

Recognizing False Teachers

There is a statement we hear often that goes something like this: “If it looks like a duck, walks like a duck and quacks like a duck...it is a duck.” We use this statement to indicate that there are obvious signs or characteristics by which something can be known or recognized. We know the characteristics of some things and they obvious point us toward its recognition.

The Bible has a great deal to say about false teachers. In Matthew 7:15-20 Jesus relates that they exist, that their appearance can be deceptive, but that they can be known by the fruit (results) they bear. Because they exist, Scripture indicates that we are to test what is taught to ascertain the nature of such a teacher (1 Jno. 4:1). For false teachers, this recognition is not based on appearance, quality of voice, personality or even popularity and the size of the group following them. Rather, we are to judge them by what they say and its relation to God’s word (2 Jno. 9-11; Gal. 1:6-9).

Upon recognition of false teachers, how are we to deal with them? First, we must love them, even though they are enemies of the truth (Matt. 5:44). But, we must also be ready to mark and avoid them because of the danger of their corrupted message (Eph. 5:11; Rom. 16:17; Titus 1:13-14).

This is often difficult because of the nature of many of our relationships. We may have to take a stand against family. We may have to understand that family chooses to go a direction we are not willing to go. Regardless, we are to approach such things faithfully and remain true to God as He is the source of truth.

Sermon: The Christian and False Teachers

Introduction: (Matt. 7:15-20; 24:5, 11, 24; 2 Cor. 11:13)

1. What about false teachers today? (1 Jno. 4:1)
2. A false teacher is not necessarily recognized by...(Rom. 16:18; 2 Cor. 11:15; 2 Pet. 2:2)
3. How do we recognize a false teacher? (1 Jno. 4:5; 2 Tim. 4:3-4; Matt. 21:23-27)
4. How should we regard false teachers? (Matt. 5:44; Eph. 5:11; Rom. 16:17; Titus 1:13-14; 2 Jno. 9-11; Acts 20:29-31; Gal. 1:6-9).

P.M. Sermon: “Zephaniah”

Zephaniah

Introduction:

- A. The history of God's people is characterized by "highs and lows."
- B. Zephaniah is written in the time of Josiah's reforms (642-611 B.C.; Zeph. 2:13-15)

Discussion:

1. Overview:

- A. Chapter One: Judgment pronounced
- B. Chapter Two: A Call to Repentance
- C. Chapter Three: A Message of Indictment and Hope

2. Lessons Learned from Zephaniah:

- A. The influence of the priesthood at this time (2 Kgs. 23:5)
- B. The sin of indifference (James 4:4)
- C. The day of the Lord (2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Pet. 3:9-11)
- D. A ray of hope