

Christian Roundtable Debate: What is a False Teacher?

In a roundtable discussion that lasted over four hours, several prominent Christian voices discussed a question that has followed the church since its inception: what constitutes a false teacher?

This is just one area of debate that took place between Justin Peters, leader of Justin Peters Ministries; Jim Osman, pastor of Kootenai Community Church; Michael Brown, host of the “Line of Fire” podcast; and Sam Storms, pastor emeritus of Bridgeway Church in Oklahoma City.

The group unanimously agreed that such individuals espouse teachings conflicting with core Christian beliefs, such as the divinity of Christ and salvation by faith.

However, things got a bit more strained when the topic of discussion focused on whether individuals who have previously erred in their teachings but repented could still be deemed false teachers. A considerable portion of the discussion revolved around Benny Hinn, known for his teachings on supernatural healings, the prosperity gospel and prophecy.

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The debate also focused on historical figures like Martin Luther, whose controversial writings raised questions about his classification as a false teacher. Brown highlighted Luther’s anti-Semitic writings were so radical that the Nazi’s used them in their propaganda campaign.

“He promoted things that undermine the gospel,” says Brown. “Many Jewish people think that Christianity is miserable and despicable because of Martin Luther ... there is at least from

our perspective ... a glaring double standard, an unequal weight measure and God hates unequal weights and measures.”

While Peters admitted he did not agree with Luther on all matters of theology, he refrained from labeling Luther a false teacher based on his gospel teachings.

“Judging from the teachings that he gave concerning the gospel, I can’t on the basis of that and the things that he taught in those regards, call him a false teacher,” Peters shares.

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Turning to modern Christian leaders, the discussion touched on IHOPKC founder Mike Bickle’s claims of supernatural experiences and Sid Roth’s ministry through his flagship program, It’s Supernatural.

“I believe that Mike Bickle has lied about a number of things. In fact, not the least of which he claims to have been to heaven at least twice. I don’t believe that,” says Osman.

Despite having wildly different views on certain aspects of Christianity, the four men presented themselves as positive models for Christians in their willingness to come together and communicate with one another in the search for biblical truth.

“Let’s try to work together, see the good, and we can have our biblical differences,” encourages Brown.

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