

Beware of the Ravenous Wolves

Brandon Phillips / General Adult

The King and His Glory / False Teaching; A False Teacher; False Believers / Matthew 7:15–20
In Matthew 7:15-20, Jesus gives the first of three critical life choices which prove which gate/way (Matthew 7:13-14) you have chosen.

Pre-sermon Comments

The devil has booby-trapped the whole world, and the deadliest trap of all is the religious one. Error never looks so innocent as when it is found in the sanctuary. ~ A. W. Tozer

Every grace can be counterfeited, even as jewels can be imitated. ~ Charles Spurgeon

Sermon Text

Matthew 7:15–20 LSB

¹⁵ “Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ “You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ “Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ “A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ “Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ “So then, you will know them by their fruits.

Introduction to our Text

Review

Discussion Questions

What does it mean that false teachers come in “sheep’s clothing” but are “ravenous wolves”? Why is this image so powerful?

How can “good fruit” and “bad fruit” be identified in a teacher's life or ministry?

Pastor Brandon quoted Tozer: “Error never looks so innocent as when it is found in the sanctuary.” What does that mean, and how can it apply in our time?

What aspects of Jim Jones’ early ministry might have looked like “good fruit” to people at the time?

What warning signs in his life and ministry became visible as time went on?

What lessons can we learn from Jonestown about the importance of biblical discernment, especially when it comes to charismatic leaders?

What are some practical ways we can evaluate the teaching we hear, both online and in person? (cf. [Acts 17:11](#); [1 John 4:1](#))

How can we help one another stay grounded in truth and avoid being “lured” by false teaching?

Why is being part of a local church—where the fruit of leaders’ lives is visible—so essential to our spiritual safety?

Have you ever followed a teacher or influencer you later realized was promoting error? How did you come to that realization?

What kind of “fruit” do you want to see in your own life as evidence of genuine faith? (cf. [Galatians 5:22–23](#))

Last week's sermon outline

In [Matthew 7:13-14](#), Jesus began His concluding call by presenting two unmistakable ways given to every person. You must

- **Either Follow the Way of the World through The Wide Gate and Broad Way**
- **Or Follow the Way of Christ through the Narrow Gate and Narrow Way**

Today's Proposition and Outline

In [Matthew 7:15-27](#), Jesus gives three critical life choices which prove which gate/way ([Matthew 7:13-14](#)) you have chosen. Your choice between:

- **Following The Types Kinds of Prophets ([Matthew 7:15-20](#)) [Part II]**
 - Either Follow The Prophets Yielding Bad Fruit
 - Or Follow The Prophets Yielding Good Fruit
- **Between The Two Types of Confession ([Matthew 7:21-23](#)) [Part III]**
 - Either Make a False Confession
 - Or Make a Sincere Confession
- **Between Being One of Two Types of Builders ([Matthew 7:24-27](#)) [Part IV]**
 - Either Be a Wise Builder Who Builds Upon the Rock
 - Or Be a Foolish Builder who Builds upon the Sand

What Kind of Prophet will you follow?

Matthew 7:15 LSB

¹⁵ “Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.
wolves.

The Existence of False Prophets

Matthew 7:15 NET

¹⁵ “Watch out for false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are voracious wolves.

False Prophets in the Old Testament

False prophets from the beginning

Genesis 3:4 LSB

⁴ And the serpent said to the woman, “You surely will not die!

Moses warns against false prophets

Deuteronomy 13:1–5 LSB

¹ “If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, ² and the sign or the wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you, saying, ‘Let us walk after other gods (whom you have not known) and let us serve them,’ ³ you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for Yahweh your God is testing you to find out if you love Yahweh your God with all your heart and with all your soul. ⁴ “You shall walk after Yahweh your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him. ⁵ “But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death because he has counseled rebellion against Yahweh your God who brought you from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, to drive you from the way in which Yahweh your God commanded you to walk. So you shall purge the evil from among you.

The Account of Balaam

Revelation 2:14 LSB

¹⁴ ‘But I have a few things against you, that you have there some who hold the teaching of Balaam, who kept teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit sexual immorality.

Numbers 31:16 LSB

¹⁶ “Behold, these caused the sons of Israel, through the word of Balaam, to act unfaithfully against Yahweh in the matter of Peor, so the plague was among the congregation of Yahweh.

The time of the Judges

Judges 17:6 LSB

⁶ In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eyes.

Judges 17:5 LSB

⁵ And the man Micah had a shrine, and he made an ephod and household idols and ordained one of his sons, and he became his priest.

Judges 17:10–12 LSB

¹⁰ Micah then said to him, “Remain with me and be a father and a priest to me, and I will give you ten *pieces* of silver a year, a suit of clothes, and your sustenance.” So the Levite went *in*. ¹¹ And the Levite was willing to remain with the man, and the young man became to him like one of his sons. ¹² So Micah ordained the Levite, and the young man became his priest and lived in the house of Micah.

Judges 18:19–20 LSB

¹⁹ And they said to him, “Be silent; put your hand over your mouth and come with us and be to us a father and a priest. Is it better for you to be a priest to the house of one man or to be priest to a tribe and a family in Israel?” ²⁰ And the priest’s heart was merry, and he took the ephod and household idols and the graven image and entered among the people.

Judges 18:30 LSB

³⁰ Then the sons of Dan set up for themselves the graven image; and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Moses, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the day of the exile of the land.

False prophets after the divided kingdom

1 Kings 13:9 LSB

⁹ “For so it was commanded me by the word of Yahweh, saying, ‘You shall eat no bread, nor drink water, nor return by the way which you came.’”

1 Kings 13:18 LSB

¹⁸ And he said to him, “I also am a prophet like you, and an angel spoke to me by the word of Yahweh, saying, ‘Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.’” *But* he dealt falsely with him.

1 Kings 13:27–28 LSB

²⁷ Then he spoke to his sons, saying, “Saddle the donkey for me.” And they saddled *it*. ²⁸ And he went and found his body thrown on the road with the donkey and the lion standing beside the body; the lion had not eaten the body nor mauled the donkey.

False prophets in the New Testament Church

Warnings about false prophets

Matthew 24:3–5 LSB

³ Now as He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things happen, and what *will be* the sign of Your coming and of the end of the age?” ⁴ And Jesus answered and said to them, “See to it that no one deceives you. ⁵ “For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.

2 John 7 LSB

⁷ For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess Jesus Christ *as* coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.

Romans 16:17–18 LSB

¹⁷ Now I urge you, brothers, to keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and stumblings contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. ¹⁸ For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own stomach, and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

1 Timothy 4:1 LSB

¹ But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons,

2 Peter 2:1 LSB

¹ But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

1 John 4:1 LSB

¹ Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Revelation 2:20–22 LSB

²⁰ ‘But I have *this* against you, that you tolerate the woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, and she teaches and deceives My slaves so that they commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. ²¹ ‘And I gave her time to repent, and she does not wish to repent of her sexual immorality. ²² ‘Behold, I will throw her on a bed of *sickness*, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of her deeds.

Other names describing false prophets

Matthew 24:24 LSB

²⁴ “For false christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

Acts 20:29–31 LSB

²⁹ “I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰ and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹ “Therefore be watchful, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears.

2 Corinthians 11:13 LSB

¹³ For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:26 LSB

²⁶ *I have been* on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from *my* countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the desolate places, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brothers.

1 Timothy 4:1-2 LSB

¹ But the Spirit explicitly says that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, ² by the hypocrisy of liars, who have been seared in their own conscience,

2 Peter 2:1 LSB

¹ But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

Discussion Questions

According to [Matthew 7:15](#), how does Jesus describe false prophets?

What imagery is used to illustrate the danger of false prophets, and why is it effective?

What does it mean that false prophets appear in "sheep's clothing"? How does this relate to deception in our current culture?

Why does Pastor Brandon reference Satan in [Genesis 3](#) as the first false prophet? What parallels can you draw between that account and modern deception?

How does [Deuteronomy 13:1-5](#) help us understand God's seriousness in dealing with false prophets?

Why do you think people—even in biblical times—were so easily led astray by false teachers?

What are some modern examples of “prophets in sheep’s clothing” in today’s media, church culture, or online platforms?

What steps can we take as believers to identify false teaching and avoid being deceived? (cf. [1 John 4:1](#) and [2 Peter 2:1](#))

Have you ever followed a teacher or influencer without really testing what they were teaching? What helped you discern truth from error?

How can we lovingly warn other believers who may be unknowingly influenced by false teaching?

Reflect on [Judges 17–18](#). What does this story teach us about how quickly worship can be corrupted—even within the family of a godly man like Moses?

How do the warnings in [1 Timothy 4:1](#) and [2 John 7](#) challenge us to remain anchored in truth?

What does this sermon stir in your heart regarding your love for God’s Word and your vigilance against error?

The character of false prophets

They are deceptive

Matthew 7:15 LSB

¹⁵ “Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.”

Jeremiah 5:30–31 LSB

³⁰ “A horrible and appalling thing Has happened in the land: ³¹ The prophets prophesy with lying, And the priests have dominion by their *own* hand; And My people love it so! But what will you do at the end of it?”

Jeremiah 14:14 LSB

Then Yahweh said to me, "The prophets are prophesying lies in My name. I have neither sent them nor commanded them nor spoken to them; they are prophesying to you a vision of lies, divination, futility, and the deception of their own hearts.

Jeremiah 23:16 LSB

16 Thus says Yahweh of hosts,

"Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you.

They are leading you into vanity;

They speak a vision of their own heart,

Not from the mouth of Yahweh.

The greatest tragedy of Jonestown was not that nearly a thousand people died, but that they died believing they were serving God. In truth, of course, they were serving Satan, and were on their way to hell if they did not know Christ. Any believers who may have been among them incurred great loss of reward. ~ John MacArthur

Jude 10 LSB

But these men blaspheme the things which they do not understand; and the things which they know by instinct, like unreasoning animals, by these things they are destroyed.

2 Peter 2:12–22 LSB

12 But these, like unreasoning animals, born as creatures of instinct to be captured and killed, blaspheming where they have no knowledge, will in the destruction of those creatures also be destroyed,

13 suffering unrighteousness as the wages of *their* unrighteousness, considering it a pleasure to revel in the daytime—*they are* stains and blemishes, reveling in

their deceptions, as they feast with you,

14 having eyes full of adultery and unceasing sin, enticing unstable souls, having a heart trained in greed—*they are* accursed children.

15 Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the *son* of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness,

16 but he received a rebuke for his own lawlessness, *for* a mute donkey, speaking out with a voice of a man, restrained the madness of the prophet.

17 These are springs without water and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been kept.

18 For speaking out arrogant *words* of vanity, they entice by sensual lusts of the flesh, those who barely escape from the ones who conducted themselves in error,

19 promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved.

20 For if they are overcome, having *both* escaped the defilements of the world by the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and having again been entangled in them, *then* the last state has become worse for them than the first.

21 For it would be better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn away from the holy commandment handed on to them.

22 The *message* of the true proverb has happened to them, “A DOG RETURNS TO ITS OWN VOMIT,” and, “A sow, after washing, *returns* to wallowing in the mire.”

It is astonishing what some people will believe when they get going. They properly hold it a sin to doubt the Bible, so they refuse to doubt anything that is served up along with the Bible, however ridiculous and unscriptural it may be. If the story has a flavor of wonder about it, these uncritical friends will accept it without question and repeat it in an awed voice with much solemn shaking of the bowed head. Multiply such people in any given church, and you have a perfect soil for the growth of every kind of false teaching and fanatical excess. We need to cultivate a healthy skepticism toward everything that cannot be supported by the plain teaching of the Bible. Belief is faith only when it has God's revealed truth for its object; beyond that it may be fully as injurious as unbelief itself. ~ **A. W. Tozer**

How Do You Identify False Prophets

Matthew 7:16 LSB

“You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes or figs from thistles?

Matthew 7:16 LSB

“You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes or figs from thistles?

Matthew 7:17–18 LSB

¹⁷ “Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ “A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.

Matthew 7:19 LSB

¹⁹ “Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

Romans 16:17–18 LSB

¹⁷ Now I urge you, brothers, to keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and stumblings contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them. ¹⁸ For such men are slaves, not of our Lord Christ but of their own stomach, and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the unsuspecting.

Three different types of false teachers

The Heretic

The Apostate

Hebrews 6:4–6 LSB

4 For in the case of those once having been enlightened and having tasted of the heavenly gift and having become partakers of the Holy Spirit,

5 and having tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come,

6 and having fallen away, it is impossible to renew them again to repentance, since they again crucify to themselves the Son of God and put Him to open shame.

The Deceivers

2 Corinthians 11:13 LSB

13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.

2 Corinthians 11:14–15 LSB

14 And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

15 Therefore it is not surprising if his ministers also disguise themselves as ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds.

Jude 4 LSB

For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into sensuality and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Being themselves deceived by the ultimate deceiver, such people can be thoroughly convinced in their own minds that their perverted beliefs are true.

They have become so deeply devoted to falsehood that darkness seems to be light, and black seems to be white.

How do we identify the deceiver?

Follow the Prophets Yielding Good Fruit

Matthew 7:20 LSB

²⁰ “So then, you will know them by their fruits.

Titus 1:5–9 LSB

⁵ For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, ⁶ *namely*, if any man is beyond reproach, the husband of one wife, having faithful children, *who are* not accused of dissipation, or rebellious. ⁷ For the overseer must be beyond reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of dishonest gain, ⁸ but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, righteous, holy, self-controlled, ⁹ holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to reprove those who contradict.

1 Timothy 3 LSB

¹ It is a trustworthy saying: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, he desires a good work. ² An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, sensible, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, ³ not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but considerate, peaceable, free from the love of money; ⁴ leading his own household well, having his children in submission with all dignity ⁵ (but if a man does not know how to lead his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), ⁶ *and* not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷ And he must have a good reputation with those outside *the church*, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil. ⁸ Deacons likewise *must be* dignified, not double-tongued, not indulging in much wine, not fond of dishonest gain, ⁹ *but* holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. ¹⁰ And these men

must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach.¹¹ Women *must* likewise *be* dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faithful in all things.¹² Deacons must be husbands of *only* one wife, leading *their* children and their own households well.¹³ For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great boldness in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.¹⁴ I am writing these things to you, hoping to come to you soon,¹⁵ but in case I am delayed, *I write* so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.¹⁶ And by common confession, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh, Was vindicated in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Proclaimed among the nations, Believed on in the world, Taken up in glory.

1 Thessalonians 2:3–13 LSB

³ For our exhortation does not *come* from error or impurity or by way of deceit;⁴ but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts.⁵ For we never came with a flattering word, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness—⁶ nor seeking glory from men, either from you or from others, even though as apostles of Christ we could have been a burden to *you*.⁷ But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing *mother* tenderly cares for her own children.⁸ In this way, having fond affection for you, we were pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become beloved to us.⁹ For you remember, brothers, our labor and hardship, *how* working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.¹⁰ You are witnesses, and *so is* God, of how devoutly and righteously and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers;¹¹ just as you know how we *were* exhorting and encouraging and bearing witness to each one of you as a father *would* his own children,¹² so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.¹³ And for this reason we also thank God without ceasing that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted *it* not *as* the word of

men, but *for* what it really is, the word of God, which also is at work in you who believe.

Conclusion

Romans 10:8–11 LSB

⁸ But what does it say? “THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART”—that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, ⁹ that if you confess with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; ¹⁰ for with the heart a person believes, leading to righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, leading to salvation. ¹¹ For the Scripture says, “WHOEVER BELIEVES UPON HIM WILL NOT BE PUT TO SHAME.”

Discussion Questions

Read [Matthew 7:16](#) again. How might this verse encourage us to become “fruit inspectors” without falling into judgmentalism?

Based on this teaching, how should the church respond to teachers who *appear* godly but live and teach contrary to Scripture?

The Gospel

God

Created and owns everything

[Gen 1:1](#)—*In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth*

[Psalm 24:1](#)—*The earth is the Lord’s, and all it contains, the world and those who dwell in it.*

Is Perfectly Holy

[1 John 1:5](#)—*This is the message we heard from Him and announce to you that God is light and in Him there is no darkness at all.*

[Matt 5:48](#)—*Therefore you are to be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

Requires perfect obedience to His Law

[James 2:10](#)—*for whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one point, he has become guilty of all.*

Man

Has broken God's law

[Rom 3:10,23](#)—*there is none righteous, not even one...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*

Will pay the eternal penalty for his sin

[Rom. 6:23](#)—*For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord*

Cannot save himself by his good works

[Titus 3:5](#)—*He saved us not based on works which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.*

Christ

Came to earth both as God and sinless man

[Col 2:9](#)—*For in Him the fullness of deity dwells in bodily form*

Demonstrated God's love by dying on the cross to pay sin's penalty

[Rom 5:8](#)—*But God demonstrated His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*

[2 Cor 5:21](#)—*He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*

Rose from the grave and is alive today

[1 Cor 15:4](#)—And that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures

Sinners

Must repent of all that dishonors God

[Isa 55:7](#)—Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.

[Luke 9:23](#)—if anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

Must believe in Christ as Lord and Savior

[Rom 10:9](#)—that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.

Will you repent and believe in Christ?

[Acts 17:30](#)—therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance God is declaring to men that all everywhere should repent.

Don't hesitate to contact Pastor Brandon or Pastor Keith if you have any questions about this sermon or if you would like to know how to follow Christ.

Brandon.Phillips@gracegainesville.org

Keith.Kemp@gracegainesville.org

Additional Quotes

If teachers are not living a high level of Christianity and are not producing good fruit, they are false teachers and wolves. ~ **James Montgomery Boice**

If you profess to be a Christian, yet find full satisfaction in worldly pleasures and pursuits, your profession is false. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Every grace can be counterfeited, even as jewels can be imitated. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

The devil has more to do with some men's pitiless theology than they imagine. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Why, these are sham Christians; they are not genuine Christians; they are of the world, and do the things of the world. We may conclude that their hearts and natures are worldly, for if they were spiritual they would love spiritual things, and their hearts would be engaged in spiritual exercises. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Let them get home to their knees and pray God to give them manliness enough at least to be damned honestly, and not go down to perdition wearing the name of Christian when Christians they are not. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Who, think you, are the more honest men,—those who tell you plainly what the Scriptures say concerning this wrath of God, or those who smooth it over, or deny it altogether? ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

The teachers of doubt are doubtful teachers. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

²⁹The teachers of doubt are very doubtful teachers. A man must have something to hold to, or he will neither bless himself nor others. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

Nobody can do as much damage to the church of God as the man who is within its walls, but not within its life. ~ **Charles Spurgeon**

I had rather that true and faithful teachers should rebuke and condemn me, and reprove my ways, than that hypocrites should flatter me and applaud me as a saint. ~ **Martin Luther (Founder of the German Reformation)**

However, the counterfeit pastors, elders, deacons, and teachers within the church are usually far more dangerous. Attacks from outside the church often unite God's people, but attacks from inside—coming from false teachers—usually divide and confuse the flock. ~ **John F. MacArthur**

It is always true of apostates, false teachers, and false religions that they pervert what Scripture declares is true about the Lord Jesus Christ. ~ **John F. MacArthur**

False teachers are dangerous because, like their evil master, their appearance is deceiving. ~ **John F. MacArthur**

False teachers are the epitome of spiritual uncleanness and smut. ~ **John F. MacArthur**

False teachers arise when the church begins to embrace the worldly culture around it. ~ **John F. MacArthur**

False followers will go after false teachers. ~ **J. Vernon McGee**

For the false teachers were apparently suggesting that Christians needed to go “beyond” the gospel that Epaphras had taught the Colossians in order to experience spiritual “fullness.” And so it is often the case with false teachers, who err not always in subtracting from the gospel but in seeking to add to it. The gospel can be perverted through addition just as easily as through subtraction. ~ **Douglas J. Moo**

The true characteristic and mark for the identification of false teachers is this, that they draw the attention of their hearers upon themselves and their life, and not away from their person and toward Christ. ~ **Martin Luther (Founder of the German Reformation)**

By entertaining of strange persons, men sometimes entertain angels unawares: but by entertaining of strange doctrines, many have entertained devils unawares. ~ **John Flavel (Presbyterian Minister)**

In our constant struggle to believe we are likely to overlook the simple fact that a bit of healthy disbelief is sometimes as needful as faith to the welfare of our souls.

I would go further and say that we would do well to cultivate a reverent skepticism. It will keep us out of a thousand bogs and quagmires where others

who lack it sometimes find themselves. It is no sin to doubt some things, but it may be fatal to believe everything....

Faith never means gullibility. The man who believes everything is as far from God as the man who refuses to believe anything. ~ **A. W. Tozer**