

# False Prophets and the Broad Way - Part 1

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon warns about the great falling away and deception that will happen before Jesus comes again, and how we can be protected from false prophets and maintain our love for Jesus.*

**Duration:** 9:47

**Scripture:** Matthew 24:10, Matthew 24:24, 2 Corinthians 11:13-15, 1 Timothy 4:1-2, 2 Timothy 3:1-5, 2 Peter 2:1, 1 John 2:18, 1 John 4:1, 1 John 4:6

**Topics:** "False Prophets", "End Times"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the warning given by Jesus and the apostles about a great falling away before His second coming. It emphasizes the deception that will accompany this falling away, with false prophets leading many astray. The message highlights the need for discernment to distinguish between the genuine and the counterfeit, especially in the face of increasing lawlessness and a cooling of love towards God. The importance of holding onto true faith and avoiding those who only have a form of godliness without its power is underscored.

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## Transcript

There are a number of verses in the New Testament that tell us that one of the things that's going to happen before Jesus comes again is a great falling away. And Jesus himself warned about that. I want you to look at some of those scriptures in Matthew 24, first of all.

The thing is, this falling away doesn't look like a falling away. That's where we can be deceived. It says in Matthew 24 that, verse 10, you know, they were asking Jesus, what, when are these things going to happen, Matthew 24 and verse 3, and what is going to be the sign of your coming? And the first thing he says is, be careful that no one deceives you, and because many will come to deceive you.

Then he goes on to say, at that time, verse 10, many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another. And again he speaks about many false prophets will arise and will mislead many. Now when you read something like that, as one of the things that's going to be very common in the last days, our attitude should be, Lord, how am I going to be protected from this? How am I going to know who is a false prophet? How am I going to distinguish between the real and the counterfeit? Because you know that in every area, the counterfeit looks very much like the real.

Somebody produces a counterfeit 500 rupee note, it will look just like the real thing. And people are becoming more and more clever at that nowadays. They produce a counterfeit diamond, it will look just like the real thing.

Counterfeit gold, it will look just like the real thing. And a counterfeit gospel, it will also look like the real thing. So, how are you going to find out? If we can be deceived in the matter of things like currency and diamonds and things like that, it's very easy to be deceived.

And when this happens, it says here, because of these false prophets, lawlessness or sin is going to increase. One of the results of the ministry of false prophets is that people begin to take sin very lightly. And when that happens, most people's love, I think that means love for Jesus, is going to grow cold.

And their love for one another, of course. But the one who endures in love till the end, he will be saved. Now, as I have tried to study this matter of false prophets now, before I come to that, I just want to tell you that the apostles said the same thing.

So, I want to show you some other verses. For example, in 1 Timothy 4, if we speak about these things many times, it's because these things are written many times in scripture. 1 Timothy 4, it says, The Holy Spirit speaks explicitly that in the latter times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons by means of the hypocrisy of liars, seared in their own conscience.

So, it's not going to be with gross sins like adultery and murder and things like that, that deception is going to come, because there's no deception in those things. Those are all obvious sins. But it's going to be in things which don't look so bad, because most people are doing it in many cases.

But people are going to fall away from the faith. That means once upon a time they were there, and they've gone down now. Let me show you another passage.

In 2 Timothy 3, it says, The last days, difficult times will come. Now, when we talk about difficult times, we think of, you know, it's going to be difficult to live financially. That's not what the Bible is speaking about.

It's not saying it's going to be very difficult to live financially. In the Living Bible it makes it clear, it's going to be difficult to be a Christian in the last days. And it's not primarily because of persecution, but because the difference between a true disciple of Jesus and a compromising Christian will be very difficult to identify.

Churches that started out preaching discipleship will compromise. And so that's what it says here. The last days is going to be difficult to be a Christian, because, the word for means because, men are going to be lovers of self.

Lovers of money. There's not going to be any shortage of money in the last days. People are going to love it.

And they're going to be boastful and arrogant and revilers and disobedient to parents and so on. And finally verse 4, lovers of pleasure, rather than lovers of God. And, doing all this, all these things mentioned in verse 2 and 3 and 4, they will still hold to a form of godliness.

But denying its power. The form of godliness is the doctrine of godliness. That is the form.

Like the form of a body, you know, ten fingers and two eyes. But it's the life in the body that makes the main thing. So also in Christianity we have a doctrine.

And that means people are not going to preach wrong doctrine. They're going to hold the right doctrine, a form of godliness, but without the power of godliness. That is the power of the Holy Spirit.

We'll be missing, and it says here, avoid such people. Now, why should we avoid such people? Because if you mingle too much with them, you will be influenced by them. And you will yourself become like them, because the vast majority are going to be like them.

Is it possible there could be such people in our church? Who could influence you away from God? I think so, sure. Slowly they can make you a lover of pleasure, more than a lover of God. That's what it says here.

That's how deception comes, very slowly.

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