

Who is a false Teacher — II

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Identifying False Teachers - A Study from Jude & II Peter 2

In the first part of the message, I wrote who false teachers are and how they become what they are. In this message I want to continue to bring out some behavioral aspects of false teachers which will help us identify them. God's word gives very clear insight into their mind, which will help us to discern them. As you read the following message, please pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give you the ability to discern. Please do not use this material to judge or condemn people you do not like. Please do not come to conclusions without proper discernment. Just let the Holy Spirit speak to you.

Proud, Arrogant, Scoffing at glorious ones

"These people are proud and arrogant, daring even to scoff at the glorious ones without so much as trembling. But the angels, even though they are far greater in power and strength than these false teachers, never speak out disrespectfully against the glorious ones" (II Peter 2: 10,11).

"...defy authority, and scoff at the power of the glorious ones. But even Michael, one of the mightiest of the angels, did not dare accuse Satan of blasphemy, but simply said, "The Lord rebuke you." (This took place when Michael was arguing with Satan about Moses' body.) But these people mock and curse things they do not understand. Like animals they do whatever their instincts tell them. (Jude 8-10).

It is amazing that these two passages written by two different people reflect the same truth with such amazing clarity. Jude and Peter emphasize the truth that, these false teachers are proud, arrogant and people who defy authority. The truth that I want to emphasize is that, these people scoff at the power of the "glorious ones". Jude makes it very clear that the "glorious ones" are Satan and his fallen angels. He even gives an example of how even Michael who is more powerful than these false teachers did not accuse Satan directly but simply said, "The Lord rebuke you". Peter also says that even angels who are more powerful than these false teachers never speak disrespectfully against the "glorious ones".

Both Peter and Jude have written clearly that these false teachers scoff and accuse Satan and his angels. Their arrogance and pride makes them to do these things. You may ask, "Is it wrong to curse, mock or ridicule the devil?" Yes! It is wrong. We are called only to resist the devil. When the devil attacks us, we are told to resist him boldly with the power and authority given to us by the blood of Jesus. We are not to unnecessarily talk disrespectfully, mock, scoff or ridicule Satan. The reason is that, we do not understand many things that happen in the spiritual realm and also, just scoffing the devil will not accomplish anything. We are not to mock or curse things we do not understand.

It is these false teachers who mock and curse things they do not understand. The reason they mock and curse is, because they are arrogant and proud.

I have seen many false teachers scoff and ridicule the devil to make themselves look "Macho" and to give an impression to their admirers that they are "bold" and "fearless". But let me tell you, in today's circumstance, a bold and a fearless Christian is the one who stands for truth, even when sometimes the truth may be against what is "popular and widely acceptable", not the one who mocks or ridicules the devil.

Do not be misled by such cheap and foolish stunts from the pulpit. Such empty rhetoric may get you fired up emotionally, but are no good when it comes to actually fighting the forces of evil. We are called to fight the evil one with God's word and in prayer, not using empty rhetoric.

Satan is not at all afraid of the empty rhetoric of these false teachers, because he knows that they do not have the real power to fight him. The real threat to Satan and his kingdom come from people who know God's word and people who spend time on their knees, not from people who fire empty rhetoric. This is another gimmick by these false teachers to prove their "zeal for the Lord". But the only thing it proves is their pride, ignorance and arrogance.

Creatures of Instinct

*"These false teachers are like unthinking animals, creatures of instinct..." (II Peter 2:12)
Like animals they do whatever their instincts tell them. (Jude 10).*

This is another thing that will help identify them. They are creatures of instinct. All of their actions are based on instincts. They are not led by the Holy Spirit but by their instincts. They do whatever they "feel" like doing.

It is this instinctive behavior that is the center of many deception in the Body of Christ today. It is with pain and horror I see many instinctive things, which are called "Manifestations of the Holy Spirit". Many of these things are clearly instinctive, purely to excite and manipulate people's emotions.

Here is an example:

In the daily TV show of a famous evangelist, an elderly man, accompanying his wife came to the stage in a meeting, conducted by this preacher. The preacher asked the man whether he wants to accept Jesus Christ. The man was so confused and disoriented by the surroundings, said "I don't know". Then the preacher laid his hands on the man and he fell. After he got up, the preacher declared this man "saved". He told the audience that this man was born again. The whole stadium erupted into applause and cheers, but the man who was declared "saved" was standing there utterly confused. He just did not know what was going on.

Again when the preacher asked the man how he felt, he answered, "I'm confused". The preacher said "Don't worry sir, that is the anointing", and once again declared this man "saved". But the old man left that stage utterly confused. Till the time he left the stage, he did not understand what was going on!!

(Remember, the Holy Spirit never confuses anyone, on the contrary, he removes confusion and gives a clear mind. Because the Holy Spirit is not a Spirit of confusion.)

This is a clear example of the instinctive behavior of these false teachers. The Bible clearly says in Romans 10: 9 *"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved"*. The Bible never says that when someone falls and gets up, then he will be saved. People do not get saved when a preacher lays his hands on them. According to God's word, when people, willingly and consciously, with a clear mind, believe that Jesus is Lord and confess it with their mouth, then they will be saved. This is the only Biblical way to get saved. There is no other way!!

But here it is, a confused man is declared "saved" because the preacher laid his hands on him, he fell down and got up. The saddest part was, that the people gathered there applauded as if a miracle had taken place, when in fact all that happened was the instinctive act of a man who was a "Creature of Instinct". That act may have excited the people gathered there, but I am sure it did not excite anyone in Heaven.

He declared this old man "saved" because he felt like doing it. He felt it was the right thing to do, so he did it. It is these people God's word calls "Creatures of Instinct". Because they do things based on their instincts, not according to the truth. They do things out of their instincts to excite people by manipulating their emotions.

It is the same preacher who said that Jesus was going to appear personally with him on stage in certain meetings in Africa. Those meetings came and went, Jesus did not appear. These are empty words that come instinctively, not by the leading of the Holy Spirit. This same preacher has said so many things out of pure instincts, and nothing came true. But still, majority of people fail to recognize who this man really is.

As God's word says, they are "Creatures of Instinct". They do many things out of instincts, but say they do it "being led by the Holy Spirit". They substitute the guidance of the Holy Spirit with their instinctive behavior because they do not have the Holy Spirit in them (Jude 19).

They prophesy based on their instincts and not the Holy Spirit, that is why many of their prophecies do not come true. Over the years, I know that many "prophecies" that came from the mouth of these false teachers did not come true. I can give you many examples of such "Prophets" and their "Prophecies". I am amazed and disappointed at the very short memory span of many Christians these days. Many people hear these "prophecies", but very few actually bother to check whether it came true or not. It is because of the irresponsible behavior of many such Christians, false teachers are flourishing.

This is my plea. Please, next time, when you hear a prophesy, discern it with the help of the Holy Spirit whether it is instinctive or from the Holy Spirit. God's word asks us to evaluate prophesy and there is nothing wrong in doing it. *"Let two or three prophesy, and let the others evaluate what is said"* (I Corinthians 14:29). Do not take them at face value. When a person prophesies, note it down and check if it is fulfilled as prophesied.

These "Creatures of Instinct" may seem harmless, but in fact they are very dangerous. Many people who follow such preachers have slowly become insensitive to the truth, because, they too have started to act on their instincts, not on the word of God.

Loudmouthed braggarts, Use flattery to get favors

They are loudmouthed braggarts and they flatter others to get favors in return. (Jude 16). They brag about themselves with empty, foolish boasting. (II Peter 2:18).

Another very glaring aspect of these false teachers is their ability to brag about themselves and their work. Most of them hire top class Public Relations professionals, who advise them on how their image should be projected. Every event they appear is carefully choreographed to get maximum publicity. Their dresses are carefully selected to suit the image they are creating. The lighting and the music in their meetings are carefully arranged to manipulate people's emotions. Even when they give to the poor, it is filmed, photographed and shown on TV for maximum publicity.

They brag about themselves, but their bragging will have a spiritual color to it. They speak vividly about their personal "spiritual experiences". Even Apostle Paul, who had many wonderful spiritual experiences never spoke about any of them. Because he knew that they are of no use to anyone other than himself. *"That experience is something worth boasting about, but I am not going to do it. I am going to boast only about my weaknesses. I have plenty to boast about and would be no fool in doing it, because I would be telling the truth. But I won't do it".* (II Corinthians 12: 5,6).

Here is an apostle who had so many revelations and spiritual experiences from God, but he refused to talk about them. Because he knew that if he talked, people would think that he was a "super-spiritual" man and would exalt him. He knew how people react to these spiritual experiences, so he kept it all to himself. He did not want anyone to think more highly of him than what they actually see in his life and message. *"I don't want anyone to think more highly of me than what they can actually see in my life and my message"* (II Corinthians 12: 6).

Paul needed no positive publicity or empty boasts about his "spiritual experiences" to prove his spirituality or to authenticate his ministry.

He let his life and his message do the talking. A minister's life talks louder than his words. But these false teachers do exactly the opposite of what Paul did. They keep talking about all their "spiritual experiences" to make themselves look "super-spiritual". Because the way they live is controversial and their message is erroneous, they need such empty boasts about their "spiritual experiences" to "prove" their spirituality. They are able to deceive people, because many people, after listening to all their "spiritual experiences", do think that they are "super-spiritual".

They project an image to the public only by revealing what will give them good publicity. Anything that will give "negative publicity" is swept under the carpet. There is no openness in their lives, finances and their work. They do not want people to see all that goes on with them. They always have something in their life hidden. In contrast, the lives of Jesus, Paul and Peter were completely transparent.

They are shameless in the way they brag about themselves with empty and foolish boasting. Even their "humble" words are boastful. They not only boast about themselves, but also flatter others to get favors in return. Flattery is a trap which is successfully used by many false teachers. They flatter many people to get favors in return. I have seen many men of God who know the truth, do not want to speak against some false teachers, because these false teachers have won them over by flattery. They bring them on their TV shows and flatter them with very nice words and effectively silence them.

I know of a preacher who used to preach that the Pope was the anti-Christ. But recently he went to a catholic country to preach. To please the catholic population there, he used a photograph that he took with the Pope in the posters for publicity, obviously to lure more crowd. They are not ashamed to use flattery to get favors in return. They do not stand for anything. They are spineless people who stand for nothing. *(If you stand for nothing, you will fall for anything.)* They change their color according to the circumstance. All that matters to them is a large crowd and more money. They will compromise anything to get what they want. Truth does not matter to them, because they do not have the truth in them..

These false teachers also flatter one another, praise one another to legitimize each other. They pat each other, praise each other to make the other look good in the eyes of the people. Do not be fooled by their very "spiritual words" of flattery. Their honey dripping words are a trap. Analyze everything you hear based on God's word and reject things that contradict His word, no matter how "nice" it may seem or how much it excites you.

Never rely on your emotions or feelings, always rely on God's word. Only His word can help you stand firm amidst all this deception.

Conclusion

But you, dear friends, must continue to build your lives on the foundation of your holy faith. And continue to pray as you are directed by the Holy Spirit (Jude 20).

Dear beloved, we are living in last days. One of the signs of last days is the existence of false teachers (I Timothy 4:1,2). False teaching is rampant these days. The body of Christ is filled with teachers who teach counterfeit gospel and twist the truth. God is calling His children to be vigilant. Stay away from people who excite

the emotions and preach questionable doctrines based on their experiences, which contradicts the written Word of God.

I have given these truths from God's word so that you may discern and stay away from such people and their "ministries".

May the Spirit of truth guide you into more truths as you learn more about Him. Amen.

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