

Through the Fire Matthew 7:15-20

INTRODUCTION:

We have Jesus proclaiming that all men's works will be tried by fire. Jesus point stems from his desire to warn people who come to us with bad intentions while claiming that they have good intentions.

Jesus Marks the Enemy: Matthew 7:15-20

Jesus cuts to the quick about the heart of people. Jesus main goal was to open up the minds of subdued, oppressed people about them being manipulated by those who claim to have intentions to help or make things better. Their offer should pass the test if it is true.

JESUS TEACHES:

Beware of false prophets. Jesus says:

- **VS 15:** They **come in Sheep's** Clothing – Their appearance, their expression, and their personalities seem harmless on the surface. But internally ...
- **VS 15:** Inside **they are ravening wolves** – They are in search of anything to consume for their own profit and benefit. **How will you identify** them?
- **VS16:** You will know them **by their fruits** – By paying attention to what they say, do, and even share.

WE LEARN:

There will always be that presence of exploitation, ambition, and opportunity.

- We should pay attention when people approach us to “teach” or “help” us.
- We must be wise enough to let people show us who they are through the benefit of doubt but keep careful consideration of motive and purpose.
- Whatever they may present to us will prove their intentions as positive or negative in purpose.
- We must be knowledgeable and alert of our associations and environments.

Let's be honest. Sometimes People are fake. This pretentious behavior will be exposed in time. Some are on a mission to benefit only self, with no intention of considering others for equal benefit. Some of these people have spent their whole lives trying to impress upon people to see them as good but they are truly a wolf in sheep's clothing. So, they prey on people who are kindhearted, naïve, or immature and have no awareness about the presence of manipulative people. What do we do about it?

Matthew 7:19,20

We look for the fruit. We look to see if lives and behavior match up to the standard that God has set for all. Everyone that is truly for God, will show it in their lives through the impact of their character. Those who intend to do what is right will have a legacy of honesty, integrity and many positive experiences. Those who have iniquity in their hearts will also have fruit and their legacy will be tainted with such corrosion.

The trees that produce bad fruit, Jesus says, will be cut down and burned.