

The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

Introduction

1. **The greatest sermon ever preached in the New Testament was preached by our Savior, Jesus Christ — the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7).**
 - A. **The Christian system is introduced in capsule form in this sermon.**
 - B. **The answer to almost every problem that comes to us is found in this sermon.**

2. **Jesus gives many warnings in this sermon.**
 - A. **He deals with two manners of living; two groups are involved.**
 - B. **The end of these groups is revealed.**
 - 1) **Many travel the broad road that leads to destruction and a few choose to follow the narrow way that leads to eternal life.**
Matthew 7:13-14
 - C. **Jesus also provides information concerning a right way and a false way.**
 - 1) **He tells of a problem that continually faces the church, that of the FALSE TEACHER.**
 - 2) **This person came to mislead men through teaching. Notice what Jesus says in Matthew 7:15-20:**
Matthew 7:15-20

We Must Judge

- 1. Some say “we cannot judge” or “who am I to judge.”**
- 2. Jesus says “beware of false prophets.”**
Matthew 7:1-5
 - A. We must judge in order to live pleasing to God.**
 - B. If we do not judge, we will freely accept and embrace all evil as well as good; we would not reject anything!**
- 3. We are not to judge without evidence.**

John 7:24 Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."

- A. Even under the old covenant there was to be no unrighteousness in judgment.**

Leviticus 19:15 You shall do no injustice in judgment. You shall not be partial to the poor, nor honor the person of the mighty. In righteousness you shall judge your neighbor.

Deuteronomy 1:17 You shall not show partiality in judgment; you shall hear the small as well as the great; you shall not be afraid in any man's presence, for the judgment is God's. The case that is too hard for you, bring to me, and I will hear it.'

- 1) Judgment was to be proper.**

- 4. The judgment we know is the Word of God; it is the basis of eternal judgment**
John 12:48

How Can We Know A False Prophet or Teacher?

- 1. We must try them or test them. We are commanded to do so.**
 - A. See Chart of scriptures:**
Jer 29:8-9; 5:30-31; 23:21-22; Deut 18:20-21; Col 2:8;
1 Tim 1:3; 4:1-2; Titus 1:10-11; 2 John 9-11
- 2. Try and test the teacher to see if he is true or false:**
1 John 4:1; Rev 2:2; 1 Thes 5:21
- 3. False teachers will come!**
2 Pet 2:1; Acts 20:29-30; Rom 16:17-18; 1 Tim 4:1-2;
2 Cor 11:13-14
 - A. False prophets or teachers:**
 - 1) Enter in among the saints**
 - 2) Can be recognized**
 - 3) Can be tested or proven by the Word of God**
 - 4) Can be exposed for what they are**

How Do False Teachers Come?

1. **They come camouflaged.**
 - A. **They do not come announcing that they are Satan's servants.**
 - 1) **Satan approached Eve cunningly (Gen 3).**

 2. **False teachers come deceitfully. How?**
2 Cor 11:13-15; Eph 4:14; Jude 4, 8, 16
 - A. **They have and will continue to come into the church.**
 - B. **They have and will continue to arise from among us (church).**
 - C. **Congregations have been led away from the truth.**
 - 1) **They can be elders, deacons, preachers, Bible class teachers.**
 - a. **They pretend to be deeply spiritual or very godly.**
 - b. **They have appealing speeches – Peter describes them:**
- 2 Peter 2:18-19 For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.

Examine Their Fruit

- 1. One can tell a person by their fruit. Jesus said this:
Matthew 7:16-20**
- 2. We must examine one's fruit.**
 - A. If we see evil fruit, we need go no further, the man and his message are false.**
- 3. We must try the spirits.**
 - A. We cannot just listen and receive what is said, we must examine it by the Word of God.**
 - 1) Otherwise, the false teacher will not be marked.**
 - B. He will be allowed by his smooth words to lead innocent sheep astray — remember, we are WARNED about this!**
 - C. Many false teachers will present things that are 90% true, but it is the 10% that does the damage.**

Conclusion

1. Saints must be cautious!

2. Satan works with the ferociousness of a lion.

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.

A. He is set to destroy the Christian and his faith.

3. He uses men who are false teachers, wolves in sheep’s clothing, those who use deception, those whose goal is to destroy the flock.

A. They slip in unaware and cunningly disguise themselves as honest, faithful servants of God.

1) However, they are really ravenous wolves, greedily devouring the innocent.

4. Brethren, we must use God’s Word to test the false teacher.

2 Timothy 3:16-17 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Invitation

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Richard Thetford, August 2007 (Based on a sermon by Guss Eoff and other sources)