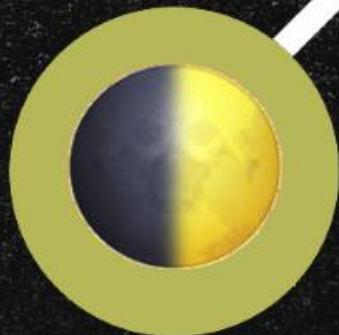


Only Two Kinds of Prophet

Matthew 7:15-20

1. Who are the false prophets?
 - a. They could be teachers, leaders, and people of influence within the church.
 - b. They are those who speak lies with the authority of truth.
2. Why did Jesus command us to “watch out” for false prophets?
 - a. Because false prophets are a very real threat.
 - b. Because false prophets are difficult to identify.
 - c. Because false prophets are extremely dangerous.
3. How are false prophets identified?
 - a. By what they say.
 - b. By what they do.
 - c. By the outcome of their work over time.

**BE DIFFERENT
LIVE DIFFERENT**



Only Two Kinds of Prophet



Matthew 7:15-20

Matthew 7:15-20

Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits.

Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they? So, every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit.

Matthew 7:15-20

A good tree cannot produce bad fruit,
nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.
Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut
down and thrown into the fire.
So then, you will know them by their fruits.

Who are the false prophets?



The Scriptures speak of false prophets, false teachers, false Christs, false apostles, as well as others who distort the truth.

2 Peter 2:1

But false prophets also arose among the people,
just as there will also be false teachers
among you, who will secretly introduce
destructive heresies...

***Notice Peter puts false prophets into
the same category as false teachers.***

Who are they?

**They could be teachers, leaders,
or people of influence within
the church.**

Matthew 7:15

Beware of the false prophets,
who come to you in sheep's clothing,
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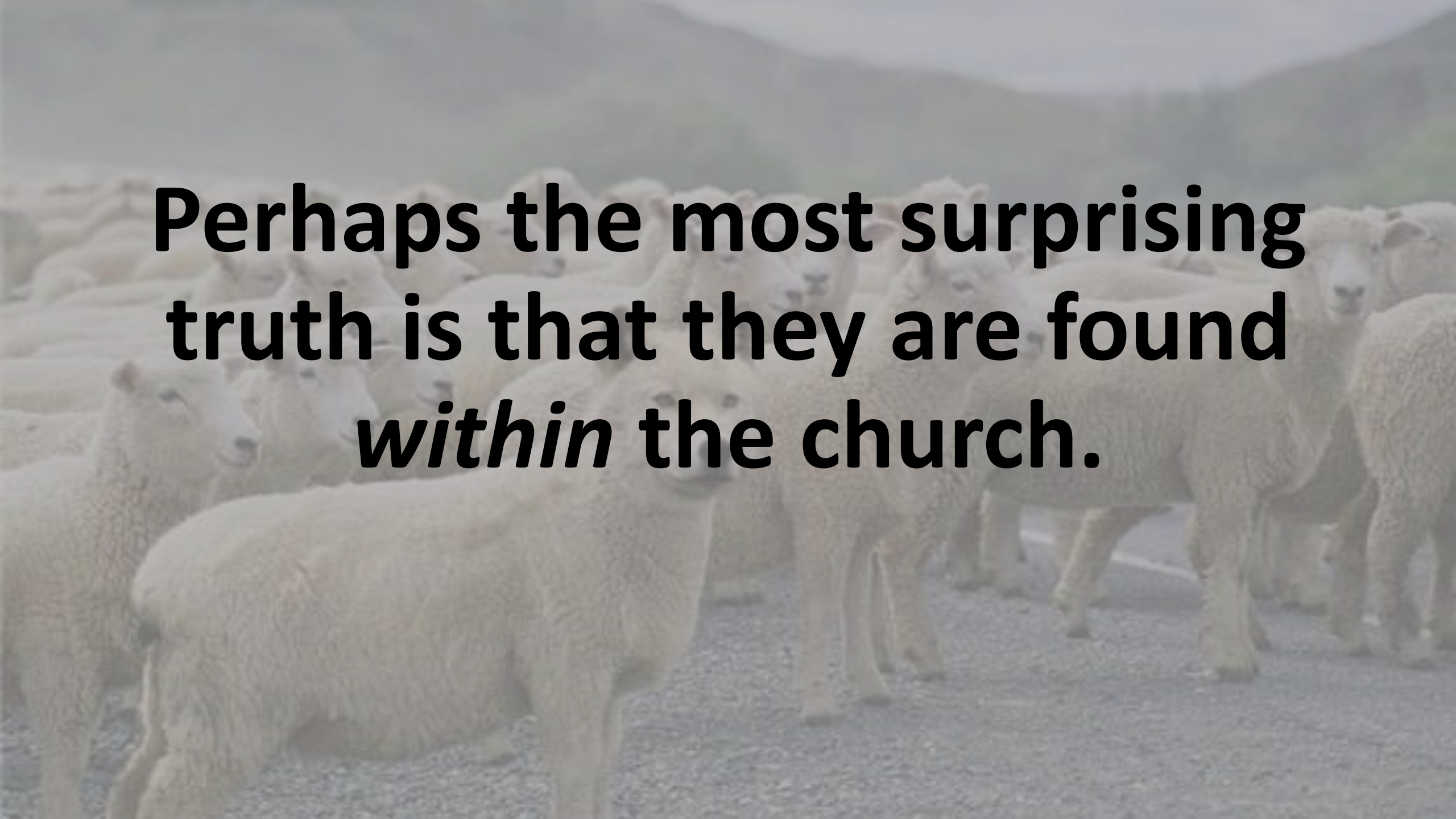
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Matthew 7:15

Beware of the false prophets,
who come to you **in sheep's clothing,**
but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

A large flock of sheep is gathered in a field, with rolling hills or mountains visible in the background under a hazy sky. The sheep are the central focus, and their woolly texture is clearly visible. The overall scene is somewhat muted in color, giving it a soft, ethereal quality.

**Perhaps the most surprising
truth is that they are found
within the church.**

Acts 20:28-30

Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

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among which the Holy Spirit has made you
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and from **among your own selves** men will arise,
speaking perverse things, to draw away the
disciples after them.

Who are they?

Teachers, leaders, or people of influence within the church.

**They are those who speak lies
as if from God.**

Matthew 7:15

Beware of the false prophets,
who come to you in sheep's clothing,
but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

Matthew 7:15

Beware of the **false prophets**,
who come to you in sheep's clothing,
but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

False prophet = pseudo prophet
or “lying” prophet.

Jeremiah 27:16

I spoke to the priests and to all this people, saying, “Thus says the LORD: Do not listen to the words of your prophets who prophesy to you, saying, ‘Behold, the vessels of the LORD's house will now shortly be brought again from Babylon’; for they are prophesying a lie to you.”

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for **they are prophesying a lie to you.”**

Ezekiel 22:28

And her prophets have smeared whitewash for them, seeing false visions and divining lies for them, saying, “Thus says the Lord God,” when the LORD has not spoken.

Ezekiel 22:28

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And her prophets have smeared whitewash for them, seeing false visions and divining lies for

them, **saying, “Thus says the Lord God,”**
when the LORD has not spoken.

**There is a *right* understanding of
God's word, and *that* must be
our final authority.**

A large flock of sheep is gathered on a gravel path. The sheep are white and fluffy, with some looking towards the camera. In the background, there are rolling hills or mountains under a clear sky. The overall scene is a pastoral landscape.

**Why did Jesus command us to
“watch out” for false prophets?**

Why watch out?

**Because false prophets are
a very real threat.**

Matthew 7:15

Beware of the false prophets,
who come to you in sheep's clothing,
but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

Matthew 7:15

Beware of the false prophets,
who come to you in sheep's clothing,
but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

Matthew 7:22-23

Many will say to Me on that day,
“Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name,
and in Your name cast out demons,
and in Your name perform many miracles?”

And then I will declare to them,
“I never knew you; depart from Me,
you who practice lawlessness.”

Matthew 7:22-23

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“Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name,
and in Your name cast out demons,
and in Your name perform many miracles?”

And then I will declare to them,
“I never knew you; depart from Me,
you who practice lawlessness.”

**Nearly every book of the Bible
was written, at least in part, to
address influences of false
prophets and false teachers.**

Why watch out?

Because false prophets are a very real threat.

**Because false prophets are
difficult to identify.**

Matthew 7:15

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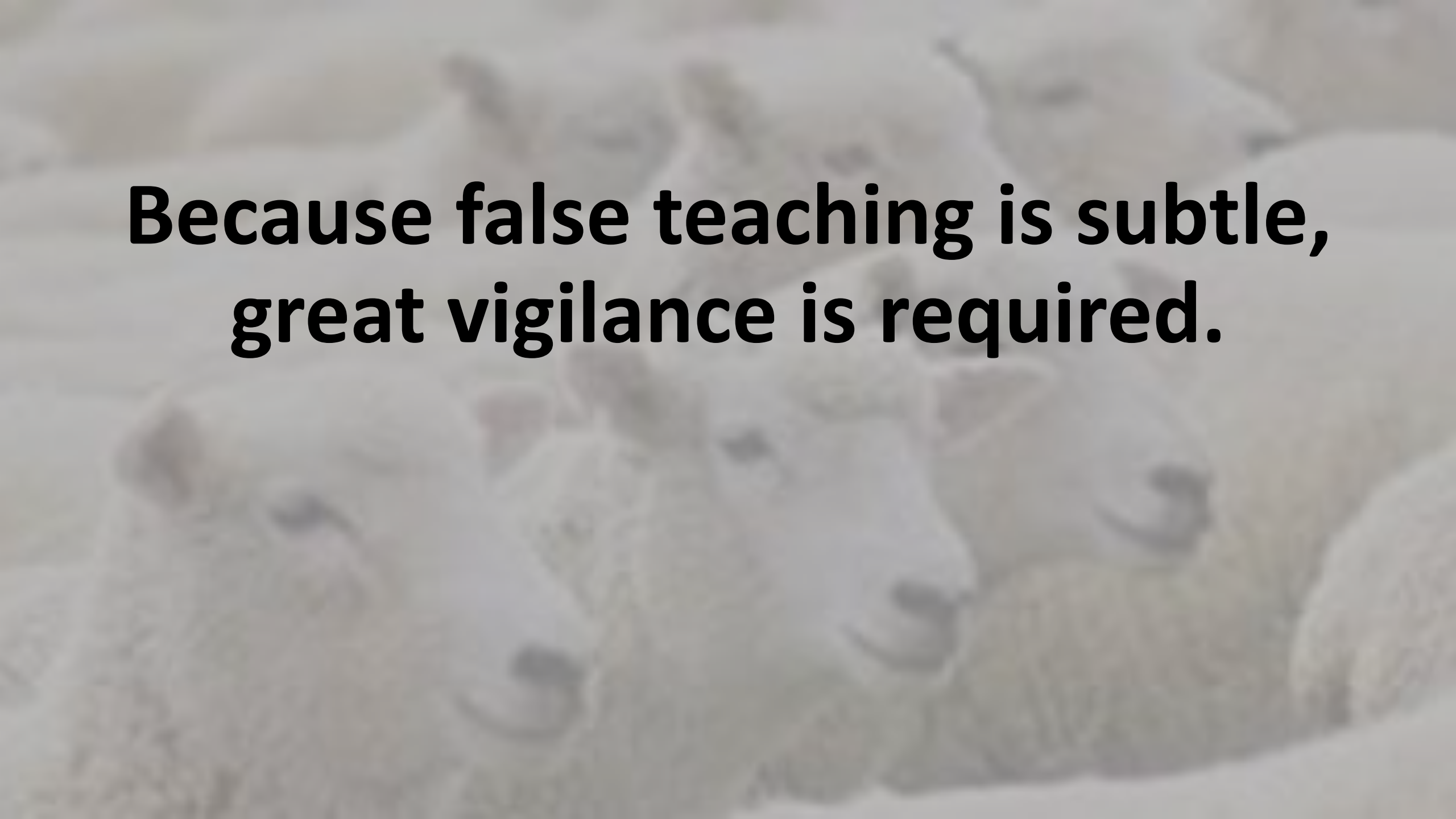
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2 Peter 2:1

But false prophets also arose among the people,
just as there will also be false teachers

among you, **who will secretly** introduce
destructive heresies...



**Because false teaching is subtle,
great vigilance is required.**

Why watch out?

Because false prophets are a very real threat.

Because false prophets are difficult to identify.

**Because false prophets are
extremely dangerous.**

Matthew 7:15

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Acts 20:29-30

I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.

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Acts 20:29-30

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will come in among you, **not sparing the flock;**
and from among your own selves men will arise,
speaking perverse things, to draw away the
disciples after them.

A group of white polar bears is shown resting on a snowy surface. The bears are huddled together, with their heads and paws visible. The background is a soft, out-of-focus white, suggesting a snowy or icy environment. The text "What makes them so savage?" is overlaid in the center of the image.

What makes them so savage?

They lead sheep to slaughter

Matthew 7:13

Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide,
and the way is broad that leads to destruction,
and many are those who enter by it.

**False teachers take their prey
down the wide way.**

They feed on sheep

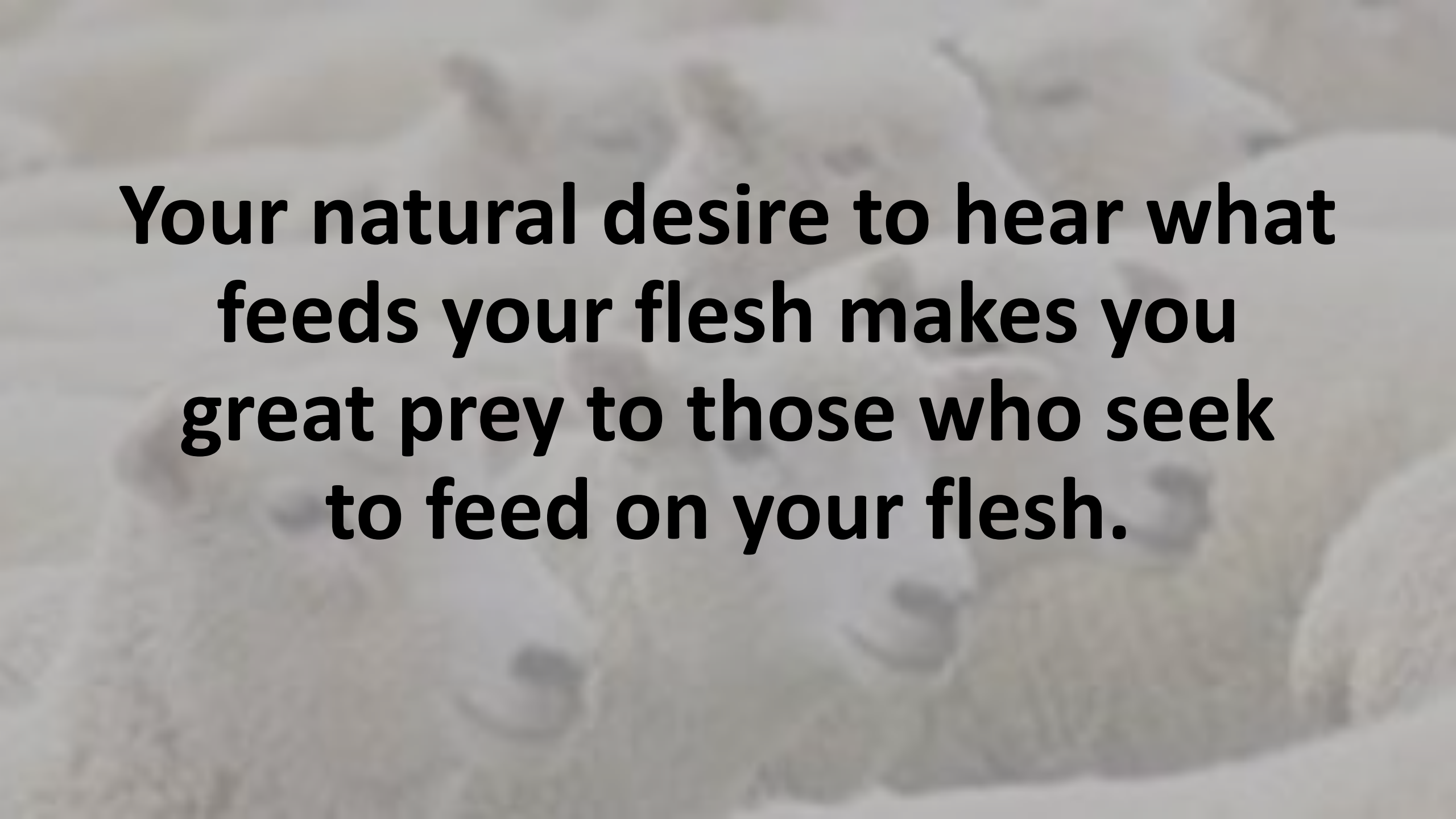
Ezekiel 34:2-3

Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, “Thus says the Lord God, ‘Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock? You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat sheep without feeding the flock.’”

Their message appeals to our flesh

2 Timothy 4:3

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires.



**Your natural desire to hear what
feeds your flesh makes you
great prey to those who seek
to feed on your flesh.**

**How are false prophets
identified?**



Matthew 7:16-20

You will know them by their fruits.
Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes,
nor figs from thistles, are they?
So, every good tree bears good fruit;
but the bad tree bears bad fruit.
A good tree cannot produce bad fruit,
nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.
Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut
down and thrown into the fire.
So then, you will know them by their fruits.

Matthew 7:16-20

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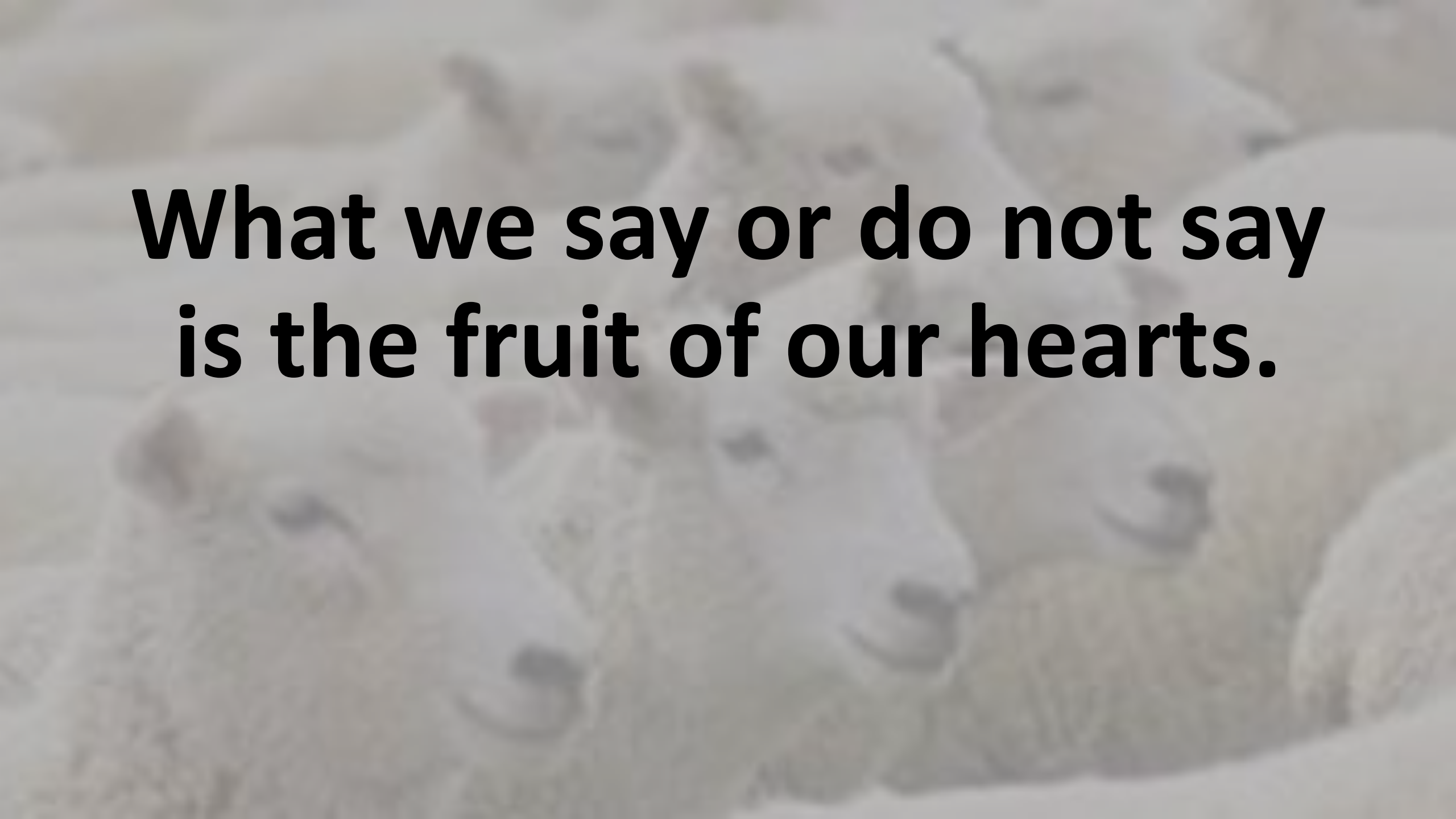
So then, **you will know them by their fruits.**



Identify false prophets...
By what they say.

Matthew 7:16-29

You will know them by their fruits.
Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes,
nor figs from thistles, are they?
So, every good tree bears good fruit;
but the bad tree bears bad fruit.
A good tree cannot produce bad fruit,
nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.



**What we say or do not say
is the fruit of our hearts.**

Matthew 12:33-34

Either make the tree good, and its fruit good;
or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad;
for the tree is known by its fruit.
You brood of vipers, how can you,
being evil, speak what is good?
For the mouth speaks out of that
which fills the heart.

Matthew 12:33-34

Either make the tree good, and its fruit good;
or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad;
for the tree is known by its fruit.
You brood of vipers, how can you,
being evil, speak what is good?

**For the mouth speaks out of that
which fills the heart.**

By what they say...

1 John 2:22

Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is the Christ? This is the antichrist, the one who denies the Father and the Son.

2 John 1:7

For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is the deceiver and the antichrist.

By what they do NOT say...

Jeremiah 6:13-14

And from the prophet even to the priest everyone deals falsely. And they have healed the brokenness of My people superficially, Saying, "Peace, peace," but there is no peace.

By what they do NOT say...

Jeremiah 23:16-17

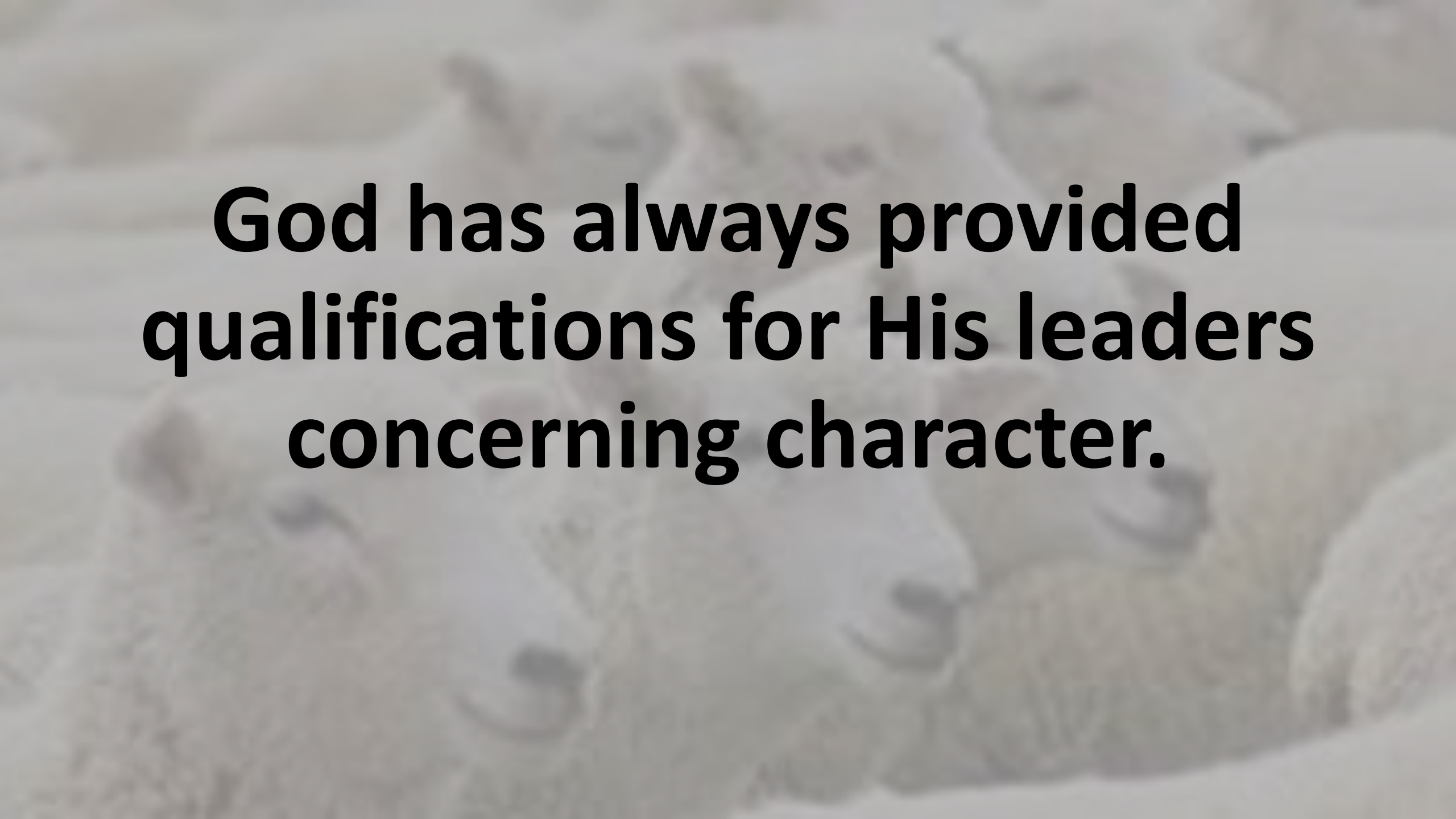
Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Do not listen to the words of the prophets who are prophesying to you. They are leading you into futility; They speak a vision of their own imagination, Not from the mouth of the LORD. They keep saying to those who despise Me, ‘The LORD has said, “You will have peace ”’; And as for everyone who walks in the stubbornness of his own heart, they say, ‘Calamity will not come upon you.’”



Identify false prophets...

By what they say.

By what they do.



**God has always provided
qualifications for His leaders
concerning character.**

1 Thessalonians 2:10

You are witnesses, and so is God,
how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly
we behaved toward you believers.

James 3:13

Who among you is wise and understanding?
Let him show by his good behavior his deeds
in the gentleness of wisdom.

Identify false prophets...

By what they say.

By what they do.

**By the results of their work
over time.**

Matthew 7:16-19

You will know them by their fruits.
Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes,
nor figs from thistles, are they?
So, every good tree bears good fruit;
but the bad tree bears bad fruit.
A good tree cannot produce bad fruit,
nor can a bad tree produce good fruit.

Romans 1:13

And I do not want you to be unaware, brethren,
that often I have planned to come to you...
in order that I might obtain some fruit among you
also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles.

Matthew 7:13-14

Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it.

For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it.

Which path are their people taking?

**What steps are you taking
to protect yourself against
the enemy's efforts to
deceive you?**