

Live Like Christ: The Sermon on the Mount
Session 7: A Foundation that Endures (Matthew 7:13-29)

Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: ¹⁴ Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

¹⁵ Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. ¹⁶ Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? ¹⁷ Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. ²⁰ Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

²¹ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? ²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

- 3 distinct dangers are highlighted: failure to follow Jesus, false leaders, and false followers.
- The way of destruction, death, and damnation is easy to find and follow. It's wide and offers lots of freedom, choice, comfort, and personal preference.
- The way of eternal life is hard, narrow, confining, difficult to find and hard to walk. It's through Christ Who is the way, the truth, and the life.

- False prophets (leaders and teachers of God's Word) will be revealed by the visible evidence of their lives and ministry.
- Bonhoeffer, "There is no need to go about prying into the hearts of others. All we need do is to wait until the tree bears fruit, and we shall not have to wait long."
- Good Fruit: Increasingly Christ-like character, demonstrated Fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), pointing people toward Christ and greater faithfulness, i.e. the narrow path.
- Bad Fruit: Lack of Fruit of the Spirit, pointing people toward themselves or the world, pointing people away from increasing holiness and toward something else.

- Our salvation isn't based on appearances, words, or even miracles done in Christ's name.
- Salvation comes from a genuine faith that compels us to obey Christ and do God's will.
- Bonhoeffer, "God will not ask us in that day whether we were good Protestants, but whether we have done His will."
- Bonhoeffer, "Here is the crucial question: has Jesus known us or not?"

²⁴ Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: ²⁵ And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. ²⁶ And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: ²⁷ And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

²⁸ And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

²⁹ For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

- Bonhoeffer, “Humanly speaking, we could understand and interpret the Sermon on the Mount in a thousand different ways. Jesus knows only one possibility: simple surrender and obedience.”
- Bonhoeffer, “‘The multitudes were astonished...’ What had happened? The Son of God had spoken. He had taken the judgement of the world into his own hands. And His disciples were standing at His side.”