



Home Group D-Guide

How To Recognize A False Prophet

ICEBREAKER: How would you prefer to die—quickly without warning or slowly over time?

OVERVIEW: Jesus and the apostles devoted a great deal of time and energy warning about the dangers of false prophets. They existed in the Old Testament. They were prevalent in the first century church. They have been around all through church history. They are all around us today. And Jesus was clear that they are dangerous. In this discussion we will go deeper in learning how to recognize and protect ourselves against false prophets.

1. Read Matthew 7:15-23. What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend's message did you find to be the most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain. (Or what was your key takeaway from Sunday's message?)
2. Perhaps the best way to recognize a false prophet is to know the beliefs and behaviors that characterize authentic Christianity, and then measure anyone who claims to speak for Christ against that standard. Read and list the traits of someone who is qualified to lead in the church in 1 Timothy 3:1-7.
3. Of the traits listed in 1 Timothy, which do you think is most/least important? Explain. Which do you think is the most rare in spiritual leaders today? Explain.
4. Compare and contrast the similarities/differences of the traits listed in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1:5-14.

5. To guard against false prophets, it is also important to know how to recognize good preaching. What can you learn about the marks of good preaching from Paul's instructions to Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:1-5?
6. Jesus said that false prophets are as dangerous as vicious wolves. What makes false prophets so dangerous?
7. In your opinion, what are the most dangerous and most prevalent false teachings that are challenging Christians today in Acadiana?
8. 1 John 4:1 says, "Dear friends, do not believe everyone who claims to speak by the Spirit. You must test them to see if the spirit they have comes from God. For there are many false prophets in the world." What are the initial signs that you look for to test whether someone is a false prophet or a man/woman of God?
9. What can you do to protect yourself from falling prey to a false prophet?
10. What can you do to protect your spouse/children from false prophets?

The Last Word: It is crucial that you are studying your Bible. The better you know the beliefs and behaviors of authentic Christianity, the quicker and easier you will be able to recognize a false prophet.