**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | Unmasking False Prophets |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | 2 Peter 2:1-9 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #1620 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. We need that which is real, that which is authentic.
   2. The world divides and recognizes all kinds of world religions.
      1. For example, Christianity is divided by denominations into Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, Roman Catholic, etc.
   3. But when we analyze it, there are only two religions in all of the world:
      1. The true and the false.
         1. That which is authentic and from God.
         2. That which is inauthentic and has the curse of Almighty God upon it.
   4. If it is a false religion, then it is dangerous.
      1. The world is full of dangerous doctrines.
   5. The Apostle Peter warned about false teachers.
      1. 2 Peter 2:1-9
         1. The word “false” in this passage is the word we get our word “pseudo” from.
         2. There were “pseudo” prophets among the people.
   6. It is wrong to tell a lie and even worse to teach a lie, but it is monstrous to teach a lie about God.
      1. There is no greater crime than to be a false prophet or to be a false teacher.
      2. God does not take this lightly.
         1. Deuteronomy 18:20
      3. God hates lies taught about Himself.
   7. The message today is a needful message because the world is full of dangerous doctrines.
      1. This message will teach us how to unmask false prophets.
2. we need to realize their presence
   1. 2 Peter 2:1
      1. Do not think that they don’t exist.
      2. There have always been false prophets.
      3. The “people” whom Peter referred to in this passage were the nation of Israel.
         1. The nation of Israel had false prophets.
         2. False prophecy is as old as the Garden of Eden.
      4. In Peter’s time, there were false prophets.
         1. “You” in this verse refers to the church.
   2. When we look for Satan, we should never fail to look in the pulpit.
      1. 2 Corinthians 11:13-14
      2. Satan comes not as a scaly monster with horns and a pitchfork, but as an angel of light declaring as an apostle but is really a false teacher.
   3. 2 Peter 2:1
      1. The word “heresy” in this verse comes from a root word which means “to divide.”
         1. Later on, it came to be called a sect, which is someone who is divided apart from true authentic Christianity.
   4. Heresies always cause division.
      1. When someone teaches something that is contrary to the Word of God, we cannot just open our arms and say that it is alright.
      2. A heretic is someone who causes division in the church.
         1. A little leaven leavens the whole lump.
      3. Division is painful and terrible, but it is better to be divided by truth than to be united by error.
   5. Peter is saying that there have been false prophets, there are false prophets, and there will be false prophets right on down to the end of the age.
   6. We ought not to think it strange that there are false prophets and false teachers.
      1. 1 Timothy 4:1
         1. This should not discourage us for the following reasons:
            1. From the beginning of time, there have been false prophets; but the Word of God stands.
            2. If there were no false prophets, false teachers, or false apostles, then the Bible would not be true because the Bible says that they will come.

In a strange way, every false prophet, fake apostle, and pseudo-Bible teacher is a confirmation of the Word of God.

1 Peter 2:1

1. we need to recognize their pretense (2 Peter 2:1-3)
   1. False prophets may be very persuasive and very charming.
      1. They may even seem sincere or actually be sincere.
   2. We can recognize their pretense by their message.
      1. 2 Peter 2:1
      2. In order to tell counterfeit money from the real thing, we would not study the counterfeit but the authentic.
         1. When we know what the authentic looks like, then we can spot the counterfeit because it is not like the authentic.
         2. We know a false prophet because his message is false.
      3. There are five tests for the message:
         1. The source test.
            1. Do they have as the source of their information the Word of God?
            2. Does it come from any source other than the Bible?

Their source must come from the Word of God.

* + - * 1. Find out if they base all that they say and believe upon the Word of God.
      1. The Savior test.
         1. Do they believe that Jesus Christ is the very Son of God, virgin born?
         2. Do they believe that Jesus Christ is as much God as if He were not man and as much man as if He were not God?
         3. 2 John 1:10-11
      2. The subject test.
         1. What is the subject of their preaching?

Is it the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

Is it that Christ died for our sins, that He was buried, and that He was raised again the third day?

* + - * 1. Do they preach the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ?
        2. What is the main subject or theme of their teaching?
      1. The salvation test.
         1. How do they say that someone is saved?

Is it by sending money to them?

Is it by good works that we do?

Is it man-centered, or is it God-centered?

* + - * 1. If it is not salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, and in Christ alone, then he is a false prophet.
      1. The sanctification test.
         1. Do they live a clean, pure, godly, and holy life?

Do they teach others to do so?

* + 1. False prophets may pass one, two, or three of these tests.
       1. We need to find out what they believe on all five tests, and measure them.
          1. If they are not bringing the right message, then they are a false prophet.
  1. We can recognize their pretense by their method.
     1. 2 Peter 2:1
        1. In this verse, the word “privily” means “to secretly bring in.”
           1. This word has the idea of laying something good alongside of something that is bad.
        2. Very few false teachers and false prophets will deny the whole scope of Christianity.
           1. Some may say that they believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God or that the Bible is the Word of God.

They will privily lay their doctrine alongside that part of Christianity that they say they believe.

* + 1. The devil is very clever.
       1. Genesis 3:1
       2. He has taught Madison Avenue how to sell alcohol.
          1. The predominant thing about an alcohol advertisement is joy, fun, beauty, and youth.

The alcohol is laid down alongside all of these things.

* + - * 1. Because of this association, people are made to think that alcohol is somehow good.

The devil does the same thing in the realm of religion.

* + 1. 2 Peter 2:3
       1. In this verse, the word “feigned” in the Greek language is the word we get “plastic” from.
          1. Plastic can be molded.

It can be molded to fit almost any situation.

It can be made to look like the real thing.

For example, plastic leather looks almost like real leather.

* + - * 1. These are the kind of words (feigned words) that are used by false prophets.

The devil will use our words and his dictionary.

* 1. We can recognize their pretense by their manner.
     1. 2 Peter 2:2
        1. The word “pernicious” here means “unbridled lust” or “lasciviousness.”
     2. Apostasy and immorality are always linked together.
     3. Jude 4
        1. “Lasciviousness” is “unbridled lust.”
        2. They take the word “grace” and add the idea that it’s alright for a person to live anyway they want or do anything they want.
           1. They turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, denying the Lord Jesus Christ.
     4. False prophets and immorality are always linked together.
        1. Jeremiah 23:14
           1. There are preachers today who say that what was practiced at Sodom and Gomorrah was alright.
        2. They’re living ungodly lives.
     5. 2 Peter 2:2 says that many will follow their pernicious ways.
        1. A following does not prove that false prophets are right.
        2. There are a lot of people who do not want sound doctrine.
           1. 2 Timothy 4:3-4

They have “itching” ears.

They want someone to scratch their ears.

They turn away from the truth.

The word “sound” in this verse is the word we get our word “hygiene” from.

They do not want spiritual hygiene or sound doctrine.

* + - 1. There is a movement of church growth today that says we shouldn’t tell people that they are sinners, or they won’t come back.
         1. Instead, find out what their felt needs are and tickle their ears with smooth words in order to build a crowd.
         2. They do not want to make people aware of their lost and sinful condition.

They don’t want to tell people they’re sinners.

* + - * 1. They just want Jesus Christ as their best friend.

But He won’t be their best friend until He becomes their Savior.

* 1. We recognize their pretense by their motive.
     1. 2 Peter 2:3
        1. Their motive is to merchandise the Gospel.
     2. Their motive is profit.
     3. We ought to honor the ministry.
        1. Anyone who preaches the Gospel is to live by the Gospel.
        2. 1 Timothy 5:17
        3. Deuteronomy 25:4
     4. May God have mercy upon those who water down the message so as not to offend the rich.
     5. May God have mercy upon those who take advantage of the plastic mentality of the masses and somehow become merchandisers of the Gospel.
        1. The Bible says that their damnation slumbers not.
           1. 2 Peter 2:3

1. we need to remember their past (2 peter 2:3-6)
   1. God has given us a record of what has happened already.
      1. 2 Peter 2:4
         1. When Satan fell, a third of the angels fell with him.
         2. God did not spare those angels.
            1. Angels are great, glorious creatures; man was made a little lower than the angels.
            2. If God spared not the angels who fell, then He will not spare the false teachers.
      2. 2 Peter 2:5
         1. The entire world was destroyed because of false doctrine, and only eight people were saved.
            1. If God spared not the higher (the angels), then why would He spare the lower (man)?
            2. If God spared not the many, then why would He spare the few?
      3. 2 Peter 2:6
         1. If God did not spare the people of Sodom and Gomorrah who were guilty of sexual perversion, then why would God spare those who are guilty of spiritual perversion?
            1. God is not going to overlook this.
   2. The Bible makes it clear that judgment has already been executed.
      1. 2 Peter 2:3
         1. The sentence has already been passed, but it has not yet been carried out.
            1. But it will be carried out.
2. CONCLUSION
   1. When it comes to false teachers, you need to recognize their presence, realize their pretense, and remember their past.
   2. Remember what God has done; God has set a precedent.
      1. God spared not the angels that sinned.
      2. God spared not the old world.
      3. God spared not Sodom and Gomorrah.
   3. Before God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, He sent a warning.
      1. Sodom was warned and then destroyed.
   4. God has sent a warning to America.
      1. America is embracing the same sins that God destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah for.
      2. God left Sodom and Gomorrah with its smoking ruins as an example to those that came after who should live ungodly.
         1. All of it was rooted (whether it be angels, the people in Noah’s day, or those who lived in Sodom) in a transgression from the Word of God.
            1. They turned the grace of God into lasciviousness and denied the only God that bought them.
   5. Romans 8:32
      1. The God who spared not the angels, the old world, Sodom, or Gomorrah, also did not spare His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.
      2. Jesus became sin for you.
         1. He took your sin upon Himself.
         2. He carried that sin to the cross.
            1. God did not spare Him.
            2. If there was ever a time when God would have been lenient upon sin, it would have been that time.

But God did not spare Jesus.

* + - * 1. Unless your sin is on Jesus, He will not spare you.
  1. God is not only unsparing in His justice, but He is unsparing in His love.
     1. John 3:16
  2. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
  3. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
     1. Romans 3:23
     2. Romans 10:9-10
     3. Romans 10:13
     4. Acts 16:31