

Sermon Devotional Guide
Know Jesus!
Matthew 7:13–27

1. Sermon Outline

- a. There Is No Salvation Apart from a Relationship with Jesus
 - i. Visible displays of Christian religion are no guarantee of salvation.
 - ii. Jesus is the Narrow Gate, if you really know Him, you will follow Him on the hard path.
- b. A Relationship with Jesus Is Revealed by a Transformed Life of Obedience
 - i. Your life shows whether or not you know Jesus.
 - ii. If you know Jesus, your life will show it through spiritual fruit.
- c. Build Your Life On Obeying Your Lord, Savior, Brother, and Friend Jesus
 - i. Hear and do what Jesus commanded in the Sermon on the Mount, regardless of what others do.
 - ii. Building on His commands allows you to withstand the storms of life and the final judgment.

2. Sunday – As soon as possible after the sermon, consider:

- a. What stood out to you the most in this sermon?
- b. What new truth did you learn, or what truth were you reminded of?
- c. Is there a particular Scripture passage you feel God is leading you to meditate on or commit to memory?
- d. What is one thing God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
- e. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?

3. Monday:

- a. In concluding the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus uses a Jewish way of teaching that was commonly employed by Jewish rabbis. This teaching tradition was known as the "Two Ways." Rabbis, and later Christians, used this contrasting structure to draw out comparison and identify moral options. In our passage, 3 "Two Ways are provided:
 - i. Read verses 13-14. Two gates and two roads (ways) are described. This is a choice of path.
 - ii. Read verses 15-20. Two trees and their fruit are described. This shows whether you walk by the Spirit or not.
 - iii. Read verses 24-28. Two builders and their foundations are described. Here we have the outcome of obedience or disobedience.

4. Tuesday

- a. Read Matthew 7:21–23 for today.
 - i. What surprising statement does Jesus say He will make to many who performed dynamic religious acts (such as prophesying, casting out demons, and other miracles) in His name?
 - What did Jesus mean when he said, "I never knew you?" Was he talking

about Christians or the unsaved?

- ii. How does Jesus define the simple requirement for entering the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 7:21), and how does confessing Jesus as Lord relate to genuine salvation (Romans 10:9)?
 - Is Jesus saying that works save us? (Ephesians 2:8-9, Romans 11:6, 2 Timothy 1:9, Titus 3:5, Galatians 2:16)
- iii. Some people do works in the name of God, yet they don't know the one and true God (John 17:3, 1 Thessalonians 1:9). What is the first "work" a believer is called to do? (John 6:29).
 - A person must do the "work" of first confessing they are a sinner and receiving Christ as Lord and Savior. They must B-E-L-I-E-V-E! (John 5:24).
- v. How can you guard your heart against practicing a loud or performative Christianity that seeks human applause rather than a true relationship with Christ?
 - 1. Do you serve at church to gain visibility and human approval? Do you work in the church so that people will say good things about you? Do you want to appear sacrificial? Do you show and tell others what you did for the church, or are you satisfied just knowing you have been a faithful steward (1 Corinthians 4:2). Are you focused on people's accolades or God saying to you, "Well done, good and faithful servant...." (Matthew 25:21)
 - 2. A true relationship with Christ is focused on an audience of one person, and that is God! He sees and knows in secret.
 - 3. Performative Christianity is driven by pride and self-righteousness and focused on an audience of peers. A true relationship with Christ is driven by love, gratitude, and fear (awe, reverence) of God.

5. **Wednesday**

- a. Read Matthew 7:13–14 for today.
 - i. Are there two ways to enter God's Kingdom? The narrow gate and the wide gate? In what ways does Jesus identify Himself as the only gate or pathway to life (John 10:7–9; John 14:6)?
 - ii. What contrast does Jesus draw between the two gates? One gate is w_____, the way is e_____, and leads to d_____. The other gate is n_____, the way is h_____ and it leads to l_____.
- b. Is there a discipleship application for believers based on the two gates and ways? What specific challenges do you face when choosing to walk the narrow, hard path of discipleship?
 - i. What does denying yourself, taking up the cross, and following Jesus look

like? (Luke 9:23) What does it produce? Look up John 10:10, John 15:5, Deuteronomy 28:2,9.

- ii. What does following the crowd look like? Self-indulgence, self-pleasure, and failing to live out the life God intended for you on this earth. Look up: Jeremiah 29:11, Ephesians 2:10, Proverbs 19:21, Proverbs 16:9, Romans 8:28, Psalm 37:23-24, Psalm 139:13-16, Philippians 1:61.
- c. The word “**destruction**” in verse 13 comes from the Greek word **apoleia**. It’s also translated as “**destruction**” in Philippians 3:19. It’s translated as “**perdition**” in 1 Timothy 6:9 (NKJV) and Revelation 17: 8, 11 (NKJV), and “**waste**” in Mark 14:4. Apoleia is a “strong negative word. It is a state or place of damnation, torture, and despair.”
 - How is Judas Iscariot, who betrayed Jesus, referred to in John 17:12?

6. **Thursday**

- a. Read Matthew 7:15–20 for today.
 - i. How does Jesus say believers can recognize false prophets who appear harmless? Do false prophets advocate the narrow gate or the wide gate?
 - ii. Trees and plants produce fruit according to their character. What type of trees and plants are false prophets (Matthew 7:16)?
 - iii. What type of fruit do false prophets produce? Look at Galatians 5:19-21. False prophets are motivated by greed (2 Peter 2:1-3, 10, 19).
 - 1. Do false prophets acknowledge God (1 John 4:1-3)?
 - 2. False prophets are barren (Jude 1:12-13).
 - 3. What is the final destination for all false prophets (Matthew 7: 19)?
- b. What specific spiritual characteristics mark a life that is genuinely connected to Christ (Galatians 5:22–23)?
 - i. What kind of “fruit” is currently visible in your daily conversations, attitudes, and relationships with others?

7. **Friday**

- a. Read Matthew 7:24–27 for today.
 - i. What single difference separates the wise builder from the foolish one in Jesus' Parable (Matthew 7:24)?
 - 1. As a believer in Jesus Christ, are you doing what Jesus commands?
 - 2. Are you building your house on rock or on sand? Remember, the world calls a believer who lives according to the truths of the Sermon on the Mount a fool; in contrast, Jesus calls them a “wise man” (Matthew 7:24).
 - 3. The “wise man” lives by faith and not by sight (2 Corinthians 4:18, Hebrews 11:1, Proverbs 3:5-6).
 - ii. In what areas of your daily life are you tempted to hear Jesus’ commands without actually putting them into practice?

- If you are struggling with a particular sin, remember Romans 6:6-7, and seek out help from LRBC's biblical counseling ministry.

iii. How does active obedience to Christ's teachings strengthen a believer to endure the rain, floods, and winds of trials and tests (James 1:22–25)?

8. **Saturday**

a. Are you trusting in your works to get into heaven instead of Christ's sacrificial atoning death (Isaiah 53:5, 2 Peter 5:21, 1 Peter 2:24, Romans 3:23-25)?

- Read Matthew 7:13–27 again, looking for what personally applies to your life and ministry. Read Matthew 7:22 and replace “we” with “I.” I encourage you to seek out one of the pastors if you have any concern about the authenticity of your salvation.

b. Close the week by praying that God will use His Word to show you how to live out this passage practically.

9. **Application:** Authentic salvation starts with God, as we read in John 6:44, *“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him on the last day.”* Also, in John 12:32, Jesus said, *“And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.”* Your salvation is not dependent on your performance. As a believer, the works you do should result from your walk with Jesus, yielding to the Holy Spirit and obeying God's word. Unfortunately, it's easy to fall into desiring human approval and living a lukewarm Christian life that might look good on the outside but is lacking in God's power. Genuine faith is always validated by a transformed life that produces spiritual fruit. Hearing Christ's words without putting them into practice leads to spiritual collapse when tests and judgment come. A redeemed person should respond to God's word by HEARING and DOING. Remember to build every area of your life on the solid rock of obedience to our Lord and Savior.

10. **Pray:** This week, please lift the Mabangi Maba people of Chad in prayer. Numbering a little over 600,000 across their region, this precious community remains largely unreached by the Gospel, with estimated evangelical believers making up less than 0.01% of the population. Islam is the primary religion and foundation of daily life for the Maba people.

While the Maba language has only partial portions of written scripture available, God knows every single heart among them by name. Ask the Lord to open doors for clear, accessible scripture translation in their native tongue and to raise bold, compassionate laborers who can share the message of hope and salvation.

Pray for God's Spirit to move powerfully in their homes and communities. Ask the Lord to grant them encounters with believers that would reveal the truth and depth of His grace. Pray that the few believers among them would be filled with wisdom and protection as they live out their Christian faith.