



Mt Sermon Series: Part 36: Decide Between: Two Teachers, Matthew 7:15-20
Kent Vincent ~ November 5, 2017

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

Intro: From here to the end of this great sermon, one great message: *Enter the strait gate and walk the narrow way.*

- A. Two dangers: How to discern, recognize and deal with both.
- B. He reminds us of the fact of judgment and its character.

First Danger: False Prophets- Interpretations:

- A. False teaching/heresy- However, this is usually easy to discern.
- B. Hypocritical life- Says, but does not do, all the right things. Also easy to spot.
- C. Both- teaching and life always go together. II Peter 2:1-3- *Subtlety*

I. What does False Prophet teach? Falseness of teaching detected by what he does not say, no offense to natural man, so he pleases all. Very subtle. Comfortable message, speaks well of and praises Jesus. However, he will not allow the cross to offend.

II. What does False Prophet not teach? Anything difficult, challenging or offensive.

- A. **Doctrine-** Always generally and vaguely, never down to specifics of doctrine. Only teaches about one aspect of God- His love. He is like a 'ravening wolf' because he never confronts men with truth, holiness, righteousness, justice and the wrath of God.
- B. The **Final Judgment-** the eternal destiny of the lost. Avoids holiness, righteousness, justice and wrath of God.
- C. **Sin-** Exceeding sinfulness of man. Inability of man to earn salvation. He will not say 'all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God' or that man 'is dead in trespasses and sins'. *Problem:* those in the pew *assume* the False Prophet believes these basic things, but he does not.

- D. **Payment for our sin** by Christ on the cross. Will talk about Jesus and cross. *Vital question or test:* Does the teacher believe and teach not only that Jesus died on the cross because of God's love, but that **Jesus had to** die because it was the only way to bear the guilt of and pay for our sins, because it was the only way to satisfy God's perfect justice. Romans 3:25-26.
- E. **Repentance.** 'You don't need to feel sorry for sin, just *decide for Christ* and rush in with the crowd.'
- F. **Strait gate and narrow way.** If only listen without practicing, that is not entering. He does not talk about I John 2:15-16.
- G. **Self-examination.** He does not encourage believers to examine themselves, just '*look to Jesus*'. He ignores the problem of evil because that is too uncomfortable.

III. So What?

- A. **To All: Listen Carefully:** It may feel good, but if it does not challenge or convict, it may be false teaching from a ravenous wolf in sheep's clothing.
- B. **To Believers: Don't Unwittingly Do the Same in Your Witness-** '*All you have to do is accept Jesus into your heart!*' is neither the whole biblical truth nor loving.

Please remember:

Romans 8:5-8 Those that continue to live in the flesh '*cannot please God.*'

James 2:19 Believing in God is not enough. '*the demons also believe, and tremble.*'

II Corinthians 5:17 *if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.*

John 3:3 "*Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.*"
Jesus

Galatians 5:22 *those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.*

I John 2:4 *The one who says, 'I have come to know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*

James 2:17 *faith by itself, if it does not result in works, is dead.*

Romans 6:1-2 *How shall we who died to sin still live in it?*

- C. **To the Uncertain:** II Corinthians 13:5 *examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith.*

When? Why Not Today?