

Pr Mark Turner: Disciples Indeed (1/9/18)

Review:

Throughout the sermon on the mount Jesus has been inviting us into perceiving and experiencing the kingdom. In Matthew 5 we saw Him talking about what it looks like to be citizens of the Kingdom, and then He began to unfold the principles of the Kingdom. In Matthew 6 & 7 we saw Him talk of the conduct of the Kingdom. He began with the Christian's piety, then spoke of Christian goal and priorities, before moving into the sections on Christian relationships and the commitment of the Christian. Today, as He concludes His sermon, we are going to see that he will talk to us about entering the Kingdom.

Entering the Kingdom

This sermon will basically be broken into three main parts.

1. Choose the Right Path
2. Beware of False Prophets
3. Build on the Right Foundation

Choose the Right Path (Matthew 7:13,14)

This theme of choosing the right path is not something that Jesus just made up. It has been present all through the Biblical narrative.

- Deuteronomy 30:19 - Choose life!
- Joshua 24:14,15 - Choose who you serve...
- 1 Kings 18:21 - Choose...
- Jeremiah 21:8 - Choose. Either the way of life, or the way of death.

"Enter by the narrow gate"

- Matthew 5:3
- Matthew 5:20
- Matthew 7:21

'Why?' We might say. Because the alternative path (gate) leads to destruction... so choose life!

The narrow path, though at times difficult and confined, leads to life.

"In the road to death the whole race may go, with all their worldliness, all their selfishness, all their pride, dishonesty, and moral debasement. There is room for every man's opinions and doctrines, space to follow his inclinations, to do whatever his self-love may dictate. In order to go in the path that leads to destruction, there is no need of searching for the way; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad, and the feet naturally turn into the path that ends in death. But the way to life is narrow and the entrance strait. If you cling to any besetting sin you will find the way too narrow for you to enter. Your own ways, your own will, your evil habits and practices, must be given up if you would keep the way of the Lord. He who would serve Christ cannot follow the world's opinions or meet the world's standard. Heaven's path is too narrow for rank and riches to ride in state, too narrow for the play of self-centered ambition, too steep and rugged for lovers of ease to climb. Toil, patience, self-sacrifice, reproach, poverty, the contradiction of sinners against Himself, was the portion of Christ, and it must be our portion, if we ever enter the Paradise of God."

Ellen White, Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, pg 138

Acts 14:22 - The apostles essentially said 'Why would we expect to enter the kingdom by an easier way than Jesus?'

Essentially, Jesus is saying “Choose life!”

Beware of False Prophets (Matthew 7:15-23)

This is not the last time that someone will warn about the infectious danger of false teachers.

- Matthew 24:11,24 - Deception
- 2 Peter 2:1-3 - False Teachers

According to Jesus, these people will seek to obscure the way to the kingdom. But, in case you thought you were safe enough, their appearance is deceptive - they look good on the outside.

“Inwardly they are ravenous wolves”

- Acts 20:29-31 - They will seek to draw away disciples after themselves.

How will we recognise them?

- Isaiah 8:20
- “By their fruits” (Matthew 7:16-20)

Matthew 7:21-23

“It’s not by your profession that you will enter into the kingdom.” Mark Turner

“I never knew you”

- Self appointed ministry
- You practice iniquity/lawlessness (this is not the first time he has shared the idea that these will not be well received into the kingdom. See Matthew 5:19)
- They don’t do the Father’s will, but do “what is right in their own eyes” (as in the Old Testament).

Build on the Right Foundation (Matthew 7:24-27)

“Whoever hears these sayings of mine”

This is a reference to the teachings of the sermon on the mount.

See just a few of them from each chapter:

- Matt 5:12; 5:16; 5:23,24; 5:28; 5:44; 5:48
- Matt 6:1; 6:5,6; 6:19,20; 6:33,34
- Matt 7:1; 7:6; 7:7; 7:12; 7:13; 7:15; 7:21

In Jesus’ illustration about the two men building their houses He uses imagery.

- House = The Christian life.
- Rock = Christ/Obedience to the teachings of Jesus.
- Sand = Doing “what is right in our own eyes.”
- Storms = The trials of life.

Jesus seems to be saying ‘don’t build your house on the flood plain. Instead, build your life on the higher ground of my teachings.’

Conclusion:

1. Enter by the way of *intentionality* - no matter how hard.
2. Evaluate all teaching upon the principles of the Word of God.
3. Then build on that foundation!

James 1:22-25 - Be doers of the Word!