



Mt Sermon Series: Part 37: Decide Between: Two Trees, Matthew 7:15-20  
Kent Vincent ~ December 3, 2017

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

'False Prophets' include both those who teach heresy and those who live hypocritical lives. Last month: their heresy. This month: their lives.

**KEY PRINCIPLE #1:** A tree can look fine on the outside, yet still bear bad fruit. The problem is inside. Likewise, **it is not primarily our outward appearance that is important in our walk with God; rather, it is our foundational character, whether we have truly become a 'new creation' and bear 'good fruit'.**

**KEY PRINCIPLE #2:** To become a Christ-follower means a real change in nature and life.

**KEY PRINCIPLE #3:** Nature always expresses itself. Whatever is in the heart of a person is certain to come out.

**THE MOST IMPORTANT QUESTION:** Does one have the 'divine nature'?

|| Peter 1 'believer'

versus

|| Peter 2 'knower'.

### **General Tests:**

*Is the person living that sort of life merely because of temperament or personality?*

*Does this person simply adhere to a certain moral standard or code?*

### **Specific Tests:**

**The negative test** of refusal to believe essential doctrines, how the holiness of God makes his righteousness nothing but filthy rags. This leads to failure to walk the narrow path, instead conforming to the world, an outlook and attitude of such a person will be worldly, secular, not truly spiritually.

**The positive test** is to look for that character of Christ, also known as the 'fruit test'.

*The Beatitudes Matthew 5:*

She will recognize her spiritual poverty and will mourn for her sin,  
he will be meek,  
she will hunger and thirst after righteousness,  
he will be merciful,  
she will be a peacemaker and pure in heart, and,  
he will rejoice in persecution for righteousness sake.

*The Fruit of the Spirit of Galatians 5:* He will exhibit consistent love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, meekness, goodness, temperance and faith.

**The ultimate test: HUMILITY.**