

Matthew Lesson 07

Matthew Chapter 7

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Memory verses for this week: *Jer 1:9 Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.*

Introduction: In last week's lesson, we studied about how we should bring our alms and prayers to the Lord in a way that is pleasing to God. We certainly are not to do these things in order to be seen of men, but rather to honor and glorify our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. This week we begin our study of Matthew Chapter 7 discussing how we should not judge others. As we covered in Chapter 6, the Sermon on the Mount continues. Jesus proceeds with various teachings, including avoiding a critical spirit, perseverance in prayer, the golden rule, and the narrow versus the broad gate. In the latter portion the chapter (the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount), Jesus touches upon three areas of warning: false prophets, false professions, and false foundations.

I. Judgment of Others is Forbidden

Mat 7:1 Judge not, that ye be not judged.

Mat 7:2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

One of the common natures of the carnal mind is to judge others. It is so much easier to see the error in others than it is our own. But when we see things accurately, I don't think we will be so quick to judge. When we realize that none of us are anything special. We are all just sinners. Some are still lost, and some by God's grace have been saved. But all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Verse 2 warns that the standard that you find fault with others will be the same that you are judged by one day. If we are forgiving and not fault finders, I believe God will treat us with a milder judgment one day. But if we are harsh and condemning to

all we come into contact with, our lives will be examined with a super close microscope one day. God help us to be people know for our love and concern for others, not fault finders.

Rom 2:1 Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

Rom 2:2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

Rom 14:1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

Rom 14:2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

Rom 14:3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

Rom 14:4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

Rom 14:5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

Rom 14:6 He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.

Rom 14:7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

Rom 14:8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.

Our Lord speaks about the common fault of having a critical attitude toward others. The word translated as judge (krinw *krino*) has several nuances of thought, but is used here in the sense of 'condemning' or 'criticizing' others. In day-to-day life, it could be summed up with the idea of being critical of others.

It should be noted that this same word (*judge*) has another sense. It also can mean to 'discern' or 'understand.' In that sense, Jesus said to judge righteous judgement in John 7:24. When we have a critical attitude toward others, it will come back on us. To what degree we deal with other people, we will tend to be dealt with in the same fashion. The word translated as mete (metrew *metreo*) has the idea to 'measure out.' It is where the modern word *meter* derives. More broadly and in this context, it has the sense of how we deal with others.

If we are critical of others, we can expect the same. If we are kind and considerate of them, the same will tend to be returned to us. I heard a preacher on the radio this week saying that young people in most churches today do not quote John 3:16 as the most important verse anymore as they did in my day. Today, according to that man, Matthew 7:1 is now the top verse. He said by not judging others, we can justify our actions in our own sight even when it does not align with the other parts of the word of God. That was NEVER God's intention on this verse. We are all to be discerners of right and wrong. The world teaches that there is no right or wrong really. It is just relative to the situation, and you. And if you find it ok, who are we to judge. This is doctrine straight from Satan. God set the standards and we are to love the things God loves, and hate the things God hates. And God hates sin. Verse 1 is a warning to not go around seeking error in others, but it does not exclude us from being discerning in our lives.

Psa 7:11 God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.

Mat 7:3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

Mat 7:4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

Mat 7:5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

Jesus touches upon one of the ironies of life. It is very easy to see the minor faults in those about us, while being oblivious to major faults in our own life. Jesus illustrates this truth by a *mote*, which literally refers to a piece of straw or a fleck of debris. He contrasts that to a *beam* which refers to a construction timber. He draws attention to the irony by exaggeration. The greater context is of avoiding a critical attitude. When we find fault in those around us while ignoring our own faults, Jesus said that we are hypocrites.

Verse 3 has a bit of extreme comparison to show how stupid we can be. He basically is say why look at the spec in your brother or sister's eye when you have a big 2 x 4 beam poking out of your own. That is sort of a funny image, but we can be a victim of harsh judgment and be that way. I know that when certain sins that plague me show up in others, I am really more upset about those with others than I am other sins.

I'm sure you may have a similar experience in your life when a sin has brought you down, and when you hear of someone else falling for that sin, you find great fault in the individual. That should not be our attitude. If someone is falling down and failing to make the mark, we should uplift that person in prayer. I have found that it is very difficult to find fault and dislike someone when you are praying for that individual. When their best interests are in your prayers, you won't be finding fault and condemning them. We have one that is the righteous judge, and He is the one who should do the judging, not us.

Rom 2:2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

Rom 2:3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

Rom 2:4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

Rom 2:5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

Rom 2:6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds:

Many today think they will escape the judgment of God, but no one will do that. If we know Christ as Lord and Savior, we will stand before the judgment seat of Christ to determine our rewards. But if we are lost, we will stand before the great White Throne Judgment where the lost will be cast into the lake of fire for punishment forever and forever. We are taught in these verses to not judge others, but clear up our own problems and sins. Don't skip the beam in your own eye, but first clean that up before even looking at the spec in your brother's eye. Verse 4 and 5 teach that we can't really help others until we get control of sin in our own life. To help others who have fallen into sin requires that we live a life separated unto the Lord. If we are being led by the flesh, we will not be able to help the sinner. We need help ourselves when we have not brought the flesh under control.

Mat 7:6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.

Jesus now changes the subject and presents a proverb that is not entirely clear. The application of the short parable may be that at times there is wisdom in not presenting the precious things of God's Word to the hounds and hogs of the world. The term *dog* in the first century was a reference to base, vile, and wicked men. At times it may be wiser to not witness or teach the things of God to some who will only make a mockery of it. The hogs are consumed with filling their belly and will eat and soil the source of food until it is ruined. There are people who after being helped in any way will use you till there is nothing left.

Verse 6 teaches that it is impossible for the natural man (the lost man) to appreciate the spiritual blessings in the Christian's life. We are admonished to not try to share certain 'holy things' with the lost until they are saved. The lost need to hear the Gospel, not the deeper things of God's Word. We must first be saved, learn the milk of the word, before we can tackle the deeper things of God called the meat of the word.

II. Encouragement to Pray

Mat 7:7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

There are three essential parts to verse 7. It says to:

ASK

SEEK

KNOCK

Are your prayers not being answered? It may be that you are not following these rules. We are to ask the Lord for our requests. We are to seek his Holy Will about our prayer, and we are to keep coming back and knocking again and again. When we do that, we will see the door open and find answers to our prayers. One of my favorite verse is:

James 5:16 Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

See the promise that the EFFECTUAL FERVENT Prayer of a RIGHTEOUS MAN availeth much. Effectual means keeping on... praying again and again. Fervent speaks of being serious with the Lord about the prayer. And being a Righteous Man can only come one way, and that is to know Jesus as our Lord and Savior. If we are saved and our heart is pure before the Lord (being in His will for our lives), then our prayers will not be hindered. And we will see answers.

Matthew Henry said this about Verse 7

Here is a precept in three words to the same purport, Ask, Seek, Knock (v. 7); that is, in one word, "Pray; pray often; pray with sincerity and seriousness; pray, and pray again; make conscience of prayer, and be constant in it; make a business of prayer, and be earnest in it. Ask, as a beggar asks alms." Those that would be rich in grace, must betake themselves to the poor trade of begging, and they shall find it a thriving trade. "Ask; represent your wants and burdens to God, and refer yourselves to him for support and supply, according to his promise. Ask as a traveler asks the way; to pray is to enquire of God, Eze. 36:37. Seek, as for a thing of value that we have lost, or as the merchantman that seeks goodly pearls. Seek by prayer, Dan. 9:3. Knock, as he that desires to enter into the house knocks at the door." We would be admitted to converse with God, would be taken into his love, and favour, and kingdom; sin has shut and barred the door against us; by prayer, we knock; Lord, Lord, open to us. Christ knocks at our door (Rev. 3:20); and allows us to knock at his, which is a favour we do not allow to common beggars. Seeking and knocking imply something more than asking and praying. 1. We must not only ask but seek; we must second our prayers with our endeavors; we must, in the use of the appointed means, seek for that which we ask for, else we tempt God. When the dresser of the vineyard asked for a year's respite for the barren fig-tree, he added, I will dig about it, Lu. 13:7, 8. God gives knowledge and grace to those that search the scriptures, and wait at Wisdom's gates; and power against sin to those that avoid the occasions of it. 2. We must not only ask, but knock; we must come to God's door, must ask importunately; not only pray, but plead and wrestle with God; we must seek diligently; we must continue knocking; must persevere in prayer, and in the use of means; must endure to the end in the duty.

Mat 7:8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Jesus next advances a major principle concerning prayer. The greater thought is just keep on praying.

The verbs *ask*, *seek*, and *knock* are all in the present tense which implies ongoing action. Therefore, Jesus in effect said, 'keep on asking, keep on seeking, and keep on knocking.'

Those who will so persevere in prayer will in due season have their prayer answered. See Luke 11:5-7; 18:1-7.

There is a threefold sequence presented. *Asking* is making requests. *Seeking* is appealing for God's guidance. *Knocking* is requesting God's help. Prayer is a major activity of faith. As long as we are asking, seeking, or knocking; we to that degree are living by faith. Moreover, faith is pleasing to God (Hebrews 11:6).

Heb 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

God may forebear answering for His own eternal purpose. It may be to keep us in ongoing fellowship with Him. And indeed, the journey of faith often is even better than what we are seeking from the Lord.. Here is a greater principle here. When we persevere in prayer, Jesus said that God *shall* give, *shall* help, and *shall* guide. These all are promises of God that pertain directly to prayer. God *will* answer as we persevere in prayer.

Mat 7:9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?

Mat 7:10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?

Mat 7:11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

The Savior now reinforces the promise of answered prayer by using two references from day to day life. Both are rhetorical questions. Jesus posed the question, 'If your son asks you for some bread, will you give him a rock?' The answer is obvious. Or, 'If he asks you for a piece of fish to eat, will you give him a snake?' Again the answer is obvious.

In the preceding and succeeding context it is clear that as we go to our heavenly Father in prayer, He will respond as any honorable father will. The greater lesson is that God answers the prayer of His children. There certainly are conditions and qualifications to prayer. But as a basic principle, God answers the prayer of His people. If we

as sinful people know how to give nice things to our children, how much more will God respond when we appropriately ask Him? Once again we find a question that answers itself as it is read.

God promises that if we will ask, we will receive. Those that will seek will find, and those that knock will have the door opened unto them. We as parents naturally yield to our children and try to give them the very best for their good. If we as parents in this sinful flesh do that for our own children, how much more will our Heavenly Father give good things to us if we will simply ask Him.

Albert Barnes in his *Notes on the Bible* said this:

Every one that asketh receiveth—That is, every one that asks aright; that prays in faith, and in submission to the will of God. He does not always give the very thing which we ask, but he gives what would be better. A parent will not always confer the “very thing” which a child asks, but he will seek the welfare of the child, and give what he thinks will be most for its good. Paul asked that the thorn from his flesh might be removed. God did not “literally” grant the request, but told him that his “grace” should be “sufficient” for him.

Have you ever prayed for something, and God did not answer your prayer and give it to you. Then later on you realize that had you received that prayer request, it would have hurt you. Sometimes when we don't get immediate answers, we need to check and see if maybe God is saying no. Dallas Holm, the writer of the song “Rise Again” once told me that sometimes when we pray, God says “Yes”, sometimes “No”, and sometimes, he just says “Wait a while.” That is really true. Sometimes waiting is the best for us that we might learn to wait on the Lord and learn patience. The key is to totally trust God with all your heart that He will always do what is best for us.

Mat 7:12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

What is traditionally called the Golden Rule is here set forth by Jesus. The common distortion of this is to do unto others as they do to us. However, that is not what Jesus said. What He did say was *“whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.”*

In other words, do to others as we would have them do to us. Be thoughtful, kind, helpful, selfless, generous, etc. As mentioned earlier in the chapter, “with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.” He

concluded this thought by noting, “for this is the law and the prophets.” The whole thrust of the Old Testament (the law and the prophets) was to so live.

Jesus, in essence, taught us to be selfless rather than selfish; to be others-directed rather than self-directed. This is the essence of agape-love.

Rom 13:9 For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

Rom 13:10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

God says the law and the prophets testify to the fact that we are to do unto others what we would have them do unto us. This is the royal law where we are to love our neighbor as our self.

James 2:8 If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well:

III. The Two Ways

Mat 7:13 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:

Mat 7:14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Our Lord then proceeded to contrast that *strait* or narrow gate to the *wide* and *broad* gate. The word translated as strait (stenov *stenos*) simply means narrow. The thought refers to an out-of-the-way gate or that which is not the popular way.

There were numerous gates to the city of Jerusalem. Some were the broad magnificent gates through which the rich and powerful entered the Temple. Others were narrow and humble used for more mundane functions such as

delivery, disposal of dung, or for animals. The word translated as destruction (*apwleia apoleia*) is the base word whose derivative refers to 'perishing'.

There have been two traditional views as to the application of this truth. One is that Jesus is alluding to the fact that the popular road that most are traveling, though broad and crowded, misses the unknown gate leading to eternal life through Christ.

The world is heading at breakneck speed down the expressway of life toward hell, for the most part ignoring the exit that points to eternal life in Christ. The other position is that Jesus is referring in the context to God's people and how many of them never seem to find the narrow path of righteousness and obedience which leads to fullness and blessing of the Christian life.

In defense of this view, it may be noted that though life is mentioned, it is not referred to as eternal life. And indeed, many Christians go through life on the broad road of doing as everyone else does, but reaping heartache and misery because they never were willing to use the narrow gate of faithfulness, consistency, separation, and genuine spiritual living. In any event, God's way is the way of the minority. Whether it be of people missing the gospel altogether or of Christians missing the road of spiritual maturity, those who go God's way are a minority.

The way that leads to hell is broad and the gate is wide. Many are traveling on this road today, and many are unaware that they are a heartbeat away from spending eternity separated from God. Oh what a great salvation Jesus has provided for all who will come to Him and be saved. It says that strait is the gate and narrow the way that leads unto life eternal. Few find this strait and narrow way it says. If you talk to people on the street, you will find that most everyone expects to make it into heaven. Some say they have done many good works in this life, or they have joined some specific denomination and that will guarantee them entrance. Some believe that some church official like a priest will make intercession for them and provide them an entrance into heaven. But the truth is that there is only one way, and it is not done 2 or 3 ways. One and one way only.

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

John Chapter 10 is more about Christ leading the Jews out of Judaism, but we can also see that the true believers know Christ as Savior. The sheep (saved) know their Shepherd's voice. Those coming some other way are not accepted by God.

John 10:1 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

John 10:2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.

John 10:3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.

John 10:4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice.

John 10:5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers.

John 10:6 This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them.

John 10:7 Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep.

John 10:8 All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.

John 10:9 I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.

There are only two roads... one leads to hell and one to heaven.

IV. Warning Against False Teachers

Mat 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Here Jesus warns of false prophets. In Deuteronomy 13:1-5, God set forth warning regarding false prophets. In the Old Testament, the basic criterion for determining a false prophet was if his prophecy did not come to pass.

Jesus taught to look upon the life of the prophet. "Ye shall know them by their fruits." Jesus likens false prophets to wolves in sheep's clothing. That is, they portray themselves as something they are not.

A brief overview of history or even of current events will reveal there has never been lack of religious charlatans. They portray themselves as men of God, and yet in reality are just the opposite. He used the analogy of wolves. The world around, wolves are noted for their preying upon other creatures. As carnivores, they prey upon other animals for their food. See Ezekiel 22:25-27 wherein the prophet likened false religious leaders to wolves preying upon undiscerning people.

Eze 22:25 There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey; they have devoured souls; they have taken the treasure and precious things; they have made her many widows in the midst thereof.

Eze 22:26 Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shewed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them.

Eze 22:27 Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain.

Recent religious history in America reveals how notorious ‘televangelists’ have fleeced gullible followers across the land. They turned out to be wolves in sheep’s clothing.

Mat 7:16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

Jesus warns us to beware of false prophets. They appear to be men of righteousness, but they have never been saved. Their heart is corrupt. A true man of God will out of the treasure of a good heart bring forth good fruits. The wicked heart will bring forth evil fruits.

Mat 7:17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

Mat 7:18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

In the same vein, Jesus uses another analogy from nature and that of horticulture. Grapes don’t grow on thorn bushes and figs don’t grow on thistle plants. Wild plants don’t yield the sweet fruit of a domesticated plant, and

cultivated plants don't yield the sour fruit of a wild plant. Wild orange trees produce bitter and sour fruit. The oranges that we eat come from trees that been cultivated and grafted for centuries to produce sweet fruit.

Fruit growers will not continually work with trees that will not produce good fruit. Such trees are eventually cut down and burned. The thought of a corrupt tree here likely refers to a wild tree. The word translated as corrupt (*saprov sapos*), in this context, refers to being of poor quality or unfit for use. Wild trees as a rule produce sour, bitter fruit. In contrast, good trees produce the sweet, *good fruit* which is desirable.

By their fruits you can identify the good teachers from the false ones. There are only two kinds of spiritual fruits... they either are good or they are bad. It is impossible for a bad tree (the false teachers) to bring forth good fruits. Likewise, the good tree (the true prophets/teachers) will not bring forth corrupt fruit.

Mat 7:19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Mat 7:20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

The application of this is that the fruit of a religious leader or prophet will reveal their true character. Their morals, honesty, temperament, humility, and even their family are good indicators of their true, spiritual condition. As many sadly found out, the corrupt life styles of televangelists revealed their true character.

The tree that brings not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire. The person who is truly saved is going to prove that salvation by their works. Works do not take any part in our salvation, but they are a proof of the salvation we have in Christ. Salvation is all of God and all of grace.

James 2:17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

James 2:18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.

James 2:19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

James 2:20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?

James 2:21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?

James 2:22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?

James 2:23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.

Phil 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Phil 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

V. The Danger of False Professions

Mat 7:21 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.

Mat 7:22 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?

Mat 7:23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

There will be many who will make great claims of doing good at the great white throne judgment of God. But verse 21 teaches clearly that not everyone who says “Lord Lord” will enter, but those who do the Will of God. His will is that all men repent of unbelief and receive Christ as Lord and Savior. Good works will not satisfy God for payment for sin. Only personal faith in Christ can save us. His blood has washed our sins away if we know Him as our Lord and Savior. Note that it is not like works were ever involved and we started by grace and fell away in the end. Verse 23 says that he will profess “I NEVER KNEW YOU”. If we ever become a son of God, we will forever be a son. Just like Cory or Devin can not one day decide they will not be my sons. They might say so, but they will always be my sons. Same way with God and the heavenly family. The family of God contains all the saved of all time, both old and new testament times.

Verses 21-23 also present a warning about false professions. Jesus warned how not everyone that professes to know Him will in fact enter the kingdom of heaven. The key is doing God’s will.

In the matter of salvation, it is of turning to and trusting in Jesus Christ as one's personal savior. See John 6:28-29,40.

Sadly, many religious people, and even those calling themselves Christians, will face a rude and shocking awakening in that day. The phrase "that day" is a reference to the day of judgement, the Great White Throne Judgment.

Many *professing* Christians are going to wake up in eternity and it is not going to be where they had supposed. Jesus goes on to speak of religious people who (1) have prophesied in His name, (2) cast out devils in His name, (3) and in His name done wonderful works— perhaps healing.

(1) At the risk of sounding judgmental, it should be noted that the modern, charismatic movement lays an emphasis on 'prophecy,' casting out devils, and healing—all in the name of Jesus. However, their life styles more often than not reveal fruit that is not consistent with that of the Holy Spirit.

(2) I as a student of God's Word have personally known charismatic individuals, claiming to have the anointing of the Holy Ghost with the reputed 'signs' of the Spirit, yet their personal lives were vile. They may have had an experience with a spirit, but it was not the Holy Spirit.

The tragedy is that many, who though quite religious, are not truly saved and will not prevail at the judgement. Jesus said, by their fruits we shall know them (verse 16). It likewise behooves us to examine our own heart, to determine if we are truly saved and not just religious.

Many a member in a fundamental church knows the language and the right answers, but has never been truly born again. What a horrible time it will be for unsaved though professing Christians to hear Jesus Christ say, "*I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*"

IV. The Two Foundations

Mat 7:24 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:

Mat 7:25 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.

Mat 7:26 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:

Mat 7:27 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.

Jesus warns of false foundations. He set forth a simple test with a simple illustration.

"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."

It is not enough to just hear his Word, but also to actually do it. (See James 1: 22-25.) That doing begins with trusting Christ. But it then continues in keeping the entire spectrum of biblical principles. Jesus uses another simple illustration from life: a house and its foundation.

A structure built upon bedrock will be solid and stable. A structure built upon the sandy shore of a body of water, may have a nice view for a time, but when the inevitable storms come, the foundation of the house will be washed away and the house will collapse. The clear and simple application of this illustration is of not only hearing, but actually doing the full spectrum of God's Word in our lives.

Not only is there the foundation of salvation, but also of the numerous other principles contained in the Word of God. Some people miss salvation because they have built their lives on the shifting sands of religion. Let us apply this principle to the lives of people who are genuinely born again. There are many Christians who though saved, have never really built their Christian lives upon the solid foundation of actually *doing*.

The actual *doing* of God's Word is the foundation that brings strength, security, and blessing. This is true in the matter of being saved in the first place and it is particularly true of the ongoing Christian life. The rock to which Jesus spoke was Himself. However, the context here clearly indicates that the *doing* of the Word of God is a necessary for stability in the Christian life. It is the doer of the Word who is like the house on the rock.

In building a home, business, or church, you must have a proper foundation. When we went to the city to get a

permit to put the tall roof on this section of the church, they went back to the blueprints and checked that the foundation was deep enough and secure enough to hold this tall roof securely. If you don't have a deep solid foundation, you can't support the weight. Jesus likens the person who hears and does the word of God as a WISE man who built his house upon a rock. When the storm came, the house built on a rock stood. Jesus likens the person who hears and does not the word as a FOOLISH man... the one who builds upon the sand. When the storm came the house he built on sand fell in. We have to have a solid foundation to stand. And spiritually, there is only one that will stand the test of time.

1 Cor 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

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

1 Cor 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

1 Cor 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

1 Cor 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

1 Cor 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

Mat 7:28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

Mat 7:29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

The common people of the day were astonished with the authority and clarity of the preaching of Jesus. It was the custom of the scribes and rabbis of the day to reference anything they said to the rabbinical traditions for their authority.

Their teaching was dry, dull, tentative, and monotonous. Moreover, they gave equal if not greater credence to their traditional interpretations than to the Word of God itself. Jesus taught and spoke with the authority of God and the power of the Holy Ghost. He didn't need to 'footnote' everything He said from some commentary. He simply preached the Word of God. It accordingly was with power and authority. The same principle remains to this day.

The doctrine of Christ astonished the people for he taught as one who had authority and not as the scribes. Why was this so? Because not only was he God manifested in the flesh, but being part of the Holy Trinity, he actually took part in penning the word of God. No one ever taught like Jesus Christ. I look forward to hearing him teach when he returns and takes us out of this world. We haven't begun to hear all the things He did in His personal ministry.

John 21:25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.