

FIRM FOUNDATIONS

Study #1 (Updated 8-11-17)

Jesus' most famous sermon is called "the Sermon on the Mount". It is found in **Matt. 5:3-7:27** with parallel teachings in **Luke 6:20-49**. In this sermon, Jesus tells us how He expects us to live as members of His Kingdom. Let's start off by looking at how Jesus ends His sermon.

Read Matt. 7:21-27 (NIV)

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

²⁴ Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. ²⁶ But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash."

Q: What is Jesus describing in these 2 scenes?

- These are judgement scenes.

Q: The ones who called Jesus "Lord, Lord" did some pretty good things. Why do you think Jesus called them "evil doers"?

- They did *some of the things* He said; probably *the things they wanted to do*.
- When we pick and choose what we will obey, Jesus calls us "evil doers"!

Q: What is the "house" Jesus is talking about?

- Jesus is comparing the life you are building to the building of a house.
- The house that stands is the person who stands uncondemned in the judgment.
 - The house stood because the builder heard what Jesus said, and *did* what Jesus said.
- The person who falls in the judgment is the one who heard what Jesus said, but didn't do it.

Q: What are the rain, floods, and wind referring to?

- The rain, floods, and wind can be understood as both the final judgment when we stand before the Lord (**Rom. 14:12; 2Cor. 5:10**), and as the storms of life that test our foundation.

Read Matt. 7:13-20 (NIV)

“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. ¹⁴ But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

¹⁵ Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. ¹⁶ By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.”

Q: Jesus’ gate is narrow. What does that mean for you?

- It probably means you won’t be able to take much with you through that gate.
- There are lots of things you will probably have to leave behind to go where Jesus leads.

Q: Who are the “False Prophets” Jesus warns us about?

- They are the people who try to point people to a wider, easier gate to get through than the one Jesus opened for us.
- Jesus makes it clear **there will be people** pointing you to a different gate than the one He is pointing to (see also [Luke 13:24-25](#) and [John 10:7-10](#)).

Q: How can you know who is a “false prophet”?

- By their fruit! ([vs. 16-20](#))

Q: What is the “fruit” of the false prophets? (Check out [Matt. 12:33-37](#))

- The “fruit” of a false prophet, are the words they use.
- That means you can identify a false prophet by what they say!
 - False prophets are the ones who tell you Jesus’ gate is wider than it really is.
 - False prophets will tell you that you can go through Jesus’ gate, and still hold on to some of the things you don’t want to let go of.

What About You?

Q: What kind of storms has life brought your way?

- How did your “house” stand up to those storms?
- What does that tell you about your foundation?
- How will your house stand when you face final judgment?

Q: What storm(s) are you most afraid of?

- How well do you think your house would stand if that storm hit you?

Q: On a scale of 1 to 10, how committed are you to building “on the rock”?