

SERIES: Sermon on the Mount
SUBJECT: Proof of Godly Righteousness;
READING: Matt. 7:13-29

Introduction:

As we move through the sermon on the mount we are learning about true righteousness we have learned about Character and about Godly considerations and today we look into

III. True Righteousness Which is Proven by Tests (7:13-29)

Christ outlines three tests that will prove our righteousness is truly from God. False Christianity, a counterfeit, will fail these tests.

A. The test of self-denial (vv. 13-14).

1. The two ways refer to two types of life-style: the easy, comfortable, popular life, or the difficult way of self-denial.
2. These ways are illustrated by Jesus with two gates:

Mat 7:13-14 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.

- a. The first gate is the most popular; **for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat**: The idea popular idea today is that large crowds equate to success in ministry; or that the most followed path is the way to success!

The truth is that this is a reflection of the world's values! Of which James reminds us;

Jas 4:4 Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.

- b. The second gate is a narrow gate of surrender or a broad gate of self-sufficiency.

Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

- i. True righteousness leads to self-denial. Note in Matt. 8:18-22 that two men turned from Christ because they failed this test.

Mat 8:18-22 Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side. (19) And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. (20) And Jesus saith unto him, **The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.** (21) And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. (22) But Jesus said unto him, **Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.**

- ii. Demas also failed this test of the narrow gate.

2Ti 4:10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

- iii. Many in the religious world are going for that wide gate and broad road of destruction!

B. There is also the test of spiritual fruit (vv. 15-23).

Mat 7:15-23 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.

1. "False prophets" does not only mean false preachers who proclaim a false gospel, but also false professors of faith in Christ. Looking back to the wide gate and broad road on discovers that...
 - a. Their inward nature has not changed (see 2 Peter 1:4 **Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.**
 - b. They merely wear the outward guise of a sheep. They call Christ "Lord" (22) **Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord,**

They even do religious deeds, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

- c. But they have not been saved! How do we detect these false believers? **Jesus makes it clear;** " **Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.**" (v. 16).
- d. **What fruits does Christ seek?** He seeks:
 - i. The fruit of the Spirit, or Christian character as described in the Beatitudes and Gal. 5:22-23;

Gal 5:22-23 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, (23) Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.*

- ii. The fruit of the lips, testimony and praise to God;

Heb 13:15 *By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name.*

- iii. Holy living;

Rom 6:22 *But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.*

- iv. Good works;

Col 1:10 *That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;*

v. Lost souls won to Christ ().

Joh 15:16 Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

Rom 1:13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.

- e. Professing Christians may be involved in religious activities and pretend to be saved, but if they are honestly born again, they will reveal these fruits in daily life.
 - i. Note that these "counterfeits" seem to be unaware of their condition!
 - ii. It is possible if not probable that they know what their preacher believes **Beware of false prophets** or what their church believes Rev 3:1 **And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. But they do not know what God believes!**
 - i. It is possible for professing Christians to fool themselves!

- ii. Satan blinds the mind (2 Cor. 4:3-4) and deceives people into thinking they are saved.
- iii. When Christ returns, millions of professing Christians will be surprised to find out they were never saved at all!

C. The test of permanence or obedience (vv. 24-29).

Mat 7:24-29 *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.*

- a. The two builders represent two men in this life. They both use the same material and the same plans, and the world cannot tell the difference in their two houses.
- b. But when the storm comes—the time of testing—the house not founded on the rock crumbles and falls.
- c. The true Christian is founded on the Rock, Christ Jesus.

1Co 3:11 *For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

- d. Righteousness is not based on a church, a creed, or a "good life" but on Jesus Christ who died for the believer.
- e. A child of God is proven by lasting through the storms that test him or her.
- f. A true Christian is proven by obedience to Christ. One is not merely a hearer of the Word, but is also a doer.

Jas 1:22-25 *But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. (23) For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: (24) For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. (25) But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.*

- g. Go through your Bible and note how false believers always fall away in the time of testing.
 - a. I'll be preaching next hour about the mixed multitude in Israel who wanted to go back to Egypt when things became difficult in their journey.
 - b. Many of the so-called Christians in Rome deserted Paul at his time of need.

Conclusion;

As men and women of Christ may our lives picture those the true believers stand regardless of the test. Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Peter, Paul, and many others proved the reality of their faith by standing through the storm. **They were built on the Rock! We must...**

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates? 2Co 13:5