

IDENTIFYING TITLES OF FALSE TEACHERS

INTRODUCTION

There are 23 New Testament passages dealing with false teachers and their teaching. From these texts we can develop the common characteristics which help unmask their identity and expose their schemes.

A. False Prophets and False Christs (*pseudoprophetes* and *pseudochristos*)

The word for false prophets is used 7 times in the N.T. and always to describe those who, acting the part of a divinely inspired prophet, utter falsehoods under the name of divine prophecies. The word for false Christs describes one who falsely claims the name and office of the Messiah.

Pseudoprophetes – Matt. 7:15; 24:11, 24; Mark 13:22; Luke 6:26; Acts 13:6; 2 Pet. 2:1; I John 4:1

Pseudochristos – Matt. 24:24; Mark 13:22

B. False Apostles and False Brethren (*pseudapostoloi* and *pseudadelphous*)

The false apostles were creeping into the church looking for control and preaching "another gospel" (2 Cor. 11:3–15). In Galatians 2:4, Paul speaks of the "false brethren" who sought control by bringing other believers under the bondage of law keeping.

C. False Circumcision (*katatome* – "concision" or "mutilation")

In Phil. 3:2, Paul uses a play on words to describe those who placed salvific security in the rite of circumcision.

D. Antichrists (*antichristos*)

Used in 1 John 2:18, 22 to refer to all those who oppose Christ. 1 John 4:3 describes those who, in the spirit of antichrist, deny the incarnation of Jesus Christ.

E. Acts 20:29 – "savage wolves"

F. Rom. 16:18 – "slaves of their own appetites"

G. 2 Cor. 11:13 – "deceitful workers"

H. Phil. 3: 2,18 – "dogs ... evil workers"; "enemies of the cross of Christ"

I. I Tim. 4:1, 2 – "apostates"; "liars"

J. I Tim. 6:4, 5 – "conceited"; "depraved of mind"; "deprived of the truth"

K. Titus 1:10, 16 – "rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers"; "false professors"

L. Titus 3:10, 11 – "factious"; "perverted"

M. 2 Pet. 2:12-14, 17 – "unreasoning animals"; "stains and blemishes"; "accursed children"; "springs without water, and mists driven by a storm"

N. 2 Pet. 3:3, 16, 17 – "mockers"; "unprincipled"; "untaught and unstable"

O. 1 John 2:22 – "liars"

P. 1 John 4:5, 6 – "from the world"; "spirit of error"

Q. 2 John 7 – "deceivers"

R. Jude 12-19 – "hidden reefs"; "clouds without water"; "trees without fruit"; "wild waves of the sea"; "wandering stars"; "grumblers"; "arrogant"; "natural"