

Example: Religious Prophecies About Rodrigo Duterte

During Duterte's presidency (2016–2022), several religious leaders — both from charismatic Protestant groups and independent Catholic movements — publicly claimed that Duterte was **anointed or chosen by God** to lead the Philippines. Some went so far as to declare him a "David-like" or "Cyrus-type" figure — flawed, rough around the edges, but divinely appointed to cleanse the nation and usher in transformation.

What made this prophetic claim dangerous?

- **Some pastors and "prophets" publicly declared visions or dreams** in which Duterte was portrayed as a messianic figure. One prominent example: a pastor claimed God told him Duterte would bring about a "new order" and "God's justice" in the land — despite (or even because of) his unconventional, violent methods.
- Duterte's war on drugs, which led to thousands of extrajudicial killings, was often downplayed or ignored by these prophetic voices. Instead of calling for righteousness and mercy (Micah 6:8), some framed the killings as necessary for "God's plan."
- The message effectively **shifted loyalty away from Christ and the gospel** toward Duterte's leadership, with some believers treating criticism of Duterte as equivalent to rebellion against God's will.

In these circles, prophecy was not used to **call people to repentance, justice, and covenant faithfulness**, but to validate a political narrative and stir allegiance to a particular leader. This is precisely what Deuteronomy 13 warns against — **a prophet whose message, even if powerful or persuasive, leads people away from the character and commands of God** (Deut. 13:1–5).

Why this matters:

Much like the example in the U.S. with Trump, the Filipino case shows how religious language and prophetic claims can be **co-opted to sanctify political agendas**. When prophets stop being voices of truth and accountability — and instead become mouthpieces for political power — they are no longer serving God's people. They're serving something else.

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