

Matthew 7:13-23
Kingdom Distinctions

Matthew 7:13-23 – *“Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few. Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'”*

In the kingdom of God there is a clear distinction between those who are kingdom citizens and those who are not.

Romans 3:10-12 – *“... as it is written: “None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God.”*

John 10:9 – *“I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.”*

John 14:6 – *“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*

I. The 2 Paths (vv. 13-14)

A. One is wide and Easy.

Proverbs 14:12 – *“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.”*

B. One is narrow and the way is hard.

Matthew 5:12 – *“Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”*

Q: Which path are you on?

II. The 2 Types of Trees (vv. 15-20)

A. One is diseased and produces bad fruit.

James 2:19 – *“You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder!”*

B. One is healthy and produces good fruit.

Jeremiah 17:7-8 – *“Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.”*

John 15:5 – *“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”*

John 15:16 – *“You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you.”*

Daniel Doriani – *“If we have taken his road, if we belong to him, we will bear some good fruit and he will forgive the bad”*

Q: What does your fruit look like?

3. The 2 Expectations (vv. 21-23)

A. One does not do the will of the Father, yet still expects the kingdom.

B. One does the will of the Father, and can surely expect the kingdom.

Proverbs 30:12 – *“There are those who are clean in their own eyes, but are not washed of their filth.”*

Acts 19:11-20 – *“And God was doing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons that had touched his skin were carried away to the sick, and their diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them. Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims.” Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. But the evil spirit answered them, “Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?” And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this became known to all the residents of Ephesus, both Jews and Greeks. And fear fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled. Also many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices. And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver. So the word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily.”*

J.C. Ryle – “Obedience is the only reality. It is faith visible, faith acting, and faith manifest. It is the test of real discipleship among the Lord's people.”

A.W. Tozer – “The Bible recognizes no faith that does not lead to obedience, nor does it recognize any obedience that does not spring from faith. The two are at opposite sides of the same coin.

Q1: What is your expectation and is it in line with Jesus' teaching?

Q2: Will you stand before the Lord clothed in Christ's Righteousness or will He say in that day, “Depart from me I never knew you”?

Response:

Q1: Have you placed your faith and trust in Jesus Christ or are you living a lie?

- *Repent and believe!*

Q2: Is there fruit in your life today that is a result of the Holy Spirit's work in you?

- *Surrender and Obey!*