

Matthew 7 (Part 6) :21-29

The Wise and Foolish Builders

Pastor Paul LeBoutillier · April 18, 2026

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Matthew chapter 7. Open your Bibles there. We're continuing our study through the Gospel of Matthew. Lord willing, we're even going to finish chapter 7 this morning. But, don't get your hopes up.

We'll see. We'll see what the Lord does. We're going to read through it all. I'll tell you that, and I think we'll be able to do it. But it says in, we're picking it up in verse 21, Matthew 7, 21.

It says, Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 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 perform many miracles. And then I will tell them plainly, I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers.

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. The rain came down, the streams rose, the winds blew and beat against that house, yet it did not fall because it had its foundation on the rock. 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. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house and it fell with a great crash. And then when Jesus had finished saying these things, and this basically encompasses all of chapters 5, 6, and 7, which we call the Sermon on the Mount, the crowds were amazed at his teaching because he taught as one who had authority and not as their teachers of the law.

Let's pray. Holy Spirit, we always need your grace and insight to understand your word, and so we're praying for that right now. Use this time to speak to us, Lord. You're so faithful and so kind to respond to the seeking heart. Lord, open our hearts now to you, we pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. The passage that we're looking at here today in our continuing study of Matthew really kind of covers two potential ways that we can deceive ourselves when it comes to the issue of the word of God.

And I do mean that sincerely. We can deceive ourselves into thinking that we're okay, everything is hunky-dory. And he's going to give us these two ways.

The first way is in verses 21 through 23, where Jesus makes reference to those who will call him Lord, Lord, but will be surprised by some of the things that they're told. And then the second way is in verses 24 through 29, dealing with the issue of the two houses and the structure on which they were built. Let's look at the first one. Again, in verse 21, it says, not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord. And by the way, that in the Greek, it speaks of an emphatic, intense, almost surprised sort of an addressing of the Lord.

Like Lord, Lord, sort of a kind of almost like, what's this all about? And he says, not everyone who says that is going to enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my father who is in heaven. And he says, in fact, verse 22, many are going to say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not? And then they're going to list the things that they have done and they are going to talk about things like prophecy, casting out of demons and performing other miracles. And I find it interesting that Jesus doesn't dispute them, their claims.

Yeah. And that is, that is pretty wild there. These people are those who are making a proper confession of Christ. You'll notice that they refer to him as Lord. Now, Lord doesn't have to mean Lord God.

It can just be a, a term of, of respect, almost like saying master or teacher, but you know, assuming that they meant it the right way. And I think there's a possibility that they did. They are making the right confession and they are even telling Jesus that they were involved in all kinds of religious activity. You know, spiritual phenomena took place in their lives, such as prophecy, miracles, casting out of demons and so forth. Again, Jesus doesn't say, Oh no, you didn't do that stuff.

You're lying. He didn't say that. He just cuts right to what his message to them is. And that is what is in verse 23. If you look with me there again, he says, then I will tell them plainly, I never knew you.

I never knew you. And by the way, when Jesus, really there's two things in this statement. He says, I never knew you and away from me, you evil doers. First of all, when he says, I never knew you, he's not saying, I didn't know who you were or, you know, where'd you come from? Or gee, we've never met.

Hi, I'm Jesus. What he's saying when in that phrase, I never knew you is you never belonged to me because frankly, I never belonged in your life. So it's, it's a, it's a relational term more than an intellectual term of, you know, Oh, I know who you are. We're acquaintances or something like that. I never belonged to you.

You never belonged to me. But the second response to these people who come and declare that they should be allowed to enter into heaven on that day. And by the way, that day refers to judgment day. The second thing that Jesus says to them is actually a little more telling. He says to them away from me, look what he says, you evil doers.

Now that's the ultimate proof that the people to whom Jesus is addressing here in these verses, that's the ultimate proof that they have not been born again because their lives have not changed. Their lives continue to be characterized by evil and not by the, the, the good that God begins to work in our lives when we come to him by faith to Jesus. You know, there's a, there's a powerful verse that Paul gives us in his letter to Timothy. His actually his second letter to Timothy that I want to put up on the screen for you because it encompasses these two ideas. Look what he writes.

Paul writes to Timothy and he says, nevertheless, God's solid foundation stands firm and it is sealed with this inscription. First of all, the Lord knows those who are his. That encompass that first part of what Jesus says to this group of people. I never knew you. God knows the Lord knows who are his.

And secondly, everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness. Isn't it interesting that these individuals who come to Jesus here in Matthew chapter seven, they freely confess the name of the Lord. They don't mind talking about the Lord. They'll talk about the Lord all day long, but they have never turned away from their lives of wickedness. They never came to him to change their hearts and change their lives.

You know, people can talk about God. You know, I'm, I'm one of those people that I, I, I mean, you want to talk to me about God. I'll talk to you about God all day long. I enjoy talking about God. I enjoy even getting into theological discussions from time to time.

I'm not a theologian by any stretch of the imagination, but I, I think it's kind of fun. I even remember when I was in college, I would take up a side of debate on a particular subject from the Bible, not necessarily because I've believed it just because it was fun to argue, you know, it was fun to debate and there were things I didn't even believe necessarily, but I just kind of took the position because, well, we'll just see what these guys come up with, you know, on the other side of the equation or whatever. But, you know, there's an inherent danger with sitting and talking theology and that inherent danger is that we can begin to believe that by talking about it, we're okay. And by just using the name of the Lord, you know, from time to time we're okay. There's also an inherent danger in the idea that we, that, that, that if we traffic around where miracles are taking place, that things are okay or people are okay, or even we're okay.

Prophecy. Did you notice some of these people that are standing before Jesus says, did we not prophesy in your name? You think, wow, how can somebody prophesy in his name and really not be one of his easy? You guys remember in the scriptures, remember good old character Balaam when the nation of Israel was making their way to the promised land and they were going through the area of Moab and the king of Moab hired Balaam to come and put a curse on Israel and took him up to a bunch of different mountaintops to as he is, the people were passing through so that he would curse them. And what came out of Balaam's mouth?

Some of the most incredibly beautiful prophecies that you'll ever read in the scripture. In fact, some of the most beautiful prophecies of Messiah came out of Balaam's mouth, but this was a man who would later on betray the Lord's people to their enemies. Remember Saul, King Saul, the Bible says he entered into such incredible. Disobedience and rebellion against God That he actually was visited with a demonic spirit that tormented him now Here's a man for whom the Holy Spirit has gone and a demonic spirit has now taken over because he's just totally whacked out I mean the guy's just a nutjob from the word go and he's totally rebellious totally just you know off his rocker But as he's out looking for David to kill him for no good reason other than jealousy Bible says he finds the company of the prophets He literally walks into the presence of the company of the prophets what happens to Saul he starts to prophesy He just begins to prophesy the Spirit of the Lord comes on him and he begins to prophesy Does that mean he was born again? Is that mean he was saved?

Does that mean he was on his way to heaven? Of course not you see the possibility of someone being involved in some kind of a spiritual Phenomena that that that you can point to and you can say wow, that's real doesn't necessarily say that that person is A godly individual at all and then this thing about miracles then you read that it says these people said to Jesus did we not do? Miracles in your name some people really get cranked around about that one. They'll go well now. How can that be?

How can they have how can they've been involved in some kind of miraculous stuff and not ever been a child of God? people listen Miraculous miracles speak of the power of God not the power of people people don't do miracles God does miracles and God can choose to accomplish a miracle through anybody he wants. He made a donkey speak to Balaam And some donkeys are still speaking today from time to time the whole point is Just because there is Supernatural phenomena taking place. It's not a guarantee you can't and you know There's a whole crowd of Christians today who just move around from spiritual phenomena to spiritual phenomena Just looking for the latest greatest wackiest weirdest most thrilling most exciting most sensational thing that they can find Thinking that God is there Well, you know The people that they may be entering into with could it could be a real serious sort of a situation So What is it

that's going to show that a person has really truly been saved if it's not our confession alone, by the way There's something wrong with confession. We do need to confess Christ.

Don't we the Bible even says it in Romans chapter 10? I believe it is that you know, if we confess with our mouth and believe with our heart and so forth So confession is good But what has to happen there has to be a company thing to that confession There needs to be a changed life, it's not and it's not you changing your life It's God changing your life, but it's you allowing him to do that work, right? so many Christians will sit and talk about their law and I understand people want to think the best about their loved one But they'll talk about some loved one Who confessed Christ at some time in their life and have never? Once shown an ounce of fruit in their lives and yet when you ask him well as your loved one saved they'll say well Yeah, well, how do you know because he confessed Christ that doesn't mean anything These people to whom Jesus says away with you I never knew you confessed him Lord Lord They used his name there was spiritual phenomena going around going on in their lives There were things that were happening and yet Jesus said you've never belonged to me. I've never belonged to you Those are important Really really important things to remember you remember and speaking of miracles remember Judas Judas Iscariot and people I was like to debate, you know, did you just go to heaven?

Yeah, I don't think so You know what Jesus said about Judas He says it would be been better for him if he had never been born that didn't sound like somebody on their way to heaven Judas was the man who? Betrayed Christ, of course, but do you guys know that he went out with the other disciples with the power to heal and cast out demons? Judas Yeah, he was involved spiritual Supernatural phenomena taking place. He sought he participated in it didn't mean he was saved Didn't mean he was born again What is Jesus looking for is he looking for you to say well I'm just gonna really try hard to get my life together No, I see I was going to be careful whenever we're talking in the Word of God here about how God is looking to see Changes in your life. There are always going to be a certain amount of the people who hear that message who are going to think oh I need to work harder.

I need to and they'll even say it sometimes they'll even say I'm really sorry pastor Paul come and talk to me about something going on. They'll say I'm really this is just an area of my life I'm really working on and and and I want to I want to shake them sometimes and say stop working on it and Give it to Jesus. You can't do it. You can't change your life You can't change your your your behavior. You can't you can't impress God with your effort.

So don't even try Give your life to God give your heart to God give your future to him Surrender the members of your body to him Be you know, allow him to receive the glory and the honor for doing the

work of changing your life The change does not come by human effort people the change that he's looking for in our lives is a work that happens when people genuinely encounter Jesus Christ the risen Jesus Christ and he comes to live inside of them through his spirit and by that indwelling begins to change their lives and then what happens is Fruit begins to grow on the branches of their lives, you know And I want to show you another passage that kind of talks about this because it's so easy to get Frustrated and discouraged with the things that that knock us down and the things that we struggle with but in first Corinthians Paul writes To the church in Corinth and says this he says do you not know that the wicked will not inherit? The kingdom of God and so he says when this is important do not be deceived neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor Slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. Don't be deceived. It ain't gonna happen. Okay?

but look what he goes on to say and this is very important and That is what some of you were But what happens you were washed? You were Sanctified which means you were set apart for God You were justified. That's a legal term meaning you've been acquitted It's just as if you had never sinned in God's Court of you know justice in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God So you see this is the way we used to be Here's this laundry list that Paul basically kind of gives us to say listen Don't be deceived these things these people who engage in these things. They're not going to inherit the kingdom of God That's just the situation. Okay?

So don't be deceived What is God looking for in our lives He's looking for good fruit and those who are putting out this kind of fruit. Don't be deceived. They're not gonna you know Enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he reminds us of one very important thing. That's what some of you were He's not saying that There isn't an ongoing struggle or even a temptation or even periodic failures He's not saying that but he's saying you are no longer that you cannot call yourself by that name anymore You're not bad anymore. Here's why because you've been washed You've been cleansed you've been sanctified you've been justified right Through Jesus Christ in the name of Jesus Christ and by the power of the Spirit of God and now he has given you the ability To conquer the flesh to say no to the temptations of the flesh and to say I'm not gonna do that anymore Doesn't mean you're gonna do it perfectly but you're now gonna do it and we're gonna see it and We're gonna look at it.

We're gonna rejoice and God is gonna see it and God says that's one of mine right there. See that's one of mine Used to be all these things, you know, but now there's been a change Because my spirit has come in they humbled themselves. They came to me. They repented of their sin They received my spirit into their lives and now there's a change going on. There's true change Transformation.

Listen guys, if you don't hear anything else for what I say this morning here this Jesus changes people. If somebody has an encounter with Jesus Christ and they don't change, I doubt the validity of that encounter. If somebody says I know Christ and they and and and there's just this there's just this no fruit sort of a situation on their branches. Then we have reason to wonder. Not judge, but wonder now the second part of this passage where Jesus speaks of these two houses I want to look at this once again look at verse 24 in your Bible. It says 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 and He'll tell us in a minute what the rock stands for and by the way, it's not Jesus in other places. The rock is Jesus, but not this time. The rain came down the streams rose the winds blew beat against the house didn't fall why it was built on. This foundation on this rock. Okay. 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. All those things happen to the house. The rain the streams the wind. So forth and that house fell with a crash. This is the final point to illustrate it. Jesus speaks of two men who build a house. Now you'll notice that Jesus has absolutely no complaint about the quality of the house in fact to the to the the I. You know the casual observer looking at these two houses there doesn't seem to be any difference at all. Between them and the reason is because it's not the house. That is a problem. They both appear to be soundly built. What is the critical element about these two houses is that which upon? They are built and that is the rock the foundation. What is the foundation the foundation is a symbol in this passage of those who hear the word and either obey it or don't obey it. In other words those who either apply the Word of God in their lives or don't apply the Word of God in their lives. Those who apply the Word of God there for them. This is the picture of building your house on a stable foundation for those who hear the Word of God. But don't apply it. It's to them is building your house on something that is shifting and it can be easily eroded by the running of water which of course you know these are pictures of trials tribulations and difficulties. So this is another interesting really picture of those whose life is in Christ. What do we find out? What is what is indicative of somebody whose life is in Christ and really found it on an application of God's Word their?

Stability in their lives things don't fall down. Oh, they feel all the same stuff that is everybody else the winds the waves the crashing you know. You know just beating against that house all the same garbage that happens to people outside of The Lord happens to these people. But there is one major difference the house that which is built remains it stands because why because they have not just heard they have applied The Word of God and see this is the second thing this is second area where we can deceive ourselves regarding the Word of God. The first one was if we hang around with people who say Lord Lord Lord Lord Lord and where there's supernatural stuff going on. We're good. They're good. We're all good. That's a deception.

Potentially What's the second deception that we're coming to church here in the the word? Opening up our Bible reading the word I'm reading my Bible reading my Bible every day, man.

I turn on Christian radio I'm listening to the scriptures stuff. You know it's cool. Yeah You know what? Did you notice that both these guys heard the word? both these builders Both of them heard both of them knew people will say to me at once in a while Yeah, my cousin he can he can quote the Bible frontwards and backwards Who cares?

The question is does he live it Is he living the Word of God? Is there a an outgrowth? Is there an application from the Word of God in his or her life? That's what's important. And that is what Jesus says will mark a stable life now there are some people who look at this passage here in Matthew chapter 7 and believe that the idea of Judgment or Judgment Day carries on into these last few verses We saw it in the earlier verses where Jesus said they will come to me on that day and say Lord Lord Did we not and then right after that?

He tells this parable of these two houses and you'll notice he begins it with therefore Which connects the two passages and there are many who believe that this this structure? Standing is the fact that on Judgment Day in a sense that they they will they will remain they will stand and that which they Have built will not be destroyed, but I think there's also an application to this just in our everyday life I mean before judgment I mean just the way we live our lives today just the the things that we go through today We see a stability in people's lives Who are applying the Word of God on a daily basis not just hearing the Word of God You can tell people who hear the Word of God because when they go difficult through a difficult time and you say to them Well, like it says in the scripture they go. I know I know I know it I know what it says and you know what they do They do know But they don't want to hear about it because they haven't applied it and Don't think that I'm not just as much to blame as you are in this area You know You can get to a point in your life and your Christian walk where you think you kind of got things kind of dialed In and you think like okay, I think me and God are doing pretty good here even in my own life lately There's just been things happening where God has been revealing to me Some areas where I have not yet fully applied his word as if that should be a big surprise It's not But my point is it's never a fun revelation. You know, it never is a fun revelation when God says to you Hey my child. I love you with an everlasting love Yeah, knucklehead, but there's here's some other areas where you've just kind of held back And You've taught my word.

You've known my word. You can recite my word You can sometimes quote it from memory, but you have yet not yet applied it to your life You have not yet really truly lived it out in a way that brings

Stability in your heart and the reason your heart is melting like wax Right now in the midst of these trials is because you have yet to apply the full intent of my word Wow That can be a hard thing to hear. I Mean that can be a difficult thing to hear But there's there's also a joy that attends it You know, some of you guys know what I mean? There's a joy that attends it There's a joy in the midst of that understanding that you know what God is. He's might be doing open-heart surgery on me right now But it's a good thing It's a good thing.

He's doing because he loves me Because he loves me he's doing it because he's preparing me and and and so forth James in his letter one and only letter in the scripture talks about this very Same thing. Let me put it on the screen for you James chapter 1 Do not merely Listen to the word and so deceive yourselves notice that it's a deceptive to just listen. He says do what it says He in fact he goes on to say that anyone who listens to the word But does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in the mirror And then after looking at himself goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like Now that sounds funny, doesn't it? I mean it does we kind of go ha ha ha ha that's stupid Who would look in the mirror and forget what he looks like? Do you know what it means?

He's likening the Word of God to a mirror What is the Word of God? We know what a mirror does it gives us a reflection of who we are and you know what? Boy one thing I've learned the mirror don't lie And boy the older I get the more I hate mirrors. I really do I mean mirrors are no longer my friend you walk by a mirror, and you just go oh Shut up. I Don't want to hear it today But you know the Word of God has a purpose But you know the Word of God has an effect like a mirror it reflects back to us when we see ourselves in the reflection Of God's Word it reflects back to us about our lives, and it shows us what we look like spiritually But you know what James says here that the man who hears the word But doesn't put it into practice It's like it's just like a man who looks into a mirror and then forgets what he looks like Because see what we're doing when we don't put the Word of God into practice We're seeing we're being convicted by the Word of God, but but we just we don't do anything about it Have you ever come to church and felt convicted?

After hearing a message. I mean have you ever just opened your Bible and just read it and just you just kind of were like Busted Right or you ever listen to somebody on the radio teaching or something like that, and you're kind of like driving along going. Oh Lord you know You know, you just it just there's a stabbing sort of a you know, you got me People Don't don't be satisfied. Don't don't Don't think that just because you were convicted that that was the end of it or that now everything is okay What did you do with that conviction? What did you do with it when you when you're convicted here at church or something like that for hearing the word Do you just kind of get up and then go home?

Turn on the game get involved in making dinner and Whatever you have going on in your life, yeah. Well, you know church was good today. Thanks. You know, it's just really good We always appreciate you know those convicting messages pastor. Thank you You know not that we're gonna do anything about it, but thanks You know because I can tell the words really doing having an effect on my life because I'm been really convicted lately Doesn't matter what have you done with the conviction?

What have you done with it Did you get down on your knees and say Jesus? Yeah, you got me now. I don't know what to do about this Change my life Change my heart change who I am. I I'm lost and you know what that's okay That's an okay thing to say to God to say, you know what? I honestly don't know what to do about this.

You've convicted me about something in my life I don't know how to handle that but You do so, you know what? I'm gonna I'm gonna just keep praying about this and say, you know And and maybe even you should maybe even start a place in your Bible Probably wouldn't be a bad idea You know those nifty little pages sometimes in the back where there's only white and that's all There's just like some blank white pages or in the front something like that. Maybe you just put on the top of one of those pages convictions or things the Holy Spirit has convicted me about and then just start to write them down every time you come to church every Time you hear something on the radio or TV every time, you know you're just reading in the word and God convicts you just write those thing down so that you can pray about them and Give them to the Lord Lord. This is an area of my life You've convicted me about and I don't want to walk away and just forget about it because that's like the man who sees himself in The mirror and then walks away and forgets what he looks like And that's pretty dumb. So I don't want to do that.

I want you know, you've taken the time To show me who I really am And even though I don't like it You know how like I said, I walk by mirrors today and I just don't want to look Sometimes I walk by the Word of God. I don't want to look either Why do you think people stop reading their Bibles? Why do you think people stop coming to church? You think it's all but you think those excuses they gave you were really real. Oh, we're just so busy You think that's true Hey, listen, they're not too busy to go boating or they're not too busy to you know Run to the hills or they're not too busy to go skiing or to go out and you know Play this or go to the game or go golfing or whatever.

Listen you find time for what you think is important bottom line So don't give me that junk anymore about I'm too busy. You're not going to church because you don't like the conviction You don't like being convicted and you don't like turning your back on the conviction when God shows you These are hard passages, aren't they? Yeah, this is not easy to even talk about These are hard things to even read because

we're being confronted here with the duplicity the natural duplicity of our lives To think one thing to think we're okay and then and then have Jesus come along and tell us you know what? I don't know Uh, this didn't look real solid to me and For us to kind of have to ask ourselves the question. Well, how do I know?

How do I know You remember that that Paul said I don't have this scripture on the top of my head But I think it's in 2nd Corinthians But Jesus or excuse me Paul the Apostle wrote and he said to examine yourselves test yourselves to see if you're in the faith Well, how What are you gonna do give yourself a 10-point quiz Well, you know what? I believe that right here in Matthew chapter 7 There are three powerful tests That right now You can you can take you can ask yourself this question. Am I in Christ? Because you know what the reality is not everybody in this room is in Christ I don't know who they are, but I and I don't and I don't have any certain any divine insight I'm just telling you the odds are with us that not everybody here in this room is born again Not everybody here saved So, how do I know because I don't want to deceive myself, right? I mean, I'm assuming since you're in church you came here.

You took the trouble of coming here today It's like well, I didn't want to really waste my time and I really would like to know that I'm in Christ I mean that would really be a good thing to know Well, sometimes you got to ask some tough questions and I believe that there are three tough questions that emerge from our study here of Matthew and I'm gonna give them to you right here In fact, I'm gonna put them up on the screen for you here So that those of you taking notes, you can kind of apply these things So we're gonna look at some testings how to test our faith from Matthew chapter 7 But we're gonna for those of you that haven't maybe been in on our study of all of chapter 7 We we started at the beginning of Matthew, but and we're gonna go to the end of Matthew But just here in chapter 7, we've talked about some important things. And the first one is you'll remember the two Roads, do you guys remember back in verses 13 and 14? Here's what Jesus said He said make every effort to enter through the narrow gate For narrow is the road that leads to life But then he said and he said and few find it But broad or wide is the door that leads to destruction In other words, it's easy It's easy to get on the broad way The wide way, it's real easy. All you got to do is just do nothing You know, I mean Yeah So here's the first question to ask Have I had to pay any kind of a price for my Profession of Christ for my my life in Christ now, I'm not just that's not saying that your salvation you have to pay for your salvation I'm not saying that salvation is free Forgiveness of sins is free to those who ask but let me ask you something Has it cost you anything in just your daily life or are you still living your life? Just the way you always did has it cost you nothing Because You know what when you're on the narrow path when you're on that hard road, it's a hard road There are things you have to give up There are things you you do you give up now?

Hopefully it should be a glad surrender in your life But there are there are things you have to give up sometimes it's friends Can't hang with those friends anymore. I love them I'm praying for them, but I've had to give them up because you know they're just they're just doing the thing that we used to do and I used to do before I knew Jesus and Hanging with them is only going to be a detriment to my walk with the Lord And then maybe you wanted to move somewhere but you prayed about it and the Lord closed the door Well back before you knew Jesus you just would have gone You just would have picked up and moved But now you're you're following a master who sometimes closes doors in your life much to your chagrin But that you know, it's something you pay for Has there been any personal cost in your own life related to your walk with Christ? The next thing that we see on this list of things from Matthew chapter 7 is then the two Trees and you'll remember that in verses 15 through 20 Jesus talked to us about Whether or not we were a fruit tree or a thorn tree and he said that you'll know a person by their fruit Look on a person's branches. Do you see fruit or do you see thorns? You don't walk up to a fruit tree and find thorns.

You don't walk up to a thorn bush and find fruit because that's just contrary to the the you know what it's there to do and So he's saying basically he's asking the question are godly fruits Emerging in your life. In other words, are you getting victory over that sin? Are you still or is that is that jealousy still the same problem? It used to be. How about your anger issue?

Are you seeing progress there? Are you seeing the Lord do some work in your life? Maybe some of those excesses in your life as you give them over to him more and more little by little You're going to see Christ making changes in your life. What changes have you seen? You can encourage yourself by saying yeah, my life is changed, you know down the road You ought to be like a person like a snake who just just got out of his skin It's like this is new.

I look back on my life before Christ and I think who is that guy? I Mean what a creep you know, I am dead convinced That if I had not met Jesus Christ and turned my life over to him I am absolutely convinced within myself that I would have had by this time in my life multiple marriages multiple children probably out of wedlock Who knows maybe even multiple diseases because of it I've been married now for 34 years and I Adore my wife and I think she kind of likes me and and you know what? It's the grace of God, it's because Jesus Christ changes people. He changes people. Most of you guys know that the only reason I really even gave my life to Christ, I shouldn't say that, what the impetus was for me to even bring my life before the Lord was the failure of my marriage.

That's why I came to the Lord, because my marriage failed. Maybe I'm still married to the same woman, but that doesn't negate the fact that all I know about marriage is how to mess one up. What God

has shown me is how to keep one together. But that's because Jesus changes people. You can look at your life and you can say, you know what?

That's God's fruit. That's God's fruit. As far as I go, I'm an idiot, but God is really cool. Then the last thing is these two houses that we've been dealing with here in verses 24 through 27, and they remind us of the fact that true faith in Christ will last. It will bring stability in the midst of the storms of life, and even at the final judgment, if that is in fact in view in these verses.

And so you can ask yourself the question, am I standing strong in Jesus? You know, there's three tests right there. Are you on the narrow road? Is life hard? If life is hard and if you've been having to give up a lot, you're probably on the right path.

And then next, those two trees, are you seeing the fruit of the Holy Spirit in your life? And then thirdly, are you seeing the stability of God? We talked today, we sang today about, you know, he gives me perfect peace. We sang that today. Is that a reality in your life?

Are you finding places where he gives you peace? Or is your life just kind of a constant tailspin? Those are questions. Those are tests. Those are things that help us determine if we're in Christ.

And you know what? Now's the time to ask the question. You don't want to be one of those people standing before the Lord one day saying, Lord, Lord, didn't I go to church? Didn't I have my Bible with me? Didn't I nod my head in agreement when the pastor said, yeah, yeah, yeah, this and that?

Wasn't I involved at kids camp? Didn't I go to refuge camp and sing and raise my hands? You don't want to hear Jesus say to you, I never knew you. You were never mine because I was never yours. You want to deal with it right here, right now.

Those of you who are thinking in your heart, it doesn't matter, God won't accept me. That is a lie from Satan. That is a lie from the devil. Don't you believe that at all? God loves you.

He loves you with an everlasting love and you are not too far. You're not too far gone. You can come to him right now and you can say, Jesus, change my life. I confess my sin. I receive your Holy Spirit.

Now change me. I can't change myself. You change me. And you just let God do it and you just keep feeding your heart and soul with his word and prayer and you let God do the rest. Amen.

Amen. Amen.