

Title: True or False

Text: Matthew 7:15-29

Will you open your Bibles, please, to the Gospel of Matthew chapter 7. Today, we conclude our study of the Sermon on the Mount.

I was <sup>reading</sup> given the results of a Gallup Poll Survey. And in this survey it said that only 42% of the thousands of people <sup>surveyed</sup> surveyed knew that it was Jesus who preached the SERMON ON THE MOUNT. Only 42%...Sad...

Dear friends, for the passed six weeks, we have been studying the SERMON ON THE MOUNT. And I trust by now that you know that it was Jesus who preached this tremendous sermon. These are the words of our Lord and Savior. They are not my words. And today we come to the concluding verses of this wonderful sermon on the subject: TRUE OR FALSE.

(Read Matthew 7:15-29)

{Prayer}

Our Father in heaven we recognize, today, that the Spirit of the living God is the one who must speak to our heart. You must show us, Lord, our need. And we must recognize when God speaks to us it is time to act. May we not quench or resist or grieve the Holy Spirit of God. Our Father, we pray, that you would use your word and cause it to penetrate our minds and change our behavior. That we might know the message that you would have for us. Father, you have told us that all things are being worked out to your own confidence and will. You have brought us here today to say something to us. I pray that you would help us to understand what that is. That we might make those decisions in our life that we know You want us to make. For we ask it in Jesus name and for His sake. AMEN....

There couldn't be a better conclusion to the Sermon on the Mount than these verses.

Now, please remember that the theme of this great sermon by Jesus is RIGHTEOUSNESS. That is God's kind, not man's kind. God's righteousness is not a standard by which we govern our life. *IT IS NOT something we use to judge our lives against someone else*  
But, *rather* it is a gift. It is something that God gives to us. And we receive the gift of God's righteousness the moment we ask Jesus to come into our heart.

Now, after discussing God's kind of righteousness, Jesus once again shows us how it will be seen in daily life. Jesus points out those who have *God's* righteousness and those who do not. THE TRUE VERSUS THE FALSE. The real Christians and the one's who are fakes. And he points out that some folks have an ability to *appear* to be a part of God's righteousness, but in reality they don't have it at all.

So, Jesus is dealing, here, with appearances. Saying one thing, yet, in appearance being something entirely different.

*How*  
~~O.K.~~ I would like to divide this passage into three simple parts.

1. Vs 15-20. Jesus talks about "FALSE PROPHETS."
2. Vs 21-23...Jesus talks about "FALSE PROFESSIONS."
3. Vs 24-27..Jesus talks about "FALSE PRACTICE."

Now, please remember that the emphases in these verses is upon "DOING"...YOUR DAILY WALK...O.K. Let's look at each section.

(1 )In the first section, Vs 15-20, Jesus is dealing with "FALSE PROPHETS." That is, people who proclaim the message of God, but in truth they are a false prophets.

In the Bible, there are two kinds of prophets. There are those who are predicting the future. And, secondly, there are those who are simple "telling it as it is."

Many of the so called prophets of the Bible just "told it as it was." They cried out against the sins of the people. They encouraged the people to repent and to turn to God. They were just preaching the message of the day. Telling it like it was.

And yet, often times a prophet *Jesus* would declare things which will take place in the future. The N.T. says that Christians in the Body of Christ can prophecy...And the meaning is "to proclaim the truth"...not....predicting the future. So, I am a N.T. prophet in terms of proclaiming or telling the message of the gospel. *like it is.*

So, what is a false prophet or <sup>False</sup> preacher? I would like to share two things here which I believe are very <sup>n</sup>very important. Especially in the light of our day when we hear so many confusing voices. Who is speaking the truth? And how do we know? Two things.....

(1) First of all, to see their deception you must understand several key phrases.

In Vs 15, it says "Beward of false prphets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves."

The word "ravening:" means "to seize" or "to grasp away quickly." For example: this word is used in I Thess. 4:17 where it says that all Christians at the cming of Christ will "be caught up together to Meet the LOrd in the air." In other words, the Lord will violently seize out of this world, Christians to meet him in the air.

*It is the Greek word Rapto*

The word "revening" is the same word "caught up," in I thess. 4:17. In other words, these men, these false prophets, even though they are in sheep's clothing..meaning they look alright...yet, they are like wolves who are so sinky they will "sieve you away" <sup>F</sup>from the truth of the Lord. If it is truth, they will <sup>try to</sup>remove it from your heart.

And I <sup>want</sup> to say to you, today, that false prophets are in abundance. People who will sieze away the truth of God that you posses as quickly as possible. People who will come in sheep's clothing....People who have the great ability to even talk in God's terms, but they seize away *God's word from your Heart*

Now, the Apostle Paul said that one of the basic responsibilities of all Pastors and <sup>leaders</sup>teachers was to warn the flock that wolvs could come in and take away that which they had.

*Brain - Christ*

It is my constant pray that there may never come a day in the history and life of First Baptist Church that we will ever preach or teach anything contrary to the Word of God. But, I want you all to be aware of this one fact that you are living in a world that is constantly seeking to take away that which we believe.

Now, there is another interesting thing in Vs 16 which I would like to point out to you. Jesus said, "that you know them by their fruits." You will know a false prophet or a true pprophet by their fruits. <sup>Jesus</sup> said "do men gather grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles?" And of course the answer is...NO!..And the point is that we can know a false prophet from a true prophet. And the way you do that is by their fruit.

And Jesus illustrates in verses 17 and 18 by trees. He said that there are good trees and there are bad trees. And they produce fruit after their kind.

Now, here is the point. You cannot tell the difference in the trees. You can only tell the difference in the fruit. A good tree and a bad tree look alike. But, the fruit will eventually tell the difference.

Dwight Moody, the great evangelist, was walking down the street <sup>one</sup> on day with the Chairmen of the Board of Deacons. As they walked they saw a drunk staggering towards them. And the deacon said to Pastor Moody: "Isn't that one of your converts." And Moody replied: "He must be. He certainly isn't the Lord's." You will know them by their fruit.

(2) Now, secondly, how do I know whether I am listening to a false prophet? How do I know that someone is in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are pulling away that which has been sown in my heart by the H.S. HOW DO I KNOW THAT?

ANSWER: Let me give you just one example from the N.T. Turn to the book of I John. Turn to I John chapter 4. Chapter 4 tells us how to know a false prophet...I John chapter 4... I John chapter 4 and notice verse 1-3.....(Read 4:1-3a)

This is a very clear sign. In our world there are very few who believe that God has become man. A false prophet does not believe that God has invaded human life. They don't accept the fact that Jesus is God.

And I say to you this morning, and I hope you will never forget it, if we get to the point where we do not believe that Jesus is God, there is no salvation for any of us. Let us close the doors of this church...let us go home and never come back.

Dear friends, the whole message of the gospel is that Jesus is God, incarnate in human flesh. God has come into the world in human flesh...WHY?..To die on a cross for the sins of the whole world. Only God could have done that. Only God could have paid for <sup>our</sup> ~~my~~ sins over 2000 years ago. And I hope you will never forget that fact. False prophets will water down the fact that God has come in human flesh in the person of Jesus Christ. OH, how we need to be aware of false prophets.

(2) Secondly, Jesus deals with false profession. We find this in verses 21-23.

Apparently some people can profess faith in Jesus Christ and yet it is not real. Jesus said in Vs 21: "Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven."

Now, that is something right there. Do you know <sup>what</sup> the problem <sup>is</sup> in calling Jesus "LORD"? It demands "obedience." Lordship demands obedience.

But, there are some people, it seems, who can go so far as to profess Jesus as Lord. But, Jesus said that not every one who professed me as Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven. But only the one who is doing or practicing as a habit of life the will of my Father who is in heaven.

In fact, Jesus said that in the last day, <sup>people will say</sup> "I look at all the wonderful things we did, Jesus." And He will say, "Depart from me for I never knew you." <sup>Wow!</sup>

I was very fascinated by this passage. Often times we heard this little statement: "that sincerity is the thing that counts."...."As long as we are sincere, that is all that counts."

What we mean by that is this: "the moment that I ask Christ to come into my heart, if I am sincere, then he comes in.".....

Well, there is some truth in that. But let me give you an illustration. In Vietnam I was with Charlie company, 1/12 Infantry. The company was moving through the jungle on a search and destroy mission when <sup>we</sup> they came under enemy fire. The company formed into a defensive primary. And in the confusion one of the men took a backward position and started firing upon his own buddies....You see, in the confusion he got turned around. And this could have caused serious problems. Now, that boy was absolutely sincere. But he was sincerely wrong.....

What Jesus is trying to say, here, there are many who will say "Lord, look at ~~the~~ what ~~we~~ have done."

The point of Jesus' sermon is righteousness. And if you are one of the people who are pleading with God and saying, "Look God at what I have done." Then you are like the Scribes and Pharisees. You have self-righteousness. You don't have God's kind. No matter how sincere you are. "Lord, Lord, I have done wonderful works in your name. I have done all of this. I have done..done..done.. I,....I....I...." It is self-righteousness. And the whole plan of the Gospel of Christ is that God doesn't accept us on the bases of what we do or do not do. We cannot earn our way to heaven. And Jesus is trying to tell us that fact.

So, how do I go to heaven? I must believe in Jesus Christ. Completely trust myself in what He has done for me. God gives me His righteousness. No matter what I have done....Sincerity and profession is not automatically going to bring me salvation. I serve God because He has saved me and He loves me.

The Question Is..WHAT ARE WE TRUSTING? Are we trusting our ability to earn our salvation? Are we trusting our good life? Or, are we trusting Jesus?

Jesus says, here, in Vs 23, "I will declare to them, I never knew you." There are two words for "knowledge" in the N.T. One is the knowledge by fact. And the other is "knowledge by experience." Of course Jesus knows all of us by knowledge of fact. He knows what is in us. He knows the believers and He knows the non-believers. But the word used here is a full mature knowledge by experience.

The point being: there has been no personal experience with Christ. There has been no personal relationship. And Jesus will say, "Oh, I know you by fact. But, I never knew you by personal experience. I never had a personal relationship with you." But, Lord, we did so many things for you...."I know, but I never knew you by personal experience."

Then He will say, "Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness." *Sad*

Now, what is Jesus saying in Vs 23 when He says, "Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness?" What is the point of that verse?

Do you know what happens when God's righteousness is really working in your heart? Your life is like Jesus Christ. You wind up fulfilling the law.



WHY? Because love and commitment is the motive; and love fulfills the law. In other words, if you think by what I am saying about righteousness, that I mean go out and do what you want to do, and break God's law, then you are mistaken. You don't have God's righteousness.

Let me put it another way. Here are people who profess to know the Lord, who profess to do many wonderful things; but they were going out and living contrary <sup>to what</sup> ~~to~~ what God's Word taught. They were lawless people. They were not obeying ~~the~~ Word of God. There was no commitment. And what did it prove? It proved that there was never a personal relationship with Christ. And <sup>thus</sup> Jesus said, "I never knew you. Depart from me, you who practice <sup>a self-righteous</sup> lawlessness. I hope you understand. This is so important.

If you really have God's righteousness working, you will measure up to the Word of God. God's righteousness changes completely a person's perspective. It changes his mind, his attitude, his heart, his will, his entire life.

Now, every time I am faced with something that I use to do that God doesn't want me to do, I am faced with this whole problem. Because I have a body with the life of God in me. But, I also have my old sin nature. And when I yield to my old sin nature, I end up trusting self. But, if I yield to the Holy Spirit, the life of righteousness that God has put in me will do the right thing. And it always works that way. You see, I must let God live his life in me. I must recognize that righteousness is God's righteousness. Not man's. False Profession.

(3) Then, let's look at FALSE PRACTICE IN VS. 24-27. Jesus uses a great illustration. The illustration of two men who build two houses. Now, you have probably heard this story many times. I remember in Sunday School we used to sing: "The wise man builds His house upon the rock. And the foolish man builds his house upon the sand." It was a great song and made a lasting impression on my mind.

But, you know, I never understood this song until I learned the meaning of the SERMON ON THE MOUNT. God is talking, here, about the practice of your life. Now that you have accepted Christ, now that you have been pronounced righteous by God.....HOW WILL YOUR LIFE GO DAY AFTER DAY? Will you be like the wise man who builds his house upon a rock...OR..... will you be like the foolish man who builds his house upon the sands? That is the issue.

Please notice the little word "doth" if you are using KJ....OR...the word "acts" if you are using NAS in Vs 24. This is in the form in Greek meaning "practice of life." It is talking about a habit of life.

O.K. What is Jesus teaching? The person who is living a life of righteousness---- meaning he is committed and serving the Lord---is one who knows how to build his house. He builds it on the solid rock of Christ. And he knows that God's righteousness is <sup>the</sup> ~~then~~ only righteousness that counts.

But, one who is like the foolish man is one who has received Christ, but then he goes and tries to live his life on the bases of ~~what he can do.~~ <sup>Self-Righteousness</sup>

Dear Christian friends, can we be honest with ourselves? So many times in every one of our lives, we are acting, we are living, we are doing as though we are the whole show. And it is all self operating. It is not from God. We haven't been building our life upon Christ. We are building our life on self. We are building our life upon sand. And when the storms of life come....the floods of life come...we get washed out. Because the foundation is wrong. I have seen this happen so many times in peoples lives. Any storm of persecution, of opposition, a little bit of sickness, a little bit of trouble, a little bit of criticism..... No matter what the storm, if your life is being built upon your self-righteousness, you will crumble, you will wash away. And great will be the fall. It happens all the time. And that is why the counseling rooms are full.

But, oh, my friends, a life that is resting solidly on the fact that I was pronounced "righteous in Christ Jesus"...And God has given me his life...and I have nothing to fear...And no matter what the circumstance of life....no matter what the storms...MAN! I stand on solid ground because I am resting upon the fact that God pronounced me righteous. My position rest in Christ Jesus the moment I ask Him into my life.

*Wesley Prager*



My friends, the <sup>only</sup> way you will ever get into heaven is to have God's righteousness. That is what Jesus said. An the way you get God's righteousness is by asking Jesus Christ to come into your life. He died for your sins. He rose again the Bible says, on account of your need for righteousness. That is why we must accept Christ as our saviour. And when we do, God pronounces us righteous. On, the foolish man tries to build his house on his own self-righteousness. Only the foolish man tries to achieve acceptability with God on his own efforts. When you do that and the rains come and the floods come and the winds bley , you life will fall apart. WHY? Because you have built you life on self-righteounsee. Instead of faith and trust in the rock...Jesus Christ.

LET US CLOSE IN RAYER

Close: Rock of Ages  
He Hideth My Soul  
A Shelter in The Time of Storm