

MATTHEW 7:15-23

BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS AND OF A FALSE PROFESSION

INTRODUCTION

There are factors which tend to cloud and confuse the apparently clear cut choice between:

1. the broad road which leads to destruction, and
2. the narrow road which leads to life.

Therefore in Matthew 7: 15-23 Jesus issues two warnings.

BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS (verses 15-20)

False prophets masquerade as real prophets (they are "wolves in sheep's clothing").

A false prophet is a *pseudo* prophet = a *lying* prophet.

How do we recognise a false prophet?

1. Does what he/she predicts come to pass? (Deuteronomy 18:22)
2. Does he/she care for God's people? (Matthew 7:15)
3. What fruit does he/she produce:
 - in terms of his/her character? (Galatians 5:19-21 or Galatians 5:22,23)
 - in terms of his/her teaching? (Acts 20:29,30)

BEWARE OF A FALSE PROFESSION (verses 21-23)

How can I know if I am a Christian?

The First Letter of John gives three tests:

1. a doctrinal test: **belief**, specifically: Do I believe that Jesus is "the Son of God" (3:23; 5:5,10,13) and that he is the Christ "come in the flesh" (2:22; 4:2)?
2. a moral test: **obedience**, specifically: Am I seeking to practice righteousness and to keep the commandments of God (1:6; 2:3,4,29; 3:3-10; 5:2,3)?
3. a social test: **love**, specifically: Do I love my fellow Christians (2:9-11; 3:14,23; 4:7-21)?

How can I avoid a false profession?

By: Repenting of sin, and
Believing in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus for sin. (Acts 20:21)