

The false prophets of the 'New Age'

The church was always confronted with false teachers, with false 'Apostles' and with false prophets right throughout the ages.

The Bible contains many warnings about them and informs us that they will always be present among us.

Thus we should not be surprised if we encounter some of them in our churches today.

Scripture even tells us that they will be on the increase in the last days.

In fact false prophets and false teachers will in fact be one of the signs which will indicate to us that we have entered this final period of history.

What is a false prophet?

There are some features which all false prophets had in common throughout the ages.

Many of them had started out as 'sound teachers' but over time their message had slowly started to change.

They will often claim special and unique insights into scripture and also believe that they had received some special revelations from God which gradually turn into heresies.

The final outcome is always the same; it is another gospel that does not exist in the Bible.

The preachers of the false prosperity gospel are one such example.

They have done untold harm particularly in the 3. World where they have given rise to many ferocious wolves dressed up in sheep's clothing which have exploited the poorest and the most vulnerable for their own personal gain.

This false prosperity gospel is nothing more than a gospel of greed which feeds our selfish egos.

The men who promote this false gospel are worse than the money lenders in the Jerusalem temple. There is no doubt that they will one day face our Lords furious anger when they have to stand before him one day.

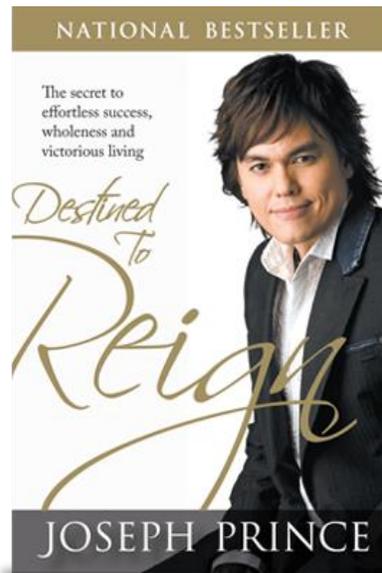
The wrath of the lamb will be unbearable once they realize the full extent of their sin.

The attraction of 'false prophets' will always be the same. It's the 'new' message, the 'new' insights which no one had received before them in time.

They will cater to our sense of curiosity and tempt us with new 'revelations'. But they will gradually set out to change and to misinterpret the word of God for their own selfish gain. They will replace what is written with their own thoughts and their own mixed-up ideas.

But in doing so they will tempt many Christians with their smooth, subtle lies. False teachers, false prophets will often have a message of 'false' comfort and proclaim promises (according to their misguided interpretation of scripture) which are not based in scripture.

Such false 'promises' will appeal to many Christians who no longer want to follow God unconditionally, who no longer want to surrender their life's into His hands and following Him regardless of the cost.



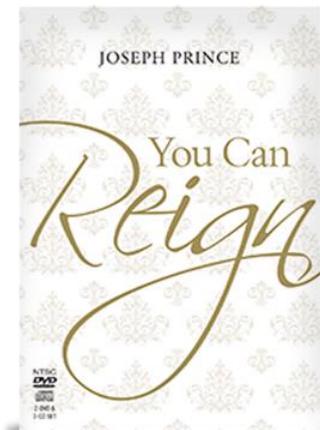
The message of such man (and woman) will always center on 'us'! It will focus on our benefits, on what's in it for 'us'. But this is not the gospel! It is an expression of a sick and corrupted gospel, one that has been changed in order to cater to our fleshly desires.

But it is a message that will appeals to many of us. Who does not want to be rich? Who does not want to rule and reign and be in charge of once life instead of to serve and submit?

The center of the message of such false prophets is always the same, it's all about 'me', it's about what's in it for me'. It has turned God into a servant instead of a Lord. It has made the universe revolve around

us and whatever we do is for the sake of reaping a benefit from it. We want a reward for our actions.

This is the modern gospel of 'self'. This is what is at the heart of the prosperity gospel. It is a gospel which is completely and totally focused on 'self'. We are at the center and the universe and everything revolves around us!



But this false gospel has nothing in common with the true gospel at all.

The Bible is anchored around the fact that it is Him, that it is our Lord who reigns and not us. Whether he reigns through us (which can only happen if we live in total surrender and in complete submission to Him) or through somebody else is irrelevant. God remains at the center of the universe.



Everything revolves around Him and not us! Christians in North Korea have a much better understanding of this than we do.

They don't reign, most of them suffer instead!

Many of the faithful saints of North Korea live in the most terrible conditions locked up in prison camps where they are slowly worked to death. They have to watch their

brethren die each and every day. Christians in the Middle East have a similar experience.

There are more Christians persecuted today in this world than in the last 2000 years!

But a false gospel which has imprisoned the minds of so many Christians today has estranged many who live in 'free' world from those who are desperate and who are in great need.

If we look at the churches in the book of revelation we notice something rather profoundly.

The church of Ephesus (Revelation 2:1-7) was known for having labored hard but it had forsaken its first love (2:4) The first love is always the greatest! Anyone who has experienced what a first love is like will know this and understand what it means.

Smyrna (Revelation 2:8-11) was admired by the Lord for its tribulation and for its poverty. The Lord had no criticism of this church whatsoever.

He only had words of encouragement and words of approval!

How blessed those Christians would have been on the day when they could finally leave this world and enter into the presence of His glory. Great and majestic will be their eternal reward!

The church in Pergamum (Revelation 2:12-17) was called to repentance for allowing false teachers into their midst.

How ironic that so many Christians today have fallen for the lies of false teachers who try to convince them that they no longer need to repent.

It is precisely those Christians which the Lord calls to repentance today!

Thyatira (Revelation 2:18-29) was known for its charity, for its good works but once again it allowed the teachings of a false prophetess (2:20)

False prophets can only be treated one way. They must be expelled from our midst, from our churches. False prophets will never produce a true blessing but in the end they will only bring judgment and face God's rebuke.

Sardis (Revelation 3:1-6) too was cautioned despite its good reputation. It was another church which was called to repentance (3:2-3)

Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13) was the only other church which had stood firm in its faith but among all those churches there was 1 church which stood out.

It was the (only) church that made Jesus sick.

It was the church of Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22)



This was the church that had it all. It was wealthy, it considered itself rich. It was affluent and it was admired by many.

It was the kind of church that most churches would have looked up to during its day (nothing has changed since). It had the crowds, the numbers for it consisted of a large and impressive congregation and it owned an

impressive building as well.

This was the church which even managed to impress the world.

But it failed to impress the only one it needed to impress.

It made only one impression on Jesus.

It became known as the church that made Jesus feel sick!

What an impression to be remembered for!!!

What a classic illustration of some of our large congregations today which promote this false gospel (the false prosperity gospel).

Jesus must look down on those churches and feel just as sick as he did when he looked upon the church in Laodicea.

When this church looked at itself it could only see status, glamour and wealth.

It most likely had a charismatic Pastor who managed to bewitch the entire congregation every Sunday with his smooth and subtle lies.

People came to this church in increasing number for this was the church that seemed to have it all. It appeared to be full of life and action.

But Jesus looked far beyond the outward visible glamour. He looked behind the apparent affluence and the worldly status of this church and concluded:

"you are poor, blind, and naked".

What a summary of a church!

Why was this church poor when in reality it was the richest church of all during its day?

The reason why Jesus said "you are poor" was because Jesus always looks at us from an eternal perspective. Seated on His holy throne he is able to look into the future and he concluded that this church had completely missed out on its final reward.

While it enjoyed riches on earth, there was no reward waiting for it in the next life to come.

The church was like the fool who had accumulated all his wealth here on earth but died empty handed.

True wealth is not what you have in this life, true wealth is wealth you can keep. It is the wealth that remains with you once you move from this life into the next. The church of Laodicea was poor because it had exchanged earthly riches for heavenly wealth.

It was also blind because it could not see the truth about itself.

It became a victim of its own outward image. When this church (the Christians of Laodicea) looked into the mirror they saw a church that was doing exceptionally well. They saw a church which had exploded in numbers, a church which enjoyed a great reputation, a church with bags full of money. It had the music and all the talents (and of course the show which brought in the crowds).

People talked about this church. It was famous during its day.

But as long as you are covered in blindness you cannot see. You cannot see the sins that you have never repented off.

You cannot see the real corruption that resides in the hidden corners of your heart. Blindness is like a mist which covers your spiritual senses.

Instead of drawing from God's light which expels all the inner darkness, a blind person will try to find his own way by walking according to his own understanding and by following his own ideas in life.

The reason why this church was blind was because it could no longer see the truth.

It could no longer see the truth about itself (as was very noticeable in the conclusion which it had reached about itself: "You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.'" the words of Jesus himself)

But we cannot expel blindness that resides deep within us. Only God's light can expel such spiritual blindness.

The church was naked because it was still covered in sin.

One of the most dangerous and deadly lies in the church today is the teaching that Christians no longer need to repent.

The Christians of Laodicea may have also fallen victim to such a terrible lie.

The outcome was that they were naked and truly exposed when they stood before Jesus.

Unless we are covered by the blood of Christ we will always be naked for the day will come when everyone will be able to see our sins.

This nakedness is far worse than if we would be caught naked without cloth.

The nakedness of heart is far worse than physical nakedness for it exposes us on the inside.

If we are caught without cloth we are only exposed on the outside but we can still hide on the inside. If we are caught naked on the inside there is no place to hide.

We are fully and we are truly exposed! Everything about us which we tried to keep hidden from others will suddenly become visible to everyone else.

No one would ever want to be caught out naked like this!

It is only the blood of Jesus which can cover us from that kind of nakedness but the blood of Jesus is only accessible through our repentance.

Jesus does not forgive our sins unless we repent. This is why scripture tells us to walk in daily repentance!

The church which teaches that repentance is no longer needed is leaving its members totally vulnerable and completely exposed!

Laodicea would have been one such church in the past.

In the eyes of Jesus its members were naked for they had failed to walk humbly before him in repentance.

The prosperity gospel has blinded large number of Christians to the truth of the gospel today. Many of those churches look large and impressive because their

message has a great appeal to the 'flesh' but when Jesus would look at them he would see them as poor, blind and naked just as he looked upon the church of Laodicea.

Whenever we only focus on our benefits we will end up depriving ourselves and miss out on many true blessings in the end.

True spiritual benefits are not found in a life which has set out to 'reign'. It can only be found in a life of humility, in a life of complete and total surrender. The famous Indian missionary to Tibet, Sadu Sundhar Singh was locked up for his faith on many occasions. He was persecuted and lived most of his life like an outcast. He had to suffer much for the Lord but during his suffering on earth he had visitations from angels, he experienced miracles on an almost daily basis and he received many visions from the Lord which only very few had ever received before him (the Apostle Paul being one of them)

His message always remained simple and pure.

Surrender your life to Jesus and allow God to reign in your life!

In his gospel there were no selfish motives, he was not feeding the ego of his followers or of those who listened to him. He was never looking for his own benefit because for him life was all about death to self. The Christian walk was a walk of complete and of total surrender.

You would never hear his message preached in any of the 'prosperous churches' today. Sadu Sundar Singh would surely be locked out of those 'prosperity' churches today just as was locked out of the Buddhist monasteries of Tibet in the past.

A message of total surrender, a message of submitting ourselves completely to God does not sit well with many Christians today.

We have become so used to the preaching of a false gospel, about a god who loves everybody, about a god who is almost indifferent to sin (who even tolerates sin to such an extent that He does not even take our sins serious anymore).

This is the god of 'convenience', the idol which we have created which is only there so serve and to please us.

But anyone who believes in this god also believes in a false gospel. This is the gospel where we sit on the throne, where we reign and where he is only there for the sole purpose to serve and to please us.

Such is the message of the false prophets of the 'new age' today.

Sadly it is a message which has infiltrated many churches and which has confused many Christians all over the world.

Poor struggling Christians in countries where they face daily persecution know that this message is a terrible lie.

One of the greatest dangers of this false gospel is that it will not equip Christians for the coming age of persecution.

When persecution will become a reality one day in the future most of those big churches will fold up and vanish overnight.

People will disappear in order to save their own life's and many will fall away from their faith because of the lies they were told, lies which had failed to equip them for the day when they needed the truth.

There are no Laodicean churches in North Korea today.

You will not find them in China, in Syria or in Iran.

Christians in those countries know that following Jesus always comes at a price.

They do not follow the Lord because they desire to reign, because they want to reap a material benefit from their decision to believe in Jesus; they follow him because they want to serve him for they have truly surrendered their life into his hands.

Out of the 12 disciples John was the only one who did not to die a violent death. Instead, he passed away peacefully on the island of Patmos at a ripe old age (around 100 AD).

All the others were brutally murdered for their faith.

If the false prophets (some even dare to call themselves Apostles) of the 'new age' would know that they would have to face certain death in the future (crucifixion or some other painful death) because of the gospel they preach they would quickly change their message and leave their profession for good.

They would look for safer ways to make money instead.



But as long as they can earn a fortune through their ministry and be admired for it at the same time they will continue every efforts to spread a false gospel to large numbers of people.

All that is left of Laodicea today are a few rocks.

We can still read about this church in our scriptures but it is only mentioned to us as a warning!

All the glamour and the affluence has vanished for good.

It will never return!

One day the glamour of the 'prosperity' churches will be disappear as well.

No one will remember their false prophets and teachers who had seduced many with their subtle lies and with their deceptions.

The only one who will remember them is our Lord and He has already told us what he will do when he encounters another church like Laodicea.

But if a church no longer preaches repentance what hope will there be for them in the end?