

## Sermon on the Mount (Part 6 – 3 Sets of Contrasts)

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Matthew 7:13-27

➡ Christ sets forth **Four Fearful Facts** in Matthew 7.

- Not everyone is going to be saved (v. 13). This passage denied universalism.
- More people are going to hell than going to heaven (v. 14).
- Many expecting to be in the kingdom will not (vs. 21-23).
- No one can be saved after they die.

We will look at these disturbing truths under the heading of **three sets of contrasts**: (1) Two Ways; (2) Two Trees; (3) Two Builders.

God often teaches by contrasting the true against the false—With God things are either right or wrong... good or evil... true or false... light or darkness... wise or foolish... saved or lost... and heaven or hell. You are either for Christ or against Christ. No middle ground. No gray areas.

### I. **Two Ways—A contrast of DESTINIES** (vs. 13-14).

- The way of life—the way of death (Jer. 21:8—*Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I set before you the way of life, and the way of death.*)
- A. The BROAD way.
1. Broad because it teaches all religions lead to God. Wide because there are no restrictions.
  2. Destiny—Destruction / Hell (Prov. 14:12).
  3. Broad because most people are on this road. Why are more people on the broad way than the narrow way?
    - They love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.
    - They think they have to give up too much. This is a lie. Instead of giving up everything, the Christian gets everything.
    - They are afraid of what their friends will say.
    - They are too busy for spiritual matters.

- They think they have plenty of time. *"Boast not thyself of to morrow: for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth"* (Prov. 27:1).
- They say there are too many hypocrites. People need to realize they must give account of themselves to God, not some hypocrite (Rom. 14:12).
- They think one religion is just as good as another. That may be true, but we are not talking about religion. We are talking about salvation. Religion is what man tries to do to be accepted by God. Salvation is what Christ has already done to make man acceptable to God.

#### B. The NARROW way.

1. Comparatively few are genuinely saved (v. 14).
2. It is "narrow" because there is only ONE way to heaven—Through Jesus, the Door (John 10:9; 14:6). This is why more people are on the broad way—There are so many false ways of salvation versus Jesus being the only way (Acts 4:12).
  - Modern "bible" versions distort this passage. For example, the New King James says in verse 14, "narrow is the gate and DIFFICULT is the way which leads to life..." This seems to make the way of salvation hard.

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One of the main things unbelievers have against Christianity is it's exclusiveness—That Jesus is the only way to heaven. Why is this? One reason is our culture's obsession with equality, more than with truth. People don't want to be called a religious bigot or be labeled as "narrow minded" (narrow is the way).

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➡ One way leads to heaven—One way leads to Hell. **Which road are you on?**

## II. Two Trees—A contrast of DISCERNMENT (vs. 15-20).

- ➡ The trees represent a contrast in discerning between a true prophet and false prophets (wolves). False prophets were a regular theme in Christ's ministry.
- A. The **discretion**—BEWARE! There are more false prophets and true (Mt. 24:11; 1 John 4:1).
  - B. The **disguise**. Wolves in sheep's clothing. Satan's minister's are transformed as "*the ministers of righteousness*" (2 Cor. 11:15).
  - C. The **discerning**. "Shake the tree and see what fruit falls out."
    - Paul warned they speak perverse things, seeking to draw men after themselves instead of pointing them to Jesus (Acts 20:29-30).
    - 2 Peter 2:3 says they will make merchandise of you. They're after your pocketbooks. They are not concerned about feeding you as they are about fleecing you.

➡ **HOW TO DETECT A FALSE PROPHET / RELIGION** (1 John 4:1)

1. WHAT IS THEIR FINAL AUTHORITY? "*By what authority doest thou these things?*" (Mk. 11:28). What do they base their beliefs on? Mormons bases their teachings on The Book of Mormon and a subjective burning in the bosom. A Christian's final authority is a King James Bible!
2. WHAT DO THEY BELIEVE ABOUT JESUS CHRIST? "*What think ye of Christ?*" (Mt. 22:42; Mk. 8:27). What does the religion teach about Jesus Christ? Mormons say He is just an exalted man. Jehovah Witnesses say He is a inferior god created by Jehovah God. The Bible says Jesus is "*God manifest in the flesh*" (1 Tim. 3:16).
3. WHAT MUST A PERSON DO TO HAVE ETERNAL LIFE? (1 John 5:12). "*What must I do to be saved?*" (Acts 16:30-31). Basically, every religion falls into two groups on this question: (1) You are either saved by your own good works, or (2) God saves you by grace through faith apart from any good works you do (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).
4. WHAT DO THEY BELIEVE ABOUT HELL? What are the consequences of rejecting their religion? "*What shall the end be of them that obey not*

*the gospel of God?*" (1 Pet. 4:17). Is there a literal burning hell? Any religion that denies a literal burning hell denies what Jesus preached about hell (Luke 16:19-31; Mt. 18:8; 25:41, 46).

### III. **Two Builders—A contrast in DURABILITY** (vs. 24-27).

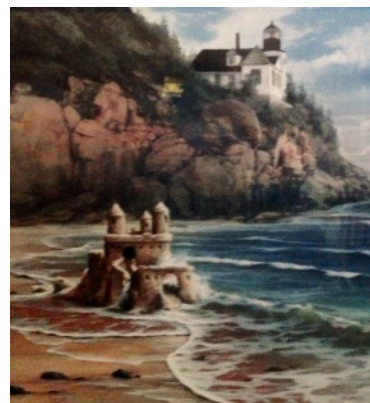
- Jesus concluded the Sermon on the Mount with an illustration of two builders. Jesus said many things in this message—Now His words needed to be applied to the lives of those who heard what He said.
- This is something lacking in much of the preaching today—There is no exhortation for hearers to put into practice what they have heard. Sermons are not preached to entertain. They are preached to change lives.

#### A. The **SIMILARITIES** of the builders.

1. Both heard what Christ said.
2. Both responded to what Christ said.
3. Both were exposed to testing. The houses were hit from three directions—On the top (roof) by rain... the bottom (foundation) by floods... and the sides by the wind.
  - We face a three-fold test every day: (1) by the world, (2) the flesh, and (3) the devil. Whether or not we will stand in times of testing depends on what your life is built on.

#### B. The **DIFFERENCE** in the buildings—One built on sand. One built on a rock.

1. Difference in **durability**—One house fell. One house stood.
2. Difference in **deduction**—One was a fool. One was wise. John Tillotson said, "He who provides for this life but takes no care for eternity is wise for a moment but a fool forever."
3. Difference in **doing**—One heard and did not. One heard and did.



- a) Hearing must be translated into doing (James 1:22). To hear Christ's words and not do them is disobedience and disobedience is sin (James 4:17).
- b) This is nothing new. God told the prophet Ezekiel the same thing: *"And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people, and **they hear thy words, but they will not do them**; for with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness. And, lo, thou art unto them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument, for **they hear thy words, but they do them not.**"* (Ezek. 33:31-32)
- c) Jesus asked in Luke 6:46, *"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and **DO NOT** the things which I say?"*

**SUMMATION:** When you come to a fork in the road, you are faced with a decision. You must choose which way you will go. Today you are faced with a choice between TWO WAYS... TWO TREES (who will you believe?) ... TWO FOUNDATIONS— The rock of God's Word, or doing your own thing. To obey or disobey.



Elijah challenged the people, *"How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him"* (1 Kings 18:21). There was no third choice. God says, *"I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life..."* (Dt. 30:19).

God has made a way for you to have eternal life (Rom. 6:23). You can either take what you deserve (wages—earnings) = Death. Or, you can accept God's gift of eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ.

You have heard God's Word. Now you can either apply it to your life and be saved, or not do anything and face destruction.

Remember: Not everyone is going to heaven... Most people are going to hell. Don't be one of them.