

# BEWARE

## MATTHEW 7:15-16

Text: Matthew 7:15-16

### **Matthew 7:15-16**

<sup>15</sup> Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. <sup>16</sup> Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

Introduction:

Have you ever walked up to a house to knock on the door? You seen a sign "Beware of dog"? What do you do? You stop right away.

Imagine a sign "Beware of wolf"! I think you would do a double-take. The Lord says, "Beware of wolves, false prophets within the church, they have disguised themselves in sheep's clothing."

Now when the Lord says beware we ought to beware!

These wolves are both dangerous and deceptive.

We cannot be wise and not beware.

Many times warnings have gone unheeded.

The captain of the Titanic received a message that they were entering iceberg-laden waters; Yet shoved the message into his pocket and 1,490 people went to a watery grave.

December 7, 1941, Sergeant Joseph Lockhart, sitting at the radar at Pearl Harbor, reported unidentified aircraft approaching. His commanding officer said “Forget it,” and 3,000 of America’s best perished that day.

If ever a generation needed to be warned about false prophets it is this one.

Note:

**Matthew 24:24**

<sup>24</sup> For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Sometimes Satan comes against the church by persecution, but when persecution won’t work he has a better way and that is infiltration.

A great danger to today’s church is the infiltration of false prophets wearing sheep’s clothing.

Paul warned of this as well.

**2 Corinthians 11:13-14**

<sup>13</sup> For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming

themselves into the apostles of Christ. <sup>14</sup> And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

Satan is the captain of camouflage, the master of deceit. Repeatedly the Bible warns us of false prophets.

The nature of sheep endangers them.

- Sheep are timid and defenseless.
- Sheep are easily frightened.
- Sheep like to wander.

The Nature of wolves endangers the sheep.

- Wolves are cunning, strong and swift
- Wolves are deadly killers
- Wolves run in packs to kill

Note:

## **1. BEWARE OF THE FLEECE THE WEAR**

All of them will be wearing sheepskin, appearing to be part of the flock. But pull back the sheepskin & it will reveal the wolf beneath.

## A. Some Will Pervert the Gospel

### **1 John 1:7**

<sup>7</sup> But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin. The blood is neither incidental nor accidental. A false prophet will offer another way; Works, not grace; Culture, not Calvary; Faith in works rather than faith in the blood.

## B. Those Who Pervert the Gospel Are False Prophets

Many spell prophet – PROFIT.

They peddle the word of God

### **2 Corinthians 2:17**

<sup>17</sup> For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ.

They are hirelings

### **John 10:12-13**

<sup>12</sup> But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. <sup>13</sup> The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

## 2. BEWARE OF THE FRUIT THEY BEAR (VS. 16-19)

### Matthew 7:16-19

<sup>16</sup> Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? <sup>17</sup> Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. <sup>18</sup> A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. <sup>19</sup> Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

- A. The Disguise – Sheep
- B. The Discernment – Their Fruit
- C. Their Doom – Hewn Down

Close:

Note 2 things about False prophets.

1. False teachers and teachings are extremely dangerous because they seem harmless.
2. False teachers and teachings are extremely dangerous because they are self-deceived.

May God give us wisdom so that we are not deceived or devoured by the wolves in sheep's clothing.