

Sermon on the Mount—Summary
Matthew 7:13—28

Jesus now finishes up His teaching of the “Sermon on the Mount.” His goal is to bring all of Israel into the Kingdom but He knows only a small remnant (the Little Flock) will actually believe and be given a position in the coming Millennial Kingdom. He is gathering the Little Flock and giving them the instructions they will need to get through the Tribulation period and into the Kingdom. As we go through the rest of chapter 7 we will see the contrast between believers and unbelievers, between those who will enter the Kingdom and those who will be denied entrance.

The path and the gate (verses 13—14)

It’s obviously much easier to be given eternal damnation than eternal life. Do nothing and end up in hell. According to Luke 13:24 a person needs to strive to enter the Kingdom. This word has the idea of struggling to win an athletic event, a fight to win. Paul used this same word to say he struggled to finish the race he was running in serving the Lord (2 Timothy 4:7). Jesus is telling the Little Flock of remnant believers that they will experience a great struggle to remain true to God during the Tribulation.

In this case they are straining to enter into the narrow gate that is at the end of the narrow path. Their straining is not centered on working faithfully for God but is connected with their eternal destiny. Those going through the narrow path of the Tribulation will need to strive to stay faithful during that time of testing in order to enter the narrow gate of the Kingdom. They will need to endure unto the end (Matthew 10:22). Many would be pulled away from the truth if that were possible.

Matthew 24:24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

False prophets (verses 15—20)

One of the things Jesus warns them about is the proliferation of false prophets and teachers. These are men who will be working under the anti-Christ to convince their Jewish brothers to get with the program and step in line with the one they are accepting as their Messiah. There will be a great amount of pressure to accept this man who is presenting himself as Israel’s Messiah. He isn’t just saying he’s the Messiah but demonstrating he’s the Messiah through many signs and wonders (See Matthew 24:24 above). Pharaoh’s magicians were able to imitate the signs and wonders that Moses did through the power of God—at least up to a certain point (Exodus 7). The magicians were able to do them by the power of Satan, the same power that will allow the anti-Christ and his followers to do miraculous signs.

These external manifestations could be interpreted as God-given so Jesus makes it clear to them how to discern who is from God and who is from Satan. The real test was in the fruit they were bearing. If they are good trees they will be bearing good fruit. If they are bad trees they will be bearing bad fruit. The key is to test and know what good fruit is.

The first thing to understand is that God is the only one who can produce good fruit. Anything done outside of God is bad fruit. Anyone abiding with Christ is a believer while those who do not abide are unbelievers. Therefore, those who are a member of the Little Flock of Israel are believers and are bearing fruit while unbelievers will be cast into the fire. It is this group of believers who will inherit the Kingdom because they will be found to be producing fruit.

John 15:4—6 ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing. ⁶ If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned.

Matthew 21:43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

Since believers are the only ones who will be producing good fruit they are told to watch out for those who appear to be good fruit producers but are really bad. They present themselves as sheep but once they get into a group of believers turn into wolves and tear apart the flock of believers with their bad doctrine. They will be preaching that the anti-Christ is really the Christ and that they should take the mark of the beast. It will be very hard for this little group of believers to go against the sly words of the unbelieving leaders of Israel especially when they see how well off many of these people are who have taken the mark. The believers will need to understand from Scripture how to test the fruit to see if it is good or bad. By comparing what Jesus is saying in the Sermon on the Mount and looking at what these prophets are saying it will be obvious that they are indeed false. Anyone who is producing good fruit is proving himself to be a disciple of Christ.

John 15:8 Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.

Think of a good fruit bearer as a person working in a company. The employee who is bearing fruit is one who follows his boss' directions and ultimately helps the company to grow. This employee does everything he can for the good of the company. The same can be said of the Kingdom believer. His focus is to follow Christ's commands and to help the Kingdom to grow. They who hear His words and do them will be bearing good fruit (Matthew 7:24). Only those who are following Christ are capable of producing good fruit.

Jeremiah 17:5—8 ⁵ Thus saith the Lord; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord. ⁶ For he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land and not inhabited. ⁷ Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. ⁸ For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

Internal vs. external (verses 21—23)

I believe the false prophets mentioned above will be shocked that they are not pleasing God in what they do during the Tribulation. As Paul (Saul) sanctimoniously went about persecuting and killing those Jews who were following Jesus Christ, these false prophets will be thinking they are pleasing God in bringing their brothers to follow the anti-Christ and take the mark of the beast. When they are finally brought to the Great White Throne their defense will be that everything they did was in the Lord's name. Externally they seemed to be following God but internally, they didn't know Christ and He doesn't know them. As the Pharisees were so wrapped up in glorifying themselves, these false prophets will be doing everything for earthly glorification foregoing an eternal reward.

Build on rock or sand (verses 24—27)

It is the wise man who hears Christ's words and take action. These are the people who have built their house on the solid rock. When the rain falls and the floods come and the wind blows his house will remain because it is built on a solid foundation. The storm is a reference to the coming Tribulation. The person who is grounded in Christ will survive the Tribulation while the foolish man ignores Christ's teaching and builds his house on a humanly created foundation. The Tribulation will cause his house to crumble.

In context, the false prophets or the people who are on the broad pathway are building their house on a poor foundation. They ignore God's teaching on how to get into the Kingdom, they live their lives the way they want to live it and do things that only bring glory to themselves. At the end they will be begging to be let into the Kingdom. By this time it is too late for them to repent. Their fall will be great.

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