



THE JOURNEY THROUGH THE
SERMON *on THE* **MOUNT**
SESSION 10: MAKING DISCIPLES



LifeGroups
Do Life Together

New Hope Church

THE JOURNEY THROUGH SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

SESSION TEN: MAKING DISCIPLES

MATTHEW 7:12-29

FOLLOW ALONG

A Christian is a _____.

**A disciple of Jesus is a learner, or follower; they _____,
_____, and _____.**

**A disciple of Jesus builds his _____ on _____
_____.**

INTRODUCTION:

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

As we wrap up our last part of our LG series I want you to consider which week, or topic impacted you the most? Why?

What do you think most people's definition of a Christian is? How does Jesus define a Christian?

Of the 2 the types of builders Jesus describes which are you more like?

Why do you think Jesus wraps up the sermon on the mount with these 2 teachings, and how are these teachings changing the way you live?

This week what can you start doing to be a better disciple of Jesus?

Going Deeper

How do we attempt to understand what's going on inside a person's mind and heart, considering that we cannot read their thoughts and emotions directly?

When trying to determine the state of someone's heart and intentions, what are some indicators or cues that we rely on?

Jesus closed out the Sermon on the Mount with a call to obey God's Word. Those who are "blessed" are the ones on the Narrow Road. And the ones on the Narrow Road are those who hear and obey the Word of God. Obedience to the Word of God is the good fruit that is produced by those who know and love God. While other fruit may seem tempting (prophecy, miracles, exorcisms), these can be smokescreens and snares set by the devil to lead Christians from the Narrow Way.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATT. 7:15.

What is the command found in verse 15?

Why is this threat to followers of Jesus considered malicious?

Have you encountered false teachings before? If yes, where and how did you react?

Have you ever fallen prey to false teachings? What made it attractive to you?

The problem with false teachers is that they often have the appearance of true teachers. They use deception to gain trust and infiltrate fellowship in order to spread their teaching and lead sheep off of the difficult road that leads to the narrow gate. The danger here is great. This is a Trojan horse full of enemy soldiers bent upon the destruction of the city.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATT. 7:16-23.

According to Christ, how can His disciples recognize false teachers?

What do Christians have at their disposal by which to measure fruit? What are some ways to spot a fake product in other areas of life?

How have you examined the fruit (doctrine and life) of teachers who you accept?
How does it measure up against God's Word?

Fortunately, Christians are not left to their own devices when it comes to distinguishing between false and true prophets. According to Jesus, simply claiming to follow Him and performing impressive feats does not necessarily make someone a faithful teacher. In fact, He warned that not everyone who professes to be His follower will enter heaven, but only those who actually obey God (verse 21). To evaluate a teacher, Christians must carefully examine their teachings and behavior in light of God's will. This requires a solid understanding of Scripture, as it serves as the standard by which all teachings must be measured. Without this foundation, Christians cannot effectively discern truth from error.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MATT. 7:24-29.

The parable of the wise and foolish builder conveyed a central message. What was this message?

In John 8:31-32, what did Jesus reveal about His Word? How does this relate to constructing a foundation on the rock of Christ's Word?

What practices do you uphold to demonstrate your love and reverence for the Scriptures, as you strive to remain close to Christ?

The command to be on guard, and Jesus' explanation of how to discern false teaching from faithful teachers, culminated with a parable that ought to be understood as a controlling motif for the entire Sermon on the Mount. In other words, the parable of the wise and foolish builders serves as an overarching theme that holds all of the teaching in the Sermon on the Mount together.

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What are some safeguards that you have up for yourself and your family against the influence of false teachers? If you don't have these things in place, how might you seek to be on guard in the future?

How might you evaluate the teaching of others by assessing the fruit of their lives? How do you need to assess the fruit of your own life? Why is this an equally important practice?

Who is God calling you to share the truth of the gospel with, so that they might build their life on the rock of Christ and not the sinking sand of any other foundation?

PRAYER

Ask God for discernment and wisdom in your own life as you consider which teachers you allow to have influence in your beliefs. Pray also for a love for God's Word and that He would help you to read it, believe it, and obey it. Ask for the grace to cling to Christ by clinging to His Word.

COMMENTARY

MATTHEW 7:15-29

7:15-20 False prophets don sheep's clothing to disguise the fact that they are ravaging wolves masquerading as true disciples. However, a prophet's character and behavior (his fruit) indicates whether he is true or false. Other NT texts insist that a teacher's doctrine must also be examined (1Jn 4:2-3). True disciples bear the fruit of good works, and this confirms their identity as Jesus's disciples (Mt 7:21-23). The image of cutting down and burning a bad tree portrays the judgment and eternal punishment of false disciples. The test Jesus gives is not quick and easy but one that proves itself over time.

7:21-23 By referring to himself as Lord and depicting himself as the ultimate judge of humanity, Jesus implied his deity. True disciples affirm Jesus's lordship, submit to his authority, and obey his commands. Jesus insisted that a person is confirmed as a true disciple not by prophecy, exorcism, or working miracles but by living a transformed life made possible by God. The disobedient lifestyles of lawbreakers are inconsistent with genuine discipleship. Jesus's words, I never knew you, show that these were never truly disciples.

7:24-27 The adjectives wise and foolish describe a person's spiritual and moral state, not his intellect. Whether one is considered wise or foolish is determined by his response to Jesus's teaching. Since OT writers described God's wrath using the image of a great storm (Is 28:16-17; Ezk 13:10-13), the storm that destroys the house on the sand is a picture of divine judgment. Hence, the person who hears and acts on Jesus's teaching is prepared for judgment. The one who hears but doesn't act on Jesus's words will be destroyed in the storm of judgment.

7:28-29 Jesus amazed the crowds with an authority that surpassed that of other teachers. First-century Jewish teachers appealed to the authority of their rabbinic predecessors. However, Jesus introduced his teachings with the contrast, "You have heard that it was said . . . but I tell you" (5:21,27,31,33,38,43). By this Jesus made clear that he had the authority to interpret the law independent from and even contrary to the Jewish oral tradition and the most esteemed rabbis. The words when Jesus had finished are important for understanding the structure of Matthew's Gospel. See "Structure" in the Introduction to Matthew.



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