

“Beware of False Prophets” Matthew 7:15-20 Suscepimus Deus 2025  
Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

We live in a world filled with lies. People try and convince us of falsehoods on TV, in movies, in books, and in person. We live in the age of “the coffee house truth”, where it’s no longer considered acceptable to disagree with anyone, unless it’s about Christianity. Canada has now become a country where it’s ok to have any religion but Christianity. We live in a dark age of sorts, where our faith is under attack worldwide. In the midst of a world filled with spiritual deception, it’s crucial for Christians to be discerning and cautious. Some individuals claiming to be Christians may falsely declare that they have received a vision or revelation from God about our relationships or other aspects of our lives. Let’s explore the biblical warnings about such false prophets, fake Christians and examine examples from Scripture.

The Bible warns us about false prophets who claim to speak on behalf of God but are actually driven by their own desires, emotions, or even demonic influences. In Jeremiah 23:16, the Lord says, "Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you, filling you with vain hopes. They speak visions of their own minds, not from the mouth of the Lord." These false prophets can lead us astray and cause significant harm to our relationships and spiritual walk.

One of the primary motivations behind false prophecies is jealousy. Some individuals may be envious of the blessings and success others experience in their relationships or other areas of life. This jealousy can drive them to fabricate prophecies or revelations, attempting to undermine the blessings and bring division. Another motivator is the desire to have power over people. Another is mental illness, where people really do believe their false prophecies.

Entire “Christian” churches have sprung up in the past 150 years under influences like these – groups like Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Seventh Day Adventists, Unitarians, The church of Christian Science, and so many more. All through scripture we are warned to avoid these false prophets, so let’s look at some examples from scripture:

1. *\*Ahab's Prophets\**: In 1 Kings 22, King Ahab gathered 400 prophets who claimed to speak on behalf of God. However, these prophets were actually influenced by a lying spirit, leading Ahab into a disastrous battle. This incident highlights the importance of discerning true prophecies from false ones.

2. *\*Hananiah and Jeremiah\**: In Jeremiah 28, Hananiah, a false prophet, claimed that God would break the yoke of Babylon's rule over Judah within two years. Jeremiah, a true prophet, countered Hananiah's false prophecy, revealing that Hananiah's words were not from God.

3. *\*The Berean Christians\**: The Bereans in Acts 17:11 are commended for examining the Scriptures daily to determine whether the teachings they received from Paul were true. This example shows the importance of testing prophecies and teachings against the Bible.

4. *\*Jesus' Warning\**: Jesus warned about false prophets in Matthew 7:15-20, saying, "Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves." He emphasized the need to discern their true nature and intentions.

5. *\*Ezekiel's Condemnation\**: In Ezekiel 13, God condemns false prophets who prophesy out of their own imagination, saying, "Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing!" These prophets were driven by their own desires and lacked a genuine word from God.

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As Christians, it's essential to be cautious and discerning when

encountering individuals who claim to have received visions or revelations from God. It's also critical that you consider carefully anything you hear from pulpits like this one. If you have doubt, verify it against scripture. A faithful preacher is never afraid for people to question their content – in fact we love that, because it means you were listening! So be alert. By testing the words you hear against Scripture and seeking God's guidance, we can avoid being led astray by false prophets. Let's prioritize biblical discernment and beware of those who might seek to undermine God's blessings in our lives. We want to ensure that our faith remains unsullied, so that on the last day Jesus does not turn to us and say, “I never knew you.”

I want to leave you with a final statement about discerning the truth. You can only hold firm to the truth if you know what it is. Please, brothers and sisters, spend time in God's word. Read the bible, read devotions from trustworthy sources, know what God says. The more you know, the easier it is to spot false prophecies or spiritual lies, and the harder it is to be led astray. May the Holy Spirit grant us all the strength and steadfastness to never lose our way.

Amen.