

False Prophets and the Broad Way - Part 4

by Zac Poonen

Zac Poonen warns against false prophets and emphasizes the importance of individual spiritual responsibility in following the narrow path to life.

Duration: 9:45

Scripture: Matthew 7:13

Topics: "False Prophets", "Spiritual Discernment"

Description

This sermon addresses the issue of false prophets and wolves in sheep's clothing within the church, highlighting how some individuals exploit others for personal gain, deceive through manipulation, and lack genuine repentance when caught. It emphasizes the importance of discerning false prophets who seek to profit from believers and warns against those who borrow money without intention to repay. The message also delves into the concept of the narrow gate, illustrating the challenging path to life and the need for individual commitment to wholeheartedness and spiritual growth.

Transcript

I remember when some people were doing the Amway business. And they would sit and spend one hour trying to convince somebody to buy this expensive soap for washing dishes and expensive type of, I don't know what all gadgets they sell. And people who never spent, in all their life, they would never visit these other people in the church to spend 15 minutes talking about God's word, but would now spend one hour trying to sell some dish washing soap.

And those people are in the church, so they don't want to offend them, they'll listen to them. I mean, if they went to some other house and tried to do that, they'd kick them out in two minutes. But people in the church don't kick you out in two minutes, so you can sit and take advantage of it.

You know this type of thing that went on here? All types of, it's everywhere, it's this nature of Adam that always wants to get a profit from somebody else for myself. Those are the children of Adam, even if they wear sheep's clothing. And I'm not fooled by any of them.

When they get caught, they stop doing it. It doesn't mean they've changed. They got offended that they got caught.

That's all. It didn't change. Such people are still wolves until they repent.

Repent radically. So, there are so many ways like this, you know. You could say, what can I gain for myself out of the other sheep? Can I get them to do something for me? Get some work done for me? I'm here to get something for myself.

This is the mark of a wolf. So that's the first mark of a false prophet. That's why in the second century, the apostles left a message before they died and passed it around to all the people in the early churches, saying, you know, those days they didn't have a Bible.

They couldn't check up when somebody came and said, I'm serving the Lord. So even Paul's letters were not widely distributed those days. So the word they passed around to all the people in those days was anybody who asks you for money is a false prophet.

That was a very good guideline, and if Christianity had followed that guideline for 2000 years, we would have had a much purer Christianity today. Anybody who tries to make a prophet out of you in the church, in the name of Christ, is a deceiver, a wolf, a ravenous wolf, and a false prophet. There are people who borrow money from believers.

If they go and borrow it from the bank, the bank will chase them and chase them for years till they pay it back with interest. So they don't go to the bank. These wolves borrow money from people in the church because they know that the church won't, those people won't send goondas after them to make them pay up the money.

It's good to borrow money from people in the church, right? Because they will hear messages on forgive others and you can live right off that loan. Wolves, where do you find them? In CFC. You never see such people progressing.

My dear brothers and sisters, these are going to be the last days. Men will be lovers of money more than lovers of God. And they don't have a conscience about it.

They don't have a conscience about returning all the money they borrowed and cheated others out of. They don't have any conscience about how they have taken, exploited others in advantage. I'll tell you something, if you don't settle it now, you'll have to settle it when you stand before God.

It's better to settle it now. And if you're not sure, better to give more back than hold back something. It's pretty serious.

The other thing you see here is that Jesus spoke here about false prophets in relation to what he said earlier in verse 13 and 14. In verse 13 and 14, he says, enter through the narrow gate, for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction. And there are many who enter through it, for the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life.

And there are very few who find it. Now, if you were to give those two verses to a small child, who can read and understand, even ten years old, and say, listen son, just read those verses and tell me, do you think many, many people are going to find the way to light? Do you think churches are going to be huge or small? He'd read it and say, well, I think it looks as if they're going to be small. So how do we get these huge churches with so many people, such big crowds, they don't even... nobody knows the other person.

Like cinema theaters. The way is broad that leads to destruction. There are many who enter through it, but the gate is small.

The way is narrow that leads to life, and the few who find it. So how small is this gate? How small do you think it is? Is it one foot? Broadway is a hundred feet? Is it one foot or three inches? What's the size of this gate? You know what Jesus said it was? He said, it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter God's kingdom. The narrow gate is the size of the eye of a needle.

That's pretty small. Not even one inch. You can't take your wife through it.

You can't take your children through it. They all have to come one by one. I mean, you know that.

You look around and you can see a wholehearted brother. His wife is not wholehearted. Or you see a wholehearted wife.

The husband is not wholehearted. You see a wholehearted man, his children are not wholehearted. Or you see a wholehearted young man and his father is not wholehearted.

It's all individual. There's no guarantee that a man is wholehearted, therefore his wife is wholehearted. No.

I've seen that deception in so many of our churches where we appoint somebody as an elder and his wife thinks that she's also become an elder. She may be just the same carnal old person she always was. Her husband is wholehearted.

You don't become spiritual by being married to a spiritual man. No. You have to choose yourself to be broken and humble and sensitive to God.

So nobody is spiritual by marriage and nobody is spiritual by coming to a particular church. We become spiritual when we choose to go through the needle's eye and say, Lord, I forsake everything and I come through. I want to go this way that you went.

It's very small and the way is very narrow. So then we say, well how do we define it? I mean the needle's eye and all these nice pictures but what does it actually mean in practical terms? And you know that you've always heard me preach in a very practical way. I don't preach any theories here.

I never preached a theoretical message in my whole life. And this one's not going to be theoretical either. I'll tell you exactly what this narrow way is.

Whenever you read scripture, always read it in its context. That's like saying if you got a ten page letter from your dad, don't read one sentence in page nine and then try to understand what it means. No, you can't understand it.

Reading in context means read the whole ten pages and then you will understand what that one sentence on page nine means. But if you don't read the whole letter and you try to understand that one sentence on page nine, you may get a wrong understanding.

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