Living Hope, a study of 2 Peter

Wk #36: Who & What Still Matters

2 Peter 2:1-3 NKJV

*But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.****2****And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed.****3****By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not (will not) slumber.*

The Greek meaning of the phrase false prophets: "one who, acting the part of a divinely inspired prophet, utters falsehoods under the name of divine prophecies, a false prophet"

The Greek meaning of the phrase false teacher:  "a spurious teacher, i.e. propagator of erroneous Christian doctrine:—false teacher."

GotQuestions.org gives three questions for evaluating a false prophet or false teacher:

1. What does this teacher say about Jesus? Jesus Christ and His work of redemption is of utmost importance; beware of anyone who denies that Jesus is equal with God, who downplays Jesus’ sacrificial death, or who rejects Jesus’ humanity.
2. Does this teacher preach the gospel? Death, burial, and resurrection according to the Bible?
3. Does this teacher exhibit character qualities that glorify the Lord? [Jude 11](https://www.bibleref.com/Jude/1/Jude-1-11.html) says, “They have taken the way of Cain; they have rushed for profit into Balaam’s error; they have been destroyed in Korah’s rebellion.” In other words, a false teacher can be known by his pride (Cain’s rejection of God’s plan), greed (Balaam’s prophesying for money), and rebellion (Korah’s promotion of himself over Moses). Jesus said to beware of such people and that we would know them by their fruits ([Matthew 7:15-20](https://www.bibleref.com/Matthew/7/Matthew-7-15.html)).

**The best way to guard yourself against falsehood and false teachers is to know the truth.**

**To be able to spot a counterfeit of something then you need to study the real thing.**

Social media influencers are people who have built a reputation for their knowledge and expertise on a specific topic. They make regular posts about that topic on their preferred social media channels and generate large followings of enthusiastic, engaged people who pay close attention to their views. Brands love social media influencers because they can create trends and encourage their followers to buy products they promote.

Influencers are separated by marketing companies into different types: Mega, Macro, Micro, and Nano.

You can separate [different types of influencers](https://influencermarketinghub.com/types-of-influencers/) in multiple ways. Some of the most common methods are by follower numbers, by types of content, and by the level of influence. You can also group influencers by the niche in which they operate. This means that influencers who may appear in a low category by one measure may seem more influential when looked at in another way. For example, many mega-influencers are also celebrities. Yet both these groups often have less real influence on their audience because they lack expertise in a dedicated narrow niche. Some micro and even nano-influencers can have a tremendous impact on followers in their specialist niche. They may be of significant benefit to a firm selling a product targeting that sector.

**One article I read said, "social media today is less about making friends and more about following popular content creators.**

J.B. Phillips New Testament

***1-3a****But even in those days there were false prophets, just as there will be false teachers among you today.* ***They will be men who will subtly introduce dangerous heresies.*** *They will thereby deny the Lord who redeemed them, and it will not be long before they bring on themselves their own downfall. Many will follow their pernicious teaching and thereby bring discredit on the way of truth.* ***In their lust to make converts these men will try to exploit you too with their bogus arguments.***

Earlier we read in the NKJV..... ***3By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words;***

**The best way to guard yourself against falsehood and false teachers is to know the truth.**

**To be able to spot a counterfeit of something then you need to study the real thing.**

Our social world has changed drastically in the past 50 years through technological advancements.

False prophets and false teachers are still a huge problem to the church of Jesus Christ. Falsehood promoted by people who claim to be anointed by God is still a destructive force.

I want us to expand our application of Peter's warning.

**To be able to spot a counterfeit of something then you need to study the real thing.**

**The best way to guard yourself against falsehood and false information is to know the truth.**

I believe that these truths apply to social media, movies, gaming, and anything or anyone that captures your attention on a consistent basis.

**I believe that most human beings have influencers, teachers, or proclaimers that carry weight like a prophet or a preacher.**

**Who they are and what they say/teach still matters.**

If you are influenced by someone then you need to consider how they are impacting your life.

If someone has your ear, consider what are they depositing in your heart, mind, and soul.

This seems like such a simple like test but does it encourage you or propel you to greater relationship with Father God by Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit?

We regularly talk about Matthew 22:37-40 along with John 13:35 because we genuinely believe that we were created for relationship.

 Relationship with God

 Relationship with others

How do we explain that with our simple mission here at MVC?

 Love God

 Love Others

 Serve God & Serve Others

This simple test should be applied to our mission as followers of Christ.

**Are the people in our lives, (those we listen to and pay attention to what they do) propelling us to grow in our love for Father God and others to the point where we are willing to selflessly serve them?**

Orrrrrrrrrrrrrrr............

**Are the people in our lives, (those we listen to and pay attention to what they do) propelling us to grow in our selfishness, superiority, and sinfulness.**

Are your influencers leading you to Jesus or to the world?

Are your influencers directing you to heaven or hell?

Your faith needs to be applied to eternal, everlasting truth.

You need to know the truth to know what is falsehood and counterfeit.