickly.

MULTIPLE CHOICE (5 Questions)

1. According to Matthew 7, how are believers to recognize false prophets?

- A. By their clothing
- B. By their fruit
- C. By their popularity
- D. By their miracles

2. Which commandment prohibits bearing false witness?

- A. The 11th
- B. The 5th
- C. The 9th
- D. The 10th

3. Which passage lists the fruit of the Spirit?

- A. Matthew 24
- B. Galatians 5:22–23
- C. Exodus 20

Select Biblical Topics

D. Romans 12

4. Who orchestrated false accusations against Naboth?

A. Ahab

B. Jezebel

C. Saul

D. Herod

5. According to Jesus in Matthew 24, what must believers do to be saved?

A. Seek signs

B. Endure to the end

C. Follow the majority

D. Avoid persecution

FILL IN THE BLANK (5 Questions)

1. “Beware of false prophets... you will know them by their _____.”
2. “You shall not bear false _____ against your neighbor.”
3. The fruit of the Spirit includes love, joy, peace, and _____.
4. Jesus said an evil and adulterous generation seeks after a _____.
5. Scripture teaches that false accusers align themselves with the _____ (Revelation 12:10).

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS (5 Questions)

1. Explain how the “fruit test” helps believers discern between true and false prophets.
2. Why does Scripture treat false accusations as a serious moral and spiritual offense?
3. How does Matthew 24 warn believers about deception in the last days?
4. Describe how biblical examples (Joseph, Daniel, Stephen, Paul) illustrate the experience of being falsely accused.
5. What does Scripture teach about the proper response to false accusations, and how can believers apply this today?

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTION

In a culture where accusations spread quickly—both in person and online—how can the church cultivate a community rooted in truth, discernment, and the fruit of the Spirit while avoiding the trap of becoming false accusers ourselves?

Select Biblical Topics

ANSWER KEY

True/False

1. True
2. False
3. True
4. True
5. True
6. True
7. True
8. False
9. True
10. False

Multiple Choice

1. **B** — By their fruit
2. **C** — The 9th Commandment
3. **B** — Galatians 5:22–23
4. **B** — Jezebel
5. **B** — Endure to the end

Fill in the Blank

1. fruits
2. witness
3. longsuffering (or forbearance)
4. sign
5. accuser of the brethren

Open-Ended (Sample Key Points)

(These are not strict answers but guidance for leaders.)

1. The fruit test evaluates character, obedience, and outcomes of teaching.
2. False accusations violate God's nature, destroy trust, and align with Satan.
3. Matthew 24 warns of deception, false prophets, false Christs, and the need for endurance.
4. Each biblical figure suffered unjustly yet remained faithful, showing God's faithfulness.
5. Scripture calls for endurance, prayer, forgiveness, integrity, and trust in God's justice.

Select Biblical Topics

Notes: