

**Text : Matthew 24:15-26, Matthew 13:24-30, Matthew 7:15-20**

**Title : “False Christs and false prophets”**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. Our approach to the study of the second coming of Christ
  - a. It is not merely about future events
  - b. It also helps us understand life today
    - i. The reality of troubles and sorrows (Matthew 24:4-8)
    - ii. The reality of persecution (Matthew 24:9-13)
2. The problem of “false Christs and false prophets” in our world today
  - a. A problem on a global scale (Matthew 24:4-5, 11, 23-25)
  - b. A problem which affects millions of people
  - c. A rapidly growing problem
3. Our challenge
  - a. We must not remain ignorant or indifferent
  - b. We must not take what we have for granted
  - c. Instead, our challenge is to take heed (Matthew 24:4)
    - i. To discern between the true and the false
    - ii. To decide how we ought to respond

## UNDERSTANDING THE IDEA OF FALSE BRETHREN

### 1. The Parable of the Tares (Matthew 13:24-30)

#### a. Good seeds (wheat)

i. Sons of the Kingdom (Matthew 13:37-38)

ii. Sowed by the Son of Man

#### b. Tares

i. Sons of the wicked one (Matthew 13:38-39)

ii. Sowed by the devil

#### c. Both wheat and tares exist together in the same field

i. The tares cannot be separated from the wheat

ii. Lest the wheat is uprooted with them

iii. Both are to grow together until the harvest

#### d. At the time of harvest they will be separated

i. This refers to the end of the age (Matthew 13:40-43)

ii. The tares will be gathered together and burnt

iii. The wheat will be gathered into the barn

### 2. The main point for application

a. Both the true and the false will be found in the church

b. Our challenge is to discern between the true and the false

## **THE REALITY OF FALSE CHRISTS AND FALSE PROPHETS WITHIN THE CHURCH**

1. They arrogate themselves to “special positions of authority”
  - a. False prophets (Matthew 24:11,24)
    - i. They claim to receive a word from God directly
    - ii. They claim to speak on behalf of the Lord
  - b. False Christs (Matthew 24:5,24)
    - i. They claim a “special anointing” from God
    - ii. They pass themselves off as “Christ-like” figures
2. They attain spheres of influence over large numbers of people
  - a. Their goal is to “deceive many” (Matthew 24:5,11,24)
  - b. Some may perform great signs and wonders to that end
3. Once again, our challenge is to discern
  - a. To discern between true and false teachings
  - b. To discern between true and false people

## **THE CHALLENGE TO DISCERN BETWEEN THE TRUE AND THE FALSE**

1. False prophets (Matthew 7:15)
  - a. They will conceal themselves
  - b. They pass themselves off as harmless sheep
  - c. But they are in fact ravenous wolves

2. You will know them by their fruits (Matthew 7:16-18)

- a. Every good tree bears good fruit
- b. But a bad tree bears bad fruit

3. Those who are false will not bear good fruit (Matthew 7:19)

- a. A tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down
- b. And thrown into the fire

### **HOW WE MUST RESPOND**

1. Discern

Distinguish between those who are true and those who are false

2. Decide

- a. To not be drawn in by those who are false
- b. To stand against the false
- c. To be even more committed to being true
  - i. To the Lord
  - ii. To His Word