

“JESUS’ KINGDOM MANIFESTO”

BIG IDEA . . . Part 17: True Judgment – Beware!

(Matt. 7:15-20)

INTRO: The SOM is Jesus’ manifesto that compares (and condemns) the self-righteousness of the S&P (proud, selfish, hyper-judgmental hypocritical, eternal, . . .) to the true imparted righteousness. He requires of all seeking to be in relationship with Him (a gift, humble, hungry, giving, serving, . . .). False righteousness is based on human works. True righteousness is founded on God’s grace through Christ (Eph. 2:8-9).

Matt. 7:13ff is Jesus’ invitation to receive His free gift. This requires a choice to enter (vv. 13-14). This is not an easy choice since it’s not the easiest and most crowded. Also, not easy because there are variety of teachers who sell cheap tickets to the wrong gate. Jesus labels them charlatans., false prophets. In vv. 15-20 Jesus gives us a warning to beware and then a call to be watchful and not be led astray.

- I. **A WARNING: BEWARE (v. 15 “Beware of . . .”)** – They will come! To “beware” is to carefully examine to discern integrity (7:1-6). We need to ask and seek God’s wisdom to rightly judge (7:7-12).
 - A. *Definition* – From the beginning God’s spokes persons were called by God to deliver His message. A true prophet is God’s voice to mankind Moses (Exo. 3:1-10; 4:10-12). Satan has his voices, too. They usually claim to be from God and to speak for Him (Deut. 18:20-22; Jer. 5:30-31; 14:14; 23:14,16,21; Isa. 30:10-11; Zech.11:16-17; etc.). Jesus warned, too (7:15-20; 24:5, 11, 24) – add Paul (Rom. 16:17-18; 2 Cor. 11:26, Peter, 2 Jn. 9-10, Jude 10, 12, 14, . . . The S&P were classic examples of false shepherds (Jn. 8:43-47; 10:7-15; Matt. 23). Why so many warnings?
 - B. *Dangerous* – FP are not only wrong, they are dangerous “are ravenous wolves . . . in sheep’s clothing” (v. 15). They are deceptive and hard to spot (Mac. p. 465). They are shepherds in sheep’s clothing. They can be heretics, apostates, or deceivers (2 Cor. 11:14). They work for Satan (2 Th. 2:9).
 - C. *Destiny* is damnation (v. 19 “cut down and thrown into the fire”) – 2 Pet. 2:3, 9, 12, 17).
 - D. *Two Tests*: 100% accuracy (Deut. 18:20-22) and doctrinal orthodoxy in “essentials” (Deut. 13:1-5; 1 Jn. 4:1-3).

II. BE WATCHFUL (vv.16, 20) – Know their fruits!

With God’s wisdom we must judge who is true and who is false. How do we identify? v. 16 “You will recognize them (FP) by their fruits.” Then in vv. 17-18 He widens application to all people in general. *A tree should be judged by what it produces, not by how it looks.* Looks can be deceiving. S. Harris: For what . . . p. 10 . . . Watch for:

- A. Their *Character*: (Who they are) – includes their inner motives, standards, loyalties, attitudes, ambitions – sometimes hard to know; often revealed over time by their life and their teaching.
- B. *Conduct* (How they live) – John the Baptist told S&P to produce fruits proving repentance (Lk. 3:8). Conduct underlies any claim to love and serve God. Look at vv. 16-18. Fruit is product of root. Is their lifestyle lavish? Humility, faithfulness, not covet (Jer. 6:13).
- C. *Creed* (What they teach) – Distort God’s Word by adding to it (legalism) or subtracting from it (liberalism – Bible is out of date). “Red Flags . . .”
- D. *Converts* (Who follows them?) – What are their followers like? False teachers attract unbelievers, nominal and carnal believers (2 Pet. 1:2; 2 Tim. 2:17). Like people, like priests: Like their teachers they are proud & selfish, rarely serving. See 2 Cor. 11:13-15 . . .

Two Admonitions:

1. Watch out (Rom. 16:17-18)
2. Stay away (2 Jn. 9-10) – Eph. 4:14

CONC: False teachers are everywhere. So, beware and be watchful. They are selling tickets to wrong gate. Judging ourselves is difficult. Hard to see our “logs”. False teachers sell us lies and lead us astray. Next, the biggest issue and most dangerous deception of all is self-deception (vv. 21-23).