

"The Purpose of the Sermon on the Mount"

Part 7

Matthew 7:13-29

Introduction: In our study of the Sermon on the Mount we have been looking at Jesus teaching concerning false prophets. This teaching follows Jesus command to all His listeners to "Enter in at the strait gate". We are in the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7:13-29. Jesus had preached this sermon not to get applause but He was pressing His listeners for a decision. There is only one Way to heaven and in order for a person to get on the path to heaven they must come through the "strait gate". Entrance through the strait gate is not easy because in order for a man to come through the strait gate he must be stripped spiritually naked. He must come to the end of himself and hate his sin and desire the new life which God offers. He must come with the complete understanding that he has absolutely no merits to give to God. He repents of his sin and he comes in great humility to Jesus Christ knowing that it was Jesus blood which paid the penalty for his sin.

That is exactly why it is struggle for people to get through the strait gate because it is rare to find someone who has the proper view of sin and their own personal sinful condition. Then on top of that Satan uses the temptations of the world to draw the person away from entering the strait gate. The flesh loves the world and all that is in it. Then there are the false teachers who stand outside the strait gate and encourage people to enter the wide gate and the wide gate is so appealing because you can bring all your sin with you through the wide gate. There is no need of repentance, humility or brokenness. The false

teachers tell everyone they can come just as they are and so people enter the wide gate and step on the broad way where there are signs which say, "This way to heaven" but they are placed there by Satan and they are nothing but lies.

Jesus knew all about these false prophets which were instruments of Satan to lead people down the path of destruction and therefore He was warning His readers about the danger associated with them.

Notice Matthew 7:15-20

1. The Definition

False prophets originated with Satan as he attempted to lead man to destruction. After man sinned he could not find his way back to God and so God sent men who were His spokesmen known as prophets to call man back to Himself.

Satan then began to use men to imitate the true prophets and these were the false prophets. Satan used them to proclaim a false message which many believed and the end result was they were welcomed through the wide gate onto the broad way and are on the path which will lead them directly to hell.

So the definition of a false prophet/teacher would be someone who is a counterfeit. He would look the same as the true prophet/teacher and even sound the same to a certain point. But he has a message which is deceptive and is incorrect.

2. The Danger

The danger of a false teacher he is fueled by Satan. They will look like a caring shepherd but within Jesus said they are ravaging wolves. They

are sent only for the purpose of deceiving God's people and leading those who are lost onto the path of destruction.

Jude tells us they are so dangerous that if we reach out to someone who has been led astray by false teachers that we are to do so with FEAR because we can be infected by the very lies which they have believed.

3. The Deception

I want to take this thought further than we did last week. The reason I desire to do this is because of something the Bible teaches us:

2 Peter 3:3-4

³ *Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts,*

⁴ *And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*

Last week we considered the deception of the false teachers we looked at what Jesus had said about them:

Notice Matthew 7:15

a. They come dressed as shepherds.

Jesus said they will come in sheep's clothing which was a garment made of wool. This was the garment worn by shepherds. So Jesus was saying that when they come in they will be undetectable by their appearance.

b. They are wicked within their hearts.

Jesus told His listeners that on the outside they would look like shepherds but "inwardly" they are ravening wolves. The main idea Jesus wants us to see here is these false teachers are so deceptive and so dangerous that we must be very careful. I am sure that many of you remember Jim Jones and the People's Temple and the horrible tragedy which took place in Guyana South America when somewhere around 1000 people followed him into the darkness of death. Shortly after all of that happened a man by the name of Mel White wrote a book called "Deceived". Within the book he researched the lives of the people who had been deceived by Jim Jones. He wanted to know their background and he was curious if any of them had any Bible teaching in their past. His findings may be a great surprise to many of us:

"Tim Stean was once the second most powerful man in People's Temple. Tim had a law degree from Stanford University and served as an Assistant District Attorney for San Francisco until he resigned to go to Jonestown in 1977. Tim later defected from the cult and worked tirelessly until that awful Saturday in November to get his son John Victor age 6 away from Jones and the jungle. According to eyewitness accounts little John-John was found dead beside Jones body. Tim said, "I was raised in a Christian home and my parents were fundamentalists, members of The General Association of Regular Baptists, G.A.R.B. We went to Sunday school and church all my young life, I attended Wheaton College, a leading evangelical Christian college in Illinois and was involved in student leadership. When I moved to California I joined and attended regularly The First Presbyterian Church in Berkeley, for two years I was the president of their Corinthians, a business and professional young adult group. I admired and respected their

Wednesday January 8, 2014

Sermon on the Mount

evangelical yet socially concerned pastoral staff. I was attending First Presbyterian and The People's Temple until I joined Jim Jones staff.

Gene Mills, another victim was for seven years a member of The Temple, one of Jones writers and a member of his planning commission He said, "I attended or taught in my church's Christian education program from my childhood, when I was 18 years old I was the leader of the Path Finder's Club which had over 50 kids in it, I had 22 adults working under me, I could give you an answer from the Bible for any question, I knew the Bible backward and forward. At one point in my life the minister tried to send me to college to become his Bible worker and I was very dedicated to the church."

Wayne Patilla who was Jones private body guard and driver grew up in a Nazarene Sunday School. His wife and long time member of the cult grew up in a Charismatic church and attended Sunday School and church regularly.

Carolyn Moore was president of her Methodist youth fellowship group and she and her sister, Annie were children of a Methodist minister and both served as intimate Jones aides and both died in Guyana."

Those are just a few examples from the research of Mel White in his book "Deceived".

This is exactly why Jesus opened verse 15 with the word "Beware". Let me just remind you the word means "to keep your mind away from". Jesus was so concerned because He knew how dangerous false teachers are and how deceptive they could be. This is also why the Holy Spirit inspired Jude to tell us we are to reach out to those who have been deceived by them with FEAR!

There is a verse which comes to mind when I read these accounts.

1 Corinthians 10:12

¹² Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

Last week we talked about 3 groups of false teachers:

1. **Apostates** - An apostate is someone who has walked away from the church. They were in the church for a while but they never were saved. They gave the appearance they were saved but they just turned and walked away and now they do all they can to prove the Bible to be wrong.
2. **Heretics** - A heretic is someone who is a professed believer who denies certain doctrines of the Bible. This person can be a little harder to identify for some because they will be someone who claims to stand on the Authority of the Bible but only on certain doctrines.
3. **Deceivers**- These are the people Jesus was so concerned about. The first 2 groups are easy to spot but it is the deceivers who are very hard to pick out.

Notice what John says about the deceivers:

2 John 1:7

⁷ For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.

Pay very close attention to what John says here. Remember last week I told you it is not so much what these people say as it is what they do not say. John says they confess NOT that Jesus is come in the flesh.

They will deny the deity and the works of Jesus Christ. Now John continues with his thought.

2 John 1:8

⁸ Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.

This verse is a warning that we must be careful not to get pulled into their teachings. We cannot lose our salvation but we can lose rewards. We are to look to ourselves or keep a close watch on our heart and mind.

1 John 1:9-10

⁹ Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son.

¹⁰ If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:

We are not to allow them in our houses. Why? Because of how deceiving they are. John knew how dangerous they were and so he says don't socialize with them! Contact with them will spot our garment.

Now that brings us to the next thought about false teachers. How can we know them? In Matthew 7:15 we are "**warned**" and then in Matthew 7:16-20 we are told to "**watch**". Jesus has not only warned us about the false teachers but He has also told us how we can know them.

Notice Matthew 7:16a

Jesus tells us here that we will know the false teachers by their fruit. I want you to pay very close attention to the words "ye shall know". This is assurance. It is confidence. We can be assured that the fruit of false teachers will expose them for who they are. But when Jesus refers to their fruit what is He talking about?

1. Fruit is conduct.

When Jesus refers to fruit we need to know that there are several ways fruit can be seen in a person's life. One way fruit is seen is in the way people conduct their lives.

John the Baptist will give to us some insight about fruit.

Luke 3:8

⁸ Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

Luke 3:10-14

¹⁰ And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?

¹¹ He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.

¹² Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

¹³ And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.

¹⁴ *And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages.*

We can see from the words of John the Baptist that when a person has repented of their sin and they bring forth fruit worthy of repentance they will:

- a. Be generous with what they possess. (:11)
- b. Not abuse the authority entrusted to them. (:12-14a)
- c. Treat others with respect. (:13-14a)
- d. Be content with what they have. (:14b)

Here we find 4 points to test anyone who is a teacher of God's Word. These are an example of fruit which should be found in every Bible teacher's life.

Notice Jesus words in John 15.

John 15:1-2

I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.

² *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.*

John 15:8-9

⁸ *Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*

⁹ *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.*

¹⁰ *If ye keep my commandments*, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

If a man is a true teacher of the Word he will be known by his fruit which will be obedience to the Word and the very opposite is true of a man who is a false teacher. If we watch him long enough we will see he has no desire to be obedient to God's Word.

Conclusion:

Let me go back to Jim Jones. In Mel White's book "Deceived" he wrote about why people followed Jones:

"He knew how to inspire hope. He was committed to people in need; he counseled prisoners and juvenile delinquents. He started a job placement center, he opened rest homes and homes for the retarded, he had a health clinic, he organized a vocational training center, he provided free legal aid, he founded a community center, he preached about God. He even claimed to cast out demons, do miracles and heal. But on the other hand, we find all the marks of a false prophet. He promoted himself through the use of celebrities, a very common vehicle for false prophets to gain credibility. He manipulated the press, he wanted certain favorable stories, and he was big on playing to the press. He pretended to be a Christian he officiated in a Disciples of Christ Church having been ordained by them in 1964. He used the language and the forms of faith to gain his power. He used Fundamentalist Pentecostal trappings and always spoke in Biblical language. He had his people sing and give testimonies as to how he had miraculously healed them."

But a closer look would have revealed another side of Jones.

Wednesday January 8, 2014

Sermon on the Mount

"He created a warm, loving, pseudo Christian community without Christ. He demanded absolute and total loyalty. He replaced Jesus as the authority figure and went so far as to say that he was Jesus. He used the Bible quoting it very often but perverting it to his own ends. He gave away anointed gifts, miracle blessings, prayer cloths and always demanded money in return. He was in it for the money, he was utterly, totally consumed with a preoccupation toward sex. He lied constantly and, continually about everything."

Jesus gave us assurance when He said, "By their fruits ye shall know them".