

Matthew 7
Part 2 (15-29)
Be doers of the Word

- VI. Beware of false prophets. (15-20)
- A. False prophets have been a hindrance to the truth from the beginning. (cf. Gen 3:1-5; Deut 13:1-5; Jer 23:9-32; 2 Pet 2:1; 1 Jn 4:1-3; Rev 2:20)
1. “False prophet” means one who claims to speak with God’s authority, but really speaks lies. (cf Ezk 13:1-6)
 2. “Beware” means to give heed. (cf 6:1; Acts 5:35)
 3. When “beware” + “of” is used, it means to be on guard against. (cf 10:17; 16:6, 11,12)
 4. The popularity of false prophets lies in the fact that they offer an “easier” way. (cf Jer 6:14)
- B. False prophets appear harmless, but inwardly they are very destructive. (15)
1. “Sheep’s clothing” means appearing to be harmless, which may also include such things as a pleasant personality, usually outwardly pleasant to look at, with an apparent concern for the spiritual well being of others.
 2. “Ravaging” means greedy and savage. (cf Gen 49:27; also used for extortioners: Lk 18:11; 1 Cor 5:10; 6:10)
 3. Like savage wolves, false prophets advance their own interests at the expense of other souls. (cf Acts 20:29, 30)
- C. The true nature of false prophets is known by what they do. (16)
1. “Fruit” means results, outcome and product from our lives. (cf Jn 15:5, 8, 16; Phil 1:11)
 2. The lives people live reveal their true character. (cf 3:8; 12:33-37; Lk 6:46)
- D. The lesson from natural fruit illustrates the impossibility of falsely living a life of true discipleship. (17, 18)
1. Fruit is produced consistent to the tree. (cf Gen 1:11)
 2. Good quality fruit cannot come from poor quality trees.
 3. “Good” means properly functioning.
 4. “Corrupt” means a tree which is decaying, unhealthy. (cf 12:33; 13:48)
 5. “Evil” means bad or worthless.
- E. No worthless tree is allowed to continue to produce it’s worthless fruit. (19, 20)
1. The lesson is real to life. (cf Lk 13:6-10; Jn 15:1-6)
 2. The fate of each tree is determined by its productivity.
 3. “Fire” though literal, must show us the eternal damnation awaiting all who are not productive in God’s vineyard. (cf 5:22; 18:8, 9; 25:41)
- Note: We judge a tree by the fruit produced. This same judgement must be made to those who are false prophets to determine the acceptance or the rejection of them and their teaching.
- VII. Final judgement will be based on God’s will. (21-23)
- A. Confessing Jesus as Lord is not the standard at judgement. (21)
1. “Not every one” shows that some will be deceived into thinking that profession can replace doing His will.
 2. “Lord” can be used as a polite form of address, (cf 13:27; 25:20) but here it is recognition of divine authority.
 3. “Lord, Lord” is not some magical formula to be saved.

4. "Kingdom of heaven" means the ultimate kingdom in eternity (cf 25:34)
 - B. Doing, not saying, is what matters to God. (cf Heb 5:9)
 1. Mere acknowledgement means nothing in God's eyes, His will must be done.
 2. "My Father" is the first time Jesus uses this term for God.
 3. In this we should see two things:
 - a. First, Jesus claims divinity for Himself.
 - b. Second, it is a personal relationship.
 - C. Doing good is God's standard at judgement. (22)
 1. "In that day" is the judgement day. (cf 24:36; Lk 10:12)
 2. "Prophesied" means to speak by God's authority. (Forth-telling as well as foretelling.)
 3. "Cast out devils," means the expelling of wicked spiritual beings.
 4. "Many wonderful works" refers to the miracles which were performed. (cf 11:20-23; Acts 1:8)
 - D. Question: Did these disciples actually do miraculous works?
 1. Consider the options we have in this case.
 - a. They may have been tricksters who deceived others into thinking that they did miracles.(cf Ex 8:18, 19; Acts 19:13-16; 2 Thess 2:9,10)
 - b. They may have done these things in the past as faithful disciples, but since have become unfaithful.
 - c. They may have been deceived into thinking they could truly exercise such power. (cf 24:24; 2 Tim 3:13; Titus 3:3)
 - d. They may have been with true miracle working disciples in the past and were thinking that the righteousness was transferable.
 2. The best option may be that they could not really do any miracles, but were deceived into thinking that the doing of good could replace the way of obedience.
 - a. Notice Jesus said, "I never knew you".
 - b. This deception may have come from tricks of others, but these did not love the truth. (cf 2 Thess 2:10)
 - c. Some may say "but Jesus did not deny their claims".
 - d. Some words are not worthy of attention. (cf Acts 1:6ff)
 - E. Failure to do God's will is to be a worker of iniquity. (23)
 1. "Know" means to approve or acknowledge. (cf Jn 10:14; 1 Cor 8:3; Gal 4:9; 2 Tim 2:19)
 2. Eternal departure from the presence of God is the worst of all punishments. (cf 25:46; Lk 13:27, 28)
- VIII. He likens our doing, or not doing, to different kinds of builders. (24-27)
- A. The wise builder does the will of God. (24, 25)
 1. He is a "wise man" because he applies what he hears to life. (Wise men still seek Him!)
 2. "Rock" means the most solid foundation possible.
 3. "Rain" means torrential downpour, not an ordinary rain.
 - B. The foolish man does not do the will of God. (26, 27)
 1. This man knows, but does not do. (cf 1 Sam 15:1ff; Jas 4:17)
 2. "Foolish" means stupid or without foresight.
 3. This builder may not have chosen sand deliberately, but even this shows dangerous carelessness.
 4. Hearing God's word and not doing it is dangerous living.

- IX. The reaction to this sermon. (28, 29)
- A. Jesus' teaching had an affect on the people. (28)
1. "Astonished" possibly refers to both astonishment and shock.
 2. Are we astonished at the words of Jesus?
- B. The objects of their astonishment:
1. His doctrine, which means His teachings or instructions. (cf Mk 4:2; 12:38; 1 Cor 14:6; 2 Tim 4:2)
 2. His authority, which was unique, because He alone knew the Fathers will. (cf 11:27; Lk 10:22; Jn 3:35)
- C. Jesus was different from their regular teachers. (29)
1. "Scribes" were experts in the Jewish law, considered by some to be scholars. (cf 1 Cor 1:20)
 2. There were some very serious differences between the teachers they were used to and Jesus:
 - a. Jesus spoke the truth, (cf Jn 14:6; 18:37) they used false and evasive reasoning. (cf 21:25, 27)
 - b. Jesus taught on significant matters; life, death and eternity. They often wasted time on trivial matters. (cf 23:23; Lk 11:42)
 - c. Jesus excited curiosity by making generous use of illustrations (cf 5:13-16; 6:26-30; 7:24-27), their speeches were often dry.
 - d. Jesus spoke from the heart and mind of the Father, (cf Jn 8:26) they tried drawing water from broken cisterns (cf Jer 2:13)

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