

Lesson 10

Title: "Identifying False Teachers & Methods"

In Matthew 7:15-18, Jesus warned, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."

What are the fruits that Jesus speaks of by which we may identify false prophets? Matthew 7 doesn't tell us what the fruit is, but Luke does. In Luke 6:43-46, it says, "For a good tree bringeth not forth corrupt fruit; neither doth a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. For every tree is known by his own fruit. For of thorns men do not gather figs, nor of a bramble bush gather they grapes. A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is evil: for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh. And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" Pay special attention to that last verse that Jesus just said, Why call me Lord and do not the things which I say?

False teachers dress themselves as "ministers of righteousness" (2Cor. 11:14-15). They claim to be followers of Jesus; they sing songs of praises to God; they profess to be Christians; with their mouths they say: "Jesus is Lord!" (see Matthew 7:21-23); they even claim to believe and follow the Bible. They can be sincere, well-liked, friendly, social and even fun to be with. However, the more you study the Word of God, the more the Lord's Word will give you insight into how to recognize the "wolves in sheep's clothing."

1. Read 1Timothy 4:1-2

a. This passage is dealing with the future state of Christianity. From verse 1, what will happen in later times?

1. People will _____ the faith

2. They will pay attention to _____ and

b. What does the word hypocrisy mean?

c. These teachers and followers' consciences have been

2. Read Luke 6:26

a. What's an identifying mark of false teachers?

b. Do they tend to be popular? _____

c. Are they likely to have a large following? _____

3. Read 2Timothy 4:3-4

a. Why do people tend to flock to such "teachers"?

4. Read Romans 16:17-18

a. According to verse 17, should one keep away from false teachers?

b. According to verse 18, how do false teachers deceive people?

c. Therefore, false teachers love to spend time talking about things that are _____ to the ears.

d. Although these teachers may appear to be serving Christ, according to verse 18, they are really serving their _____.

e. What does that mean? _____.

5. Read 2John 1:9-11

Jesus is the Word (John 1:1, 14; Revelation 19:13; Hebrews 4:12-13), therefore, Genesis to Revelation is the teaching or doctrine of Christ. Those who have God are faithful to the Word of God. They abide or continue in the teachings of Christ.

a. Do false teachers stay in the bounds of Holy Scripture? _____

b. Should we welcome such "teachers" into our homes? _____

c. According to verse 11, if we bid such teachers God speed, then we are _____

d. Let's take a look at an example of Christ's teachings:

Read Mark 16:15-16.

1. According to Jesus in Mark 16:16, who will be saved? He who _____ and is _____

2. If a teacher teaches differently from what Jesus said in Mark 16:16, is he abiding and continuing in the teachings of Christ? _____

6. Read 2Peter 2:1-3

a. What does the word pernicious mean? _____

b. Through _____ shall they with feigned words make _____ of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.

c. What does the word feign mean? _____

7. Read Jude 1:4

a. According to this passage, false teachers turn the grace of God into _____

8. Read Matthew 4:3-10

a. False teachers are influenced by Satan. We must learn from the Master. What did Jesus use to refute Satan? _____

b. According to verses 6-7, did Satan try to use Scripture against Scripture to establish a false teaching? _____

False teachers, like Satan, do the same. They use passages to reject passages. For example. They will set John 3:16 against Mark 16:16. They will run to Romans 10:9 and run away from Acts 2:38. They will show you Ephesians 2:8, yet deny Acts 22:16.

Psalm 119:160 says, "Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever." Every word that comes out of God's Mouth is true. 2Timothy 3:16-17 says, "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 perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

This makes it clear that we need to apply every scripture in combination one with another to fully understand the Word of God. Just as Isaiah 28:9-10 tells us, "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." This is the perfect will of God.

Have you ever heard of the term "synecdoche" before? In fact, you are probably having a hard time pronouncing it. It is pronounced: si-nek-duh-kee.

Many of us may not be familiar with the term synecdoche but we use them often in the English language. A synecdoche is a figure of speech by which a part is used to represent the whole. For example: The phrase: "I like your new set of wheels" means "I like your new car." The "wheels" (the part) represent the car (the whole). The phrase: "Let's do a head count" means "Let's count the people." The "head" (the part) represents the person (the whole).

The word of God uses synecdoches as well. When the New Testament writers speak of being saved by believing, they are using the term "believe" as a synecdoche -- "believe" represents (the part) while (being saved) by following Acts 2:38 given by Apostle Peter represents the whole of Jesus' teachings.

For this portion of the study we will be using the infamous John 3:16 passage. John 3:16 is a "life-and-death" passage. A "life-and-death" passage is a passage that uses terms such as "saved," "damned," "life," "death," "live," "perish," etc.

John 3:16

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

9. Read Luke 13:1-5

- a. According to Jesus, is repentance optional? _____
- b. From verses 3 and 5, if a person does not repent, he or she will _____.
- c. John 3:16 says "...whosoever believeth in him should not perish." Does "believing in Jesus" involve repentance? _____
- d. Therefore, if a "life-and-death" passage does not mention "repentance," does that mean "repentance" is not essential to salvation? _____
- e. Therefore, the term "believe" in John 3:16 is being used as a "synecdoche," involving repentance. Do you agree? _____

10. Read Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:10

- a. According to scripture, is confession optional? _____
- b. From verse 32, if a person confesses Christ before men, He will confess that person before His _____ who is in Heaven.

- c. From verse 33, if a person denies and disowns Christ before men, He will deny that person before His _____ who is in Heaven.

- d. Therefore, if a "life-and-death" passage does not mention confession, does that mean confession is not essential to salvation?

- e. Therefore, the term "believe" in John 3:16 is being used as a "synecdoche," involving confession. Do you agree? _____

11. Read Mark 13:13

- a. According to Jesus, is faithful-endurance optional? _____

- b. Those who remain faithful to Christ to the very end shall be _____

- c. Therefore, if a "life-and-death" passage does not mention "faithful endurance," does that mean "faithful endurance" is not essential to salvation? _____

- d. Therefore, the term "believe" in John 3:16 is being used as a "synecdoche," involving "faithful endurance to the end." Do you agree? _____

12. Read Mark 16:15-16

- a. According to Jesus, is baptism optional? _____

- b. According to Jesus in verse 16, those who _____ and are _____ shall be _____

- c. Therefore, if a "life-and-death" passage does not mention "baptism," does that mean "baptism" is not essential to salvation?

- d. Therefore, the term "believe" in John 3:16 is being used as a "synecdoche," involving "baptism." Do you agree? _____

As you can see, the Bible uses synecdoches all the time. Unfortunately, many fall into the wrong conclusion, that if a passage fails to mention a certain command, then that command is not essential to salvation. But as you can see, to "believe" means to accept and apply all the words of Jesus. A person cannot pick and choose what they want to believe. They must believe everything God has to say. A person must also realize that God's Word uses synecdoches. When the Bible speaks of "belief," repentance, baptism, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, confession and faithful endurance is implied and understood. When the Bible speaks of "repentance," belief, baptism, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, confession and faithful endurance is implied and understood. When the Bible speaks of "baptism," belief, repentance, receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost, confession and faithful endurance is implied and understood, and so on.

In conclusion, false teachers are men-pleasers (Galatians 1:10; 1Thess. 2:1-4). They preach more to please the ear than to profit the soul. Isaiah 30:10, says, "Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits:" False teachers are one of satan's greatest weapons to bring deceit to the hearers, whose end thereof will be an eternity in the Lake of fire. Where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, and where the worm dieth not.

Proverbs 5:11-14

11 And thou mourn at the last, when thy flesh and thy body are consumed,
12 And say, How have I hated instruction, and my heart despised reproof;
13 And have not obeyed the voice of my teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me!
14 I was almost in all evil in the midst of the congregation and assembly.

What has the Lord taught you in this Bible Study?