

FOLLOWING
JESUS

Guarding
against false
prophecy

Previous sermon

If the vision is too clear, we cling too tightly

- ◇ When we receive guidance from the Lord, we sometimes colour the picture in our own way with too many of our own details.
- ◇ Then when the truth unfolds, we are surprised, stomped, disappointed, unprepared, angry, frustrated that it did not go according to our plan.
- ◇ But then our picture was never God's plan in the first place.
- ◇ We clung to it too tightly because we made it fit our own plans.
- ◇ God always knows better than we do.
- ◇ Don't try to get ahead of God, rather stay in step with God.
- ◇ Hearing God's voice is crucial to staying in step with Him.

Following Jesus

◇ We are part of His flock

Jeremiah 14:11 -18 False prophecy

- ◇ 11 The Lord said to me: “Do not pray for the welfare of this people.
- ◇ 12 Though they fast, I will not hear their cry, and though they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I will not accept them. But I will consume them by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence.”
- ◇ Lying Prophets
- ◇ 13 Then I said: “Ah, Lord God, behold, the prophets say to them, ‘You shall not see the sword, nor shall you have famine, but I will give you assured peace in this place.’”
- ◇ 14 And the Lord said to me:
- ◇ “The prophets are prophesying lies in my name. I did not send them, nor did I command them or speak to them.
- ◇ They are prophesying to you a lying vision, worthless divination, and the deceit of their own minds.
- ◇ 15 Therefore thus says the Lord concerning the prophets who prophesy in my name although I did not send them, and who say, ‘Sword and famine shall not come upon this land’: By sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed.
- ◇ 16 And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem, victims of famine and sword, with none to bury them—they, their wives, their sons, and their daughters. For I will pour out their evil upon them.
- ◇ 17 “You shall say to them this word:
- ◇ ‘Let my eyes run down with tears night and day, and let them not cease, for the virgin daughter of my people is shattered with a great wound, with a very grievous blow.
- ◇ 18 If I go out into the field, behold, those pierced by the sword! And if I enter the city, behold, the diseases of famine! For both prophet and priest ply their trade through the land and have no knowledge.’”

1 Kings 22
Ahab and the False Prophets
Micaiah Prophecies Against Ahab

False prophets

- ◇ Who is the master of the prophet? (Jeremiah 23:21)
- ◇ What is the source of the prophecy? (Jeremiah 23:16)
- ◇ What is the consequence for prophecy? (Jeremiah 14:15-16)
- ◇ Is it only good news?
- ◇ Does it prove to be true?
- ◇ Is the prophet willing to die for the message they bring?

False prophets

- ◇ People like to make rules
- ◇ If you have rules, you don't need faith
- ◇ False prophets easily over-simplify matters
 - ◇ It is complicated when God tells Jeremiah that he will destroy His own people.
 - ◇ It is not complicated if prophets can tell people that nothing bad will happen.
- ◇ Some people blindly apply rules to our lives to try and explain hardship.
 - ◇ They may sound like true words because they are not sweet words, but harsh words. But just because it is harsh does not mean that it is true.
 - ◇ Some people have seen in the Word that bad things happen to people who have done bad things and then the solution is uncomplicated, repent and see change.
 - ◇ But sometimes God allows bad things to happen even when a person has not done something that deserves that bad result.

How to guard against false prophets

- ◇ Fear God and not man
- ◇ Test any word given against the Word of the Lord
- ◇ Pray about it personally
- ◇ Seek God's peace
- ◇ Listen to uneasiness in your body
- ◇ Have faith in God's nature and His promises
- ◇ Be content in not knowing the full picture
- ◇ Stay in God's herd, among sheep that seek to follow Jesus and not other sheep!!!

◇ People want to make rules and formulas for spiritual matters, but God wants us to have faith.

◇ Next week, Following Jesus: The Good Shepherd