

## Kill False Prophets? – Part One

Tim Perry here, Pastor of Spiritual Discover, Christ Community Church welcoming you to Week 8 of Tough Questions.

Well, this week, we're going to ask the question about false prophets. Is it true that God in the Old Testament commanded the Israelites to kill false prophets? Let's look at this passage:

Deuteronomy 18:19-22

*"If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account." So God was serious about people listening to Moses who was one of their prophets. When Moses said something from the LORD, they were to obey it. But look at this – Verse 20: "But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded him to say, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, must be put to death." Now with the stakes that high, we want to be completely clear on what is a true prophet and what is a false prophet.*

*You may say to yourselves, "How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the LORD?" If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him.*

So this sets up a bit of a test that Moses and other leaders in the community of the Israelites could use to determine if someone was a true prophet or a false prophet. Here are the three aspects of that test:

### Test for a False Prophet

1. False prophecy is spoken presumptuously from God. It's not actually given to the person by God. The person is pretending to have some message from God. Only "borrowing" God language to give their message credibility.
2. If the prophet is not speaking for God himself, then his message is going to be out of sync with what's in the rest of the Bible or the rest of what God had spoken. So if he's speaking on behalf of some other divine entity or some other thing that he has drawn his ideas from, then that's out of bounds too – that's a false prophecy.
3. If the prophet says something that doesn't come true in some predictive way, then obviously that's a case of false prophecy. So here we have a clear test that could be applied.

Now what I want to do is have a little fun here with you – I want to show you ten images of people that I think flunk the false prophecy test here. They actually would qualify as a false prophet – not a true prophet – based on these criteria. As we go through these, I'm going to give you just a couple of hints but I want to see if

you know who they are first – so let's take a look at them. Here we go – ten examples of what I think are false prophets.

1. No – not George Washington.
2. Yes – false prophets were girls too sometimes.
3. Hmmm – it looks like one of those pictures that's in your Bible – you know like out of Bible Times. So my guess here would be something in the New Testament – false prophet in the New Testament.
4. Some of you just need a familiar face right now!
5. Hmmm – charismatic – 1970's looking suit – what do you think?
6. Well, we obviously don't have this guy's photograph, but the fancy calligraphy down at the bottom might give it away.
7. I like the guy's tie!
8. Hmmm – who do you think that is? Kind of an Asian looking dude.
9. Then here you've got a very studious guy reading his Bible. Wow – I'd believe anything that guy said.
10. Icon – you'll probably recognize him right away?

So what do you think? Well, in the next part of the video we'll go right back through each of these ten and I'll show you how each of them pretty successfully pass the false prophet test and come out as a false prophet on the other side of it.