

WHAT IS A FALSE PROPHET?

I was reading your review of Max Lucado's book "In the Grip of God's Grace". At the very end you said that many people who read and follow Max's teachings will be sadly disappointed when God says to them, "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven". Is this verse not talking about false prophets and their followers? This brings to mind people like David Koresh and of course the anti-Christ. I am not a Bible scholar so I could be completely wrong, and am just trying to understand the connection in the context you used. Josh

Dear Josh: To see Matthew 7:21 in its contextual setting you should read from verse 15 through 27. The earlier verses do talk about false prophets, while the latter ones talk about the person who hears the words of Christ but does not do them (7:26). Thus when a man knows to do good and does it not it is sin (James 4:17). Jesus is the author of eternal salvation to all that obey him (Heb. 5:9). It is not enough to profess love for and faith in Christ. To be saved we must obey his will. The premise of Max Lucado's book on Grace is that one can be saved without complying with Christ's will on baptism (See Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16). Thus I made my remark.

A false prophet is one who teaches a false message rather than the revealed will of God. Obviously some false prophets are extreme, disgusting and destructive in their work. But one can be a dignified, refined and eloquent false prophet. Jesus described some of them to be as gentle and harmless-looking as sheep...yet in reality their work was destructive (Matt. 7:15). Paul described some of the teachers at work among the Gentile churches as "false apostles, deceitful workers, who fashion themselves into apostles of Christ. They were ministers of Satan who appeared as "ministers of righteousness" (II Cor. 11:14). One doesn't have to be a Jim Jones or David Koresh to be a false teacher...he needs only to teach that which is contrary to God's Word.

May God bless you and help you to always walk with Christ in the straitened and narrow way (Matt.7:14).
JHW