

THE LIFE OF JESUS

The Danger Of False Teachers

Matthew 7:13-23 – Jesus said, “You can enter God’s Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. ¹⁴But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it.”

¹⁵ “Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. ¹⁶You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree can’t produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can’t produce good fruit. ¹⁹ So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions.”

²¹ “Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. ²² On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ ²³ But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’”

Four Tests Of A True Or False Teacher

1) The Fruit Test: Does the teacher live a life of holiness and righteousness based on the biblical definitions?

1 Thessalonians 1:5 - Paul said, “For when we brought you the Good News, it was not only with words but also with power, for the Holy Spirit gave you full assurance that what we said was true. And you know of our concern for you from the way we lived when we were with you.”

2) The Doctrine Test: Does the teacher teach all the doctrines of the Bible and do they teach them correctly?

1 Timothy 6:2-3 - These are the things you are to teach and insist on. ³ If anyone teaches otherwise and does not agree to the sound instruction of our Lord Jesus Christ and to godly teaching, ⁴ they are conceited and understand nothing.

3) The Scripture Test: Does the teacher teach according to truth of the Bible or does the person twist the scriptures or avoid the scriptures?

1 Corinthians 14:37-38 - If anyone thinks they are a prophet or otherwise gifted by the Spirit, let them acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord’s command. ³⁸ But if anyone ignores this, they will themselves be ignored.

1 John 4:1-6 - Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³ but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world. ⁴ You are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. ⁵ They are from the world and therefore speak from the viewpoint of the world, and the world listens to them. ⁶ We are from God, and whoever knows God listens to us; but whoever is not from God does not listen to us. This is how we recognize the Spirit of truth and the spirit of falsehood.

“If a person does not submit his thinking and his teaching to the authority of the apostles — to the authorized teachers of Christ who wrote the New Testament — then they’re not going to be reliable teachers. It doesn’t mean they won’t say true things. Everybody says true things from time to time — even the devil. But that doesn’t make them reliable teachers.” - John Piper

4) The Gospel Test: Does the teacher teach the biblical truth of how a person is made right with God and how they have eternal life?

Galatians 1:6-9 - I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you to live in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— ⁷ which is really no gospel at all. Evidently some people are throwing you into confusion and are trying to pervert the gospel of Christ. ⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let them be under God’s curse! ⁹ As we have already said, so now I say again: If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let them be under God’s curse!