

**BEWARE
FALSE
PROPHETS** & **BUILD
THE KING'S
COMMANDS**
MATTHEW 7:13-29

16: Beware False Prophets & Build on the King's Commands (Matthew 7:13-29)

According to what we hear at most funerals, the majority of people make it to heaven when they die. But that's not true, according to Jesus. In a world full of false teachings and false teachers, how can we KNOW that we KNOW Jesus? Today we discover His answer.

beourguest

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teachingnotes

Last week we ended our study with some difficult words from Jesus, words that many people seem to pay little attention to....words that should shake our souls.

The Narrow Gate Few Enter

Matthew 7:13-14 (NIV) Enter through the narrow gate. For **wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction**, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and **narrow the road that leads to life**, and only a few find it.

According to what we hear at funerals, most everyone goes to heaven. **When is the last time you attended a funeral when the person who died DIDN'T make it to heaven?** But if Jesus has it right, this is NOT the case. **Few enter the narrow gate...that leads to life.** Those who claim there are many ways to God are in disagreement with Jesus.

False Prophets & Bad Fruit

Matthew 7:15-16a (NIV) Watch out for **false prophets**. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are **ferocious wolves**. By their fruit you will recognize them.

False prophets are those who claim to speak for God, who pretend to be a part of the flock (**in sheep's clothing**), who are really **ferocious wolves**. Jesus says we can **recognize them...by their fruit**.

What FRUIT should we be inspecting? What a person SAYS and DOES. Jesus says it this way...

Matthew 7:16b-20 (NIV) Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, **by their fruit you will recognize them**.

- **Do their LIVES match what their LIPS say?** Are they teaching the right things & *are they practicing what they're preaching?*

2 Corinthians 11:13-15 (NIV) For such people are **false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading** as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for **Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light**. It is not surprising, then, if his servants also masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.

1 John 4:1 (NIV) Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but **test the spirits to see whether they are from God**, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

The Berean people who heard Paul teach, **tested what HE taught** to see if it lined up with the Scriptures (Acts 17:11).

Test what teachers say about God, Man, Sin, Jesus, & Judgment.

GOD is the **Creator & Lord over all. He is perfect - the standard of what is right**. False teachers attempt to dethrone God as the perfect Creator of all things and bring Him down to our level and subject to our laws.

☛ **Mormons** do this. Listen to the words of **Joseph Smith**, their founder, just 2 months before his death: "*God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted man, and sits enthroned in yonder heavens!*"¹ Is that what the Scriptures say? NOPE!

☛ **Kenneth Copeland** said: "*The Bible says [God] measured out the heavens with a nine-inch span. Well...my span is eight and three-quarter inches long. So God's span is a quarter of an inch longer than mine. So you see...God...stands somewhere around 6'2", 6'3", weighs somewhere in the neighborhood of a couple hundred pounds, little better.*"²

¹ <https://www.lds.org/ensign/1971/04/the-king-follett-sermon?lang=eng>

² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mPUCL5qDmkM>

MAN is:

- created in the image of God, with value.
- **Man is relational, creational, & eternal.**
- Yet mankind has also **sinned against God.**
- ➡ False teachers not only attempt to bring God down to man's level, but they **lift man up to God's level**. There is little focus on repentance (turning from sin & agreeing with God on what is right & wrong) & more focus on mankind's goodness and spiritual authority.
- **Word-faith teachers** like Kenneth Copeland, TD Jakes, Jesse Duplantis, Joyce Meyer, Paula White, & Joel Osteen claim that Christians have the ability to, LIKE GOD, to speak life & death into existence. We can **HARM** or **HELP** other people with our words. But these people twist the Scriptures (e.g. misquoting Rom. 4:17) and say things like this:
 - ☀ **Joel Osteen** "Your words become your reality...Words are like seeds. When you speak something out, you give life to what you're saying...Whether you realize it or not, you are prophesying your future."³ Osteen goes on to say, "James said in the Scripture, with our tongue we can bless our life or we can curse our life." Where did he get that from? The only place would have come from is James 3:9-10, and as you'll see, it is **NOT teaching us to bless our own lives with our words.**

James 3:9-10 (NIV) **With the tongue we praise** our Lord and Father, and with it **we curse** human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, **this should not be.**

What does the person teach about SIN?

SIN has separated us from relationship with God. We must turn from our sin and change our thinking to agree with what God says is right and wrong. Those who never talk about sin...instead calling sin '*mistakes*'...if they never talk about repenting of sin, it's FALSE TEACHING.

☀ **Andy Stanley** has now moved away from the Scripture to say those who participate in homosexual activity don't need to repent of this sin, as long as they marry one another. This is FALSE!

JESUS is **God-in-skin** (fully God & fully man), who came to live the perfect **life without sin & pay IN FULL the penalty for our sins**. Because of this, it is by God's grace that we are saved, and not by our good works (Eph. 2:8-9). False teachers add something to the cross, it's the **cross PLUS**. They either downplay the need for Jesus to die, claim He didn't pay for all our sin, or teach that Jesus broke the law of God to pay for us.

- **Mormons** teach that it is by grace **AFTER ALL YOU CAN DO**.⁴ Jesus didn't pay it all. (And Jesus is just one of many deities - our spirit brother & the brother of Lucifer)
- **Jehovah's witnesses** deny that Jesus is God. They teach that the Trinity is a doctrine of the devil. They don't believe that Jesus physically rose from the dead, nor should He ever be worshipped. According to them, Jesus originally created by Jehovah as the archangel, Michael.
- **Word-Faith teachers** claim that Jesus had to make a deal with the devil and suffer in hell to pay for our sin - which is NEVER taught in the Scriptures. Jesus is God the Son who paid for our debt - **ON THE CROSS!**

JUDGMENT is coming.

- **Following Jesus = Eternal Life.**
- **Refusing Jesus = Eternal Punishment.** False teachers often claim that God will forgive everyone (e.g. Rob Bell)

If Jesus is right, then many who think they will enter the kingdom of heaven **WON'T**.

Matthew 7:21 (NIV) Not everyone who says to me, (Lord, Lord,) will enter the kingdom of heaven, but **only the one who does the will of my Father** who is in heaven.

The doubling of "Lord, Lord" is amplifying the claim that Jesus is **Lord** over your life, **your ultimate AUTHORITY**. To proclaim "Jesus is Lord" with your lips but not with your life is like saying: 1) I respect you...2) I trust you as the Ultimate Authority in my life BUT.... *I refuse to DO what you SAY.*"

- ➡ THIS is a clarifying characteristic of those who will **enter the kingdom of heaven** - It's **only the one who does the will of the Father** - those who actually obey what God says.

BIG TRUTH: Trusting Jesus as LORD [means we] pledge allegiance & practice obedience.

Allegiance without obedience is just talk. **Don't call Jesus "Lord" if you don't obey His word**, because you're fooling yourself and confusing others.

³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GA6uE2CPo1I>

⁴ The Book of Mormon, 2 Nephi 25:23.

Think of *the audacity* of one of your Bible teachers saying what Jesus is about to say...

Matthew 7:22-23 (NIV) **Many will say to Me** on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

Jesus is claiming to be the ONE who judges false followers who claim He is their **Lord**, and send them **away** for eternity. And just look at the FRUIT these people offer to prove their legitimate relationship with God. But regardless of their spiritual resumé, Jesus calls these people are **evildoers**, because they aren't obedient to God.

Where is Jesus sending them away to? Matthew later records what Jesus says about this.

Matthew 25:31-34, 41 (NIV) When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. **All the nations will be gathered before him**, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. "Then the King will say to those on his right, '**Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world.**' [v41] Then he will say to those on his left, '**Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.**'

❓ Do you think Jesus believes in an eternal place of punishment we typically call HELL? Yep.

Summarizing the Sermon on the Mount

Matthew 7:24-27 (NIV) Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and **puts them into practice** is like a **wise man** who built his house on the rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because **it had its foundation on the rock**. But everyone who hears these words of mine and **does not put them into practice** is like a **foolish man** who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

1. **They both built houses.** One took the time to dig deep to find a foundational stone to build on; The other didn't worry about all that extra work and quickly started to construct his house.
 2. **A flood came to both houses.**
 - Some say this is referring to **tough times** that come to all people.
 - Others say that Jesus is pointing to what will happen on **Judgment Day**.
 - Whether both are intended, certainly both are true. All people WILL go through tough times. Followers of Jesus are NOT immune to difficulties. And bigger than that...ALL people WILL face judgment one day.
 3. **One house stood & the other collapsed.** What made the difference? Whether or not they built their houses (representing their lives) on the words of Jesus or not.
- 👉 **Can you imagine ME or some other pastor or teacher talking like THIS?** Jesus was not just another Rabbi pointing to the words of a former rabbi. Jesus speaks of people BUILDING THEIR LIVES on His Words!

BIG TRUTH: Trusting Jesus as LORD [means we] pledge allegiance & practice obedience.

🔍 If judgment were to happen TODAY for you...would your LIFE STAND...or COLLAPSE? Are you building your LIFE on the words of Jesus or not?

Do you Pledge Allegiance & Practice Obedience? Or are you just FOOLING yourself & CONFUSING others?

Matthew 7:28-29 (NIV) When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because **he taught as one who had authority**, and not as their teachers of the law.

Beware False Prophets & Build on the King's Commands.

❓ **Is Jesus Your King?** Have you surrendered to Him? Do you walk in obedience to Him?

❓ Are you studying Scripture on your own? Are you involved in a GROUP and have some solid Bible teachers that you can ask difficult questions? PLUG IN on Sundays or Wednesdays!

heretoserveyou

Have questions and need some help? ...real soon...how about now? Please **call** or **text** us soon!

* Contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Christy** (850-673-9764), **Caleb** (864-315-8015), or another follower of Jesus soon!

* Or call our **deacons & wives**: Alan & Christy Androski (850-464-1428), Steve & Debbie Bass (850-673-7952), Freddy & Joyce Howard (850-973-0047), Tim & Joni Hughey (850-464-1156), Mark & Dot Mancil (850-253-5405), Boss & Amelia Mulkey (850-464-6717), or Tom & Martha Waddail (850-973-0011).

discussion questions

Take some time to discuss these questions with your family, friends, or group.

1. What challenged or encouraged you most from today's teaching? You might need to look back in your notes to help explain your answer.
2. **Read Matthew 7:15-20 and 2 Corinthians 11:13-15.** Why are false teachers so dangerous? How can examining what people teach & if they practice what they preach, help protect us from being sucked into false teaching?
3. Were there any false teachings/teachers that surprised you from today's teaching? How might you gently approach and help someone who is listening to false teachers?
4. **Read Acts 17:11.** Why didn't Paul get upset about these people daring to question what he taught? Why should we follow the example of the Bereans? What might that look like in our current culture?
5. **Read Matthew 7:21-27.** What is the problem with calling Jesus 'Lord' and not obey what He says? Explain how the illustration of the foundation of houses & a flood demonstrate the ultimate outcome of calling Him 'Lord' and obeying what He says.
6. You might have heard that a person who prays, "Jesus save me" is 'saved', but what would you say to the person who **Pledges Allegiance** but refuses to **Practice Obedience**? Why is it important to know where Jesus talks about these issues in the Scriptures? Can you share about a time when YOU were confronted with what the Scripture said and you bent your belief to fit what the Bible said? How might sharing a story like that help you to gently correct a brother/sister who needs to change their views based on what the Scripture says?
7. Read this: "**Obedience doesn't save me, but obedience demonstrates that I am saved.**" Explain why you agree or disagree with this statement.
8. **Read Matthew 7:21-23 & 25:31-34, 41.** Where is Jesus saying he has the authority to send those who don't obey God? What would YOU say to a person who says a loving God wouldn't send someone to hell for eternity?
9. Share prayer needs and pray for one another.