

Two Trees: Good Fruit or Bad Fruit?

Matthew 7:15-23

1. The prevalence of false teachers.

a. The disguise they wear.

Matthew 7:15 | ¹⁵ “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

b. The danger they pose.

Matthew 7:15 | ¹⁵ “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

c. The doctrine they espouse.

Genesis 3:1 | ¹ Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’”

2. The product of false teachers.

a. Like trees, teachers must be inspected to see that they are producing good fruit.

Matthew 7:16a | ^{16a} You will recognize them by their fruits.

b. Like trees, teachers produce after their own kind.

Matthew 7:16b-18 | ^{16b} Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit.

c. Like trees, teachers that don't produce good fruit are burned in the fire.

Matthew 7:19-20 | ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

3. The peril of self-deception.

a. Have we made a false profession?

Matthew 7:21 | ²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

b. Will we too offer false proofs?

Matthew 7:22 | ²² On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’

c. We must avoid the fateful pronouncement?

Matthew 7:23 | ²³ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’