

SHEEP'S CLOTHING



"Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves."

He looks like a sheep.
But he walks and talks like a false prophet.
Is anyone paying attention?

Our Lord warned us that as the End draws near,

"Many false prophets will arise and lead many astray."

Matthew 24:11

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. By their fruits you will know them. Do you gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree produces good fruit; but the corrupt tree produces evil fruit. A good tree can't produce evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree produce good fruit. Every tree that doesn't grow good fruit is cut down, and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them."

Matthew 7:15-20

"All my friends insist that he's the finest Christian teacher in the land."

"Look at his following!"
"Look at all the good he's doing!"

"By their fruits you will know them".

Does his life match his message?

Does his money-pitch sound like Jesus?

Is he telling you how to vote?
Is he producing followers of Jesus,

or soft-headed groupies?

When Jesus tells us to “beware” he’s commanding us to think!

“Beware of false prophets.”

“Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

“Beware of practicing your piety before men.”

“Beware of these teachers of religious law! For they like to parade around in flowing robes and love to receive respectful greetings as they walk in the marketplaces.

“Beware! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions.”

Beware means, “Wake up and think!”

When we obey our Lord’s command to wake up and think, we often discover that our favorite sheep is actually a false prophet.

*“But Lord, everybody looked up to this man.
He was the best Bible teacher I ever heard!”*

“What about his fruit?”

“Multitudes came, wherever he spoke. He even had access to the White House.”

“What about his fruit?”

And where did he get money for that jet he flew around in?

Who were those groupies who hung in his shadow? Were they his fruit?”

“Lord, I really believed that he was your servant.”

“But he was not my servant. I never knew him.”

Jesus expects us to use our brains, to know the difference between truth and the half-truth of a false prophet.

No man, no woman is to do our thinking for us.

“Group think” among professing believers is a sign that they are relying on their “Christian teachers” more than on the simple words of Jesus himself.

False prophets *thrive* when believers

drift away from direct contact with the words of the Master.

False prophets *thrive* when believers have *lazy brains*.

The Subtle Drift

So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.

John 1:14 (NLT)

Every word that he spoke came from the heart of his Father---the God of the universe. And his Father has seen to it that his words have been preserved to us. Not one of those words is empty.

When we concentrate on the words of Jesus, the Spirit gives us a wisdom which is not our own.

The words of Jesus are Spirit and Life. They sustain us as no other words on earth.

But when we get Jesus' words "second-hand" and allow others to "interpret" them for us, we open ourselves to half-truths which lead us into darkness.

The Lazy Brain

Then Jesus said to them, "If you can't understand the meaning of this parable, how will you understand all the other parables? Mark 4:13 (NLT)

Jesus has little patience with lazy brains.

He expects his disciples to *concentrate*, to *think*.

No disciple should ever be taken in by a false prophet, since a false prophet always carries the marks of a false prophet: *bad fruit*.

Bad fruit

Deeds that are dubious, evil, deceitful.

Followers with hearts of stone.

Sometimes the false prophet is not a man or woman, but an institution. It can be a church organization, a "Christian NGO", a "missionary outreach." The institution becomes a false prophet when it demands a loyalty which belongs to Jesus alone. When we look to this institution for light, rather than to heaven, we have drifted into a wilderness where false prophecy abounds.

Pay attention! Figure it out! Think with a sanctified brain!

The "Christian teacher who tells you how to vote, tries to sell you his latest book, offers to be your "spiritual guide", should be causing alarm bells to go off, if you haven't already turned over your mind to him.

The Christian institution, whose claim on your life is stronger than the words of the Shepherd, should be causing alarm bells to go off, if you haven't already sold your soul to the hierarchy.

The Voice of the Shepherd



If the words of the Shepherd live in us, the voice of the Shepherd is easy to discern, no matter who is doing the speaking. If we take the Shepherd's words into our souls *and do them*, we will never be taken in by a false prophet.

*“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.
And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish.*

And no one shall snatch them out of my hand.”

John 10:27-28



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