

# Lesson 18

## Warnings

Key Scripture Readings: Matthew 7:15-29

### Summary

- In the final section of the sermon, Jesus warns disciples about false teachers, self-deception, and building upon the wrong spiritual foundation.
- Jesus describes false prophets as being like wolves in sheep's clothing. A prophet is a spokesman for God. He preaches information that God reveals. A false prophet only claims to be inspired. He deceives people into believing that the message he is preaching is God's will when it is not. Jesus tells disciples that they can recognize false prophets by their fruits (Matthew 7:16a). Their fruits include their teaching and conduct. Is their teaching in harmony with God's complete and perfect inspired word (2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3; Jude 3)? Is their conduct that of a faithful servant of God, or full of hypocrisy like the scribes and Pharisees (Matthew 23:1-3)? There are numerous warnings against false teachers and prophets in the gospel. Jesus predicted that many would precede His judgment on Jerusalem (Matthew 24:11). Paul warned the Ephesian elders that many false teachers would arise from among them (Acts 20:28-30). Paul also warned about a time of apostasy in the church (1 Timothy 4:1-2). Both Peter and John give warnings about false prophets (2 Peter 2:1-4; 1 John 4:1). These workers of Satan seemed to have infiltrated several of the local churches in Asia (Revelation 2:14, 20).
- Spiritual self-deception is another thing that can trip up disciples. So often, people deceive themselves into believing that being a "good person" or religious is enough to be saved. On Judgment Day, many religious people are going to be condemned (Matthew 7:21-22). They will be eternally lost because they did not fully submit to the Lord's will (Matthew 7:23). It is not enough to merely believe in Jesus and do some religious things. Jesus also wants complete obedience.
- In Matthew 7:24-27, Jesus speaks of two builders. The first builds a home on a solid foundation. When the storms come, the house stands firm because it is founded on a rock. The second builds a home on a weak foundation. When the storms come, it falls because it is founded on sand. Both illustrations are used to describe the consequences of a person choosing to follow Jesus. The person who hears and obeys Jesus' words will withstand the trials of life and be saved. But the person who merely hears the words of the Lord will spiritually fall and be lost.
- After concluding this powerful sermon, the crowds who heard it were changed forever. Matthew 7:27-28 says, "When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching; for He was teaching them as one having authority, and not as their scribes." May we also be as awed and impacted by this sermon!

## Study Questions

1. List some examples of false prophets today. How are you able to know with certainty that these people are false prophets?
2. What is God going to do with false prophets and those who blindly follow them? What kind of impact should this reality have on us?
3. Describe the people Jesus mentions in Matthew 7:21-22. Why are these people lost? What key lessons can we learn from their fate?
4. Why is it easy for someone to fall into the trap of spiritual self-deception? How do we avoid this trap?
5. What obstacles can stand in the way of us building our house on the rock? How do we overcome these obstacles?
6. Why do you think this sermon has impacted people like no other in the history of the world? Which part of it has impacted you the most?