

True and False Prophets

by Zac Poonen

The unmistakable characteristic of every true prophet is rebuke, which is a mark of Divine love, while false prophets use flattery to draw people to themselves.

Scripture: Psalm 74:1, Daniel 11:32, 2 Timothy 4:3, Revelation 2:4-5, Revelation 2:16, Revelation 3:2, Revelation 3:15, Revelation 3:19

Topics: "False Prophets", "Repentance"

Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the danger of false prophets who use flattery to draw people to themselves, contrasting them with true prophets who rebuke with love. He highlights the importance of receiving words of rebuke as a sign of God's love and the necessity of responding with repentance. Poonen warns about the rise of smooth words in churches when God's rebuke is absent, stressing the need for those who truly know God to stand firm and do great things for Him through daily sacrifice and dying to self.

Transcript

We read in Daniel 11:32, that those who are influenced by the spirit of the antichrist will use smooth words (flattery) to draw people to themselves. The one unmistakable characteristic of every false prophet in history has been flattery. And the one unmistakable characteristic of every true prophet has been rebuke.

False prophets flatter people in order to win them to their group, or to build their own kingdoms, or to get honour, or to get money, etc., Many of these false prophets correspond faithfully with people, in order to retain their personal hold over them. Their letters will not however contain words of rebuke and correction (as in the letters of the Lord and of the apostles - as we read in Revelation 2 and 3 and in the epistles). Instead, they will only contain words of flattering commendation.

Smooth words will only defile your heart with pride and self-satisfaction. Words of rebuke on the other hand will cleanse your heart and make it pure. Jesus said "Those whom I love, I reprove and I discipline" (Rev.3:19). Rebuke is one mark of Divine love.

When God sends a prophet into our midst, to rebuke us, that is a proof of the fact that God loves us. When God forsakes a church, it will "no longer have a prophet in its midst" (Psa.74:1,9) to rebuke it. Instead, it will have preachers who preach smooth words (2 Tim.4:3,4). That is a sad condition for any of God's people to be in.

In Revelation 2 and 3, we see that even though five of the seven churches there were in a bad shape, yet the Lord had not forsaken them as yet. The proof of this is seen in the fact that He sent a prophet (John the apostle) to rebuke and correct them through his letters.

John had strong words even for the elders - words such as, "You have left your first love....You are spiritually dead....You are wretched and poor and blind and naked". If those elders and those churches did not respond to those words of rebuke, and repent, they would be forsaken.

Once the Lord "takes away the lampstand" (Rev.2:5), He will not send His prophets to rebuke that church any more. The false prophets will then take over, and smooth words will be heard regularly at the meetings, Sunday after Sunday!! This has happened in church after church, in generation after generation, throughout these twenty centuries. And it is happening all around us today.

It is at such a time, that there is a great need for those "who know God, who are strong, and who will do great things for Him" (v.32). Because they know God, they will fear no man. But there is only one way to know God - and that is through the daily sacrifice. The veil has to be rent if we are to enter into the Most Holy Place where God dwells. So don't ever allow the daily sacrifice to be taken away from your life.

If your husband or wife treats you badly - DIE. When you suffer unrighteously - DIE. If your brothers betray you and hate you - DIE. As you die to your Self-life, you will get to know God and Jesus better.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/zac-poonen/true-and-false-prophets/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net