

**A WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING:  
SPOTTING A FALSE PROPHET/TEACHER**

30<sup>th</sup> May 2021  
#tbsundayteaching

# CATCH UP

In previous sessions we have looked at **how and why we read the Bible**. Do you remember the 4 simple steps we can use?

We also looked at resources and tools that we could use - Bible apps, audio sermons and online teaching to deepen our understanding of God's Word.

If you missed the sessions on any of these or want to refresh, you can find them on the church website:

[How to Study the Bible - Resources and Apps](#)

[Part 1](#)

[Part 2](#)

[Part 3](#)

At the end we briefly mentioned that it is important to remember to be careful when reading or listening to any teaching; testing it for truth and trustworthiness.



# SPOTTING A FALSE PROPHET/TEACHER

It is vital that we use Bible teaching resources and tools wisely to receive teaching from them that is **true to God's Word**.

## Why?

So that the Word of God will not be distorted and corrupted.  
So that our hearts will not be harmed and our spiritual wellbeing will not be destroyed.

**It is important for us to recognise the truth.**

'He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm' **Proverbs 13:20**



# SPOTTING A FALSE PROPHET/TEACHER

If someone tells you something, do you always believe what they say?

It is just as important to consider **who** is telling you something, as well as **what** they are saying.

**Acts 20:30**

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

**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. They speak visions from their own minds, not from the mouth of the LORD.”*



# SPOTTING A FALSE PROPHET/TEACHER

We need to know something about the character of the person who is bringing the word from God or interpreting the scripture, to know whether or not they are trustworthy.

## Matthew 7:15-16

<sup>15</sup> “Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. <sup>16</sup> *By their fruit you will recognize them.* Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles?”



# SPOTTING A FALSE PROPHET/TEACHER

## Can you spot false prophets/teachers of the Word?

To help us do this we will look at what is said about false prophets/teachers in the Bible. Using Bible verses we, will spot things in their actions/behaviour that makes them 'false' unworthy prophets/teachers.

For example:

Look at **Micah 3:5**

*"This is what the Lord says:*

*As for the prophets who lead my people astray, they proclaim 'peace' if they have something to eat, but prepare to wage war against anyone who refuses to feed them."*

**False prophets/teachers lead people astray; They show no love in their action**

# SPOTTING A FALSE PROPHET/TEACHER

## Now your turn:

Look at these passages and write down the characteristics or behaviour a false prophet/teacher show:

- 2 Corinthians 11:13-15
- Galatians 1:6-10
- 1 Thessalonians 2:3-5
- Romans 16:17-18



# SPOTTING A FALSE PROPHET/TEACHER

Did you find these characteristics or behaviour from the passages?

<b>2 Corinthians 11:13-15</b>	Deceitful/dishonest or hiding the truth
<b>Galatians 1:6-10</b>	Wanting to win the approval of human beings not that of God.
<b>1 Thessalonians 2:3-5</b>	Uses flattery/Puts on a mask to cover up greed
<b>Romans 16:17 -18</b>	Causes divisions/put up obstacles/smooth talking/deceiving the minds of naive people

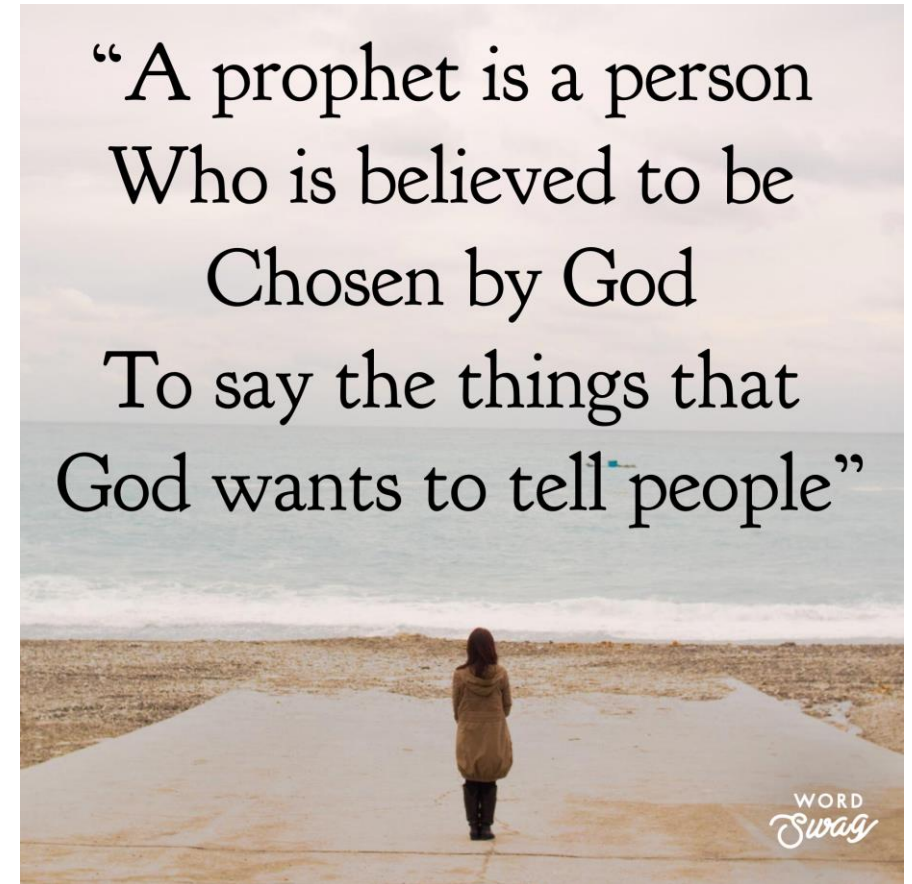


# SPOTTING A FALSE PROPHET/TEACHER

## What about the Prophets in the Bible?

- Did they flatter or deceive?
- Were they boastful or greedy?
- Did they seek glory for themselves or for God?
- Were they truly God's messengers here on Earth speaking in God's name and by God's authority?

“A prophet is a person  
Who is believed to be  
Chosen by God  
To say the things that  
God wants to tell people”



# SPOTTING A FALSE PROPHET/TEACHER



Consider:

- **Elijah** - He took on the 'prophets' of Baal and waited for God to show His Glory and power. (1 Kings 18)
- **Nathan** – He treated King David with respect when he rebuked him about his affair with Bathsheba. (2 Samuel 12)
- **Jeremiah** – Jeremiah's message to the King and people of Judah was not well received. His prophecies caused plots against him. (Jeremiah 11:18-19; 12:1-17)
- **Daniel** – Always made it clear to those around him and the King that his gifts of interpretation came from God. (Daniel 2:26-28)
- **Micaiah** – Spoke the truth from God even if it meant being unpopular (1 Kings 22:1-28)

# SPOTTING A FALSE PROPHET/TEACHER

## Reflection: What About You?

What lessons can we take from this into our everyday lives?

‘Test’ what you hear and read by:

- Being careful when looking up speakers and ‘Christian’ material. Ask yourself who is the speaker? What is their character and background? If they are linked to a church – what does that church believe?
- Asking the Holy Spirit to help you to decide on the truthfulness of what you are listening to or reading. Is what they are saying going against the Bible’s teaching?
- Check with other Christians you trust when you hear Christian teaching you are not sure about.

