



# **SERMON** ON THE **MOUNT**

**“Beware of False Prophets  
and False Professors”  
Matthew 7:15-23**

**<sup>15</sup>“Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. <sup>16</sup>You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup>Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup>A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup>Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup>So then, you will know them by their fruits.**

**Matthew 7:15-23**

**<sup>21</sup>“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. <sup>22</sup>Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, in Your name did we not prophesy, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name do many miracles?’ <sup>23</sup>And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.’**

**Matthew 7:15-23**

## **Introduction**

**A. In Matthew 7:13-14 we learned that there is only one way into the kingdom of heaven and His name is Jesus. No one drifts into the kingdom without having to make a personal decision concerning Jesus Christ.**

**B. Today we learn that there are false prophets who are deceiving others and false professors who are deceiving themselves about salvation.**

## **Introduction**

**C. Big Idea: Beware of false prophets and false professors.**

## **I. Beware of False Prophets (7:15-20)**

**<sup>15</sup>“Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. <sup>16</sup>You will know them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup>Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup>A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup>Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup>So then, you will know them by their fruits. - Matthew 7:15-20**

## **I. Beware of False Prophets (7:15-20)**

**A. Jesus is warning us that not everyone who claims to belong to God and to speak for Him actually does so.**

**B. “When we stand at the crossroads of decision, we should remember that the true way to God is narrow and that the false way is broad; the true way is difficult and demanding, and the false way is easy and permissive”  
(John MacArthur).**

## **I. Beware of False Prophets (7:15-20)**

**C. False prophets claimed to speak for God but did not. False prophets lead people down the broad road.**

**D. There are three realities to remember: (1) truth matters and can be known; (2) what you believe can send you to hell; and (3) false prophets exist today.**

## **I. Beware of False Prophets (7:15-20)**

**E. False prophets are deceptive (“who come to you in sheep’s clothing”). They are subtle. Hard to detect, especially at first.**

**F. “The false prophet is a man who comes to us, and who at first has the appearance of being everything that could be desired. He is nice and pleasing and pleasant; he appears to be thoroughly Christian, and seems to say the right things” (Martyn Lloyd-Jones).**

## **I. Beware of False Prophets (7:15-20)**

**G. The false prophet is often known more by what he does NOT say than by what he says.**

**H. “The false prophet is a man who has no ‘strait gate’ or ‘narrow way’ in his gospel. He has nothing which is offensive to the natural man; he pleases all. He is in ‘sheep’s clothing,’ so attractive, so pleasant, so nice to look at. He has such a nice and comfortable and comforting message” (Martyn Lloyd-Jones).**

## **I. Beware of False Prophets (7:15-20)**

**I. False prophets are also dangerous (“but inwardly are ravenous wolves”). They teach destructive heresies. (Acts 20:28-30; 2 Peter 2:1)**

**J. 7:16-20. We are to identify false prophets “by their fruits.” What are “their fruits”? Not worldly success.**

## **I. Beware of False Prophets (7:15-20)**

**K. Three things can help you identify “their fruits.” (1) What do they teach? (2) How do they live? (3) What are their followers like?**

**L. What do they teach? They’re deceptive and dangerous oftentimes because of what they do NOT teach. They teach Jesus is not the only way to the Father. They don’t preach on holiness, wrath, judgment, or man’s depravity.**

## **I. Beware of False Prophets (7:15-20)**

**M. They don’t preach on sin (Robert Schuller, Joel Osteen) or penal substitutionary atonement.**

**N. They deny that Jesus is God in the flesh (John 1:1-3, 14; 1 John 4:1-3).**

**O. They deny the bodily resurrection of Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:13-14, 16, 20).**

## **I. Beware of False Prophets (7:15-20)**

**Q. Who denies that Jesus is God? (Bill Johnson, Paula White-Cain)**

**R. Who denies the bodily resurrection of Jesus? (Martin Luther King Jr., N. T. Wright)**

**S. Who denies they are a sinner in need of repentance? (Todd White, Wesleyans and Nazarenes teach the doctrine of entire sanctification)**

## **I. Beware of False Prophets (7:15-20)**

**T. How do they live? (Todd Bentley, Ravi Zacharias, Steven Lawson)**

**U. What are their followers like? Are they growing in godliness? Are they living under the lordship of Jesus Christ?**

**V. Jesus says: "So then, you will know them by their fruits."(7:20)**

## **II. Beware of False Professors (7:21-23)**

**<sup>21</sup>“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. <sup>22</sup>Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, in Your name did we not prophesy, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name do many miracles?’ <sup>23</sup>And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’**

**Matthew 7:21-23**

## **II. Beware of False Professors (7:21-23)**

**A. The number of people who say they are in the kingdom of heaven is larger than the number who actually are in the kingdom of heaven.**

**B. Self-deception is real. “Many” will make a false profession.**

**C. The people Jesus is addressing didn’t just say things. They had actually done things.**

## **II. Beware of False Professors (7:21-23)**

**D. Their profession was passionate, orthodox, public, and powerful. Jesus didn't deny their claims. He denied them. "I never knew you."**

## **II. Beware of False Professors (7:21-23)**

### **E. Important clarifications**

- (1) Confession of Jesus as Lord is essential to salvation (Romans 10:9).**
- (2) Not everyone who says "Lord, Lord" will be saved.**
- (3) Religious works won't save you.**
- (4) Remarkable works won't save you. (7:23)**

## **II. Beware of False Professors (7:21-23)**

**F. Salvation is not based on your works. They did good works. They were talking about how righteous they were because of their good works.**

**G. They didn't recognize their spiritual bankruptcy before the Lord. (Matthew 5:3)**

## **II. Beware of False Professors (7:21-23)**

**H. The broad road is full of religious people. Entering the kingdom of heaven requires more than a verbal profession.**

**I. The confession of Jesus as Lord is essential to salvation, but that profession will be demonstrated by a transformed life.**

## **Conclusion**

**A. Beware of false prophets.**

**B. Beware of false professors.**

**C. “And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’” (7:23)**

**D. What do your fruits reveal about you?**

**1. The Sword & the Trowel podcast**

<https://founders.org/the-sword-the-trowel/>

**2. The Briefing podcast by Albert Mohler**

<https://albertmohler.com/the-briefing/>

**3. Apologia Studios podcast**

<https://apologiastudios.com>

**4. Bible Study with Brother Luke**

<https://www.youtube.com/@lukejosiah2025>

**The gospel is the good news that the just and gracious God of the universe looked upon hopelessly sinful people and sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, God in human flesh, to bear His wrath against sin on the cross and to show His power over sin in the resurrection so that everyone who turns from their sin (repentance) and believes in Him (faith) will be reconciled to God forever.**