

FALL, 2023 | SERMON ON THE MOUNT
Life Group WORKSHEET
Week 8 - “Distinctive Durability” | MATTHEW 7:21-29

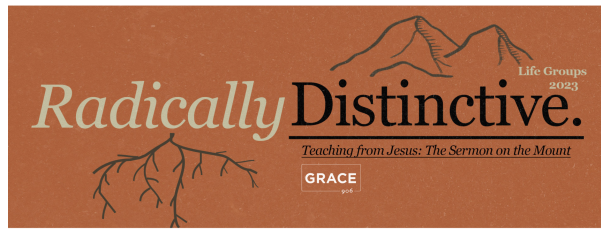
INTRODUCTION

We have titled this entire series, “**Radically Distinctive.**” The English term “radical” comes from a Latin term, “radix,” which means, “at the root.” In this series, we are going to see in the teaching of Jesus that life in the Kingdom of God is distinctive at the root. Followers of Jesus are radical in that they are rooted in Him. Their hearts have been changed, AND are being changed by Jesus. Being connected to Him, and rooted in Him, followers of Jesus are to be distinctive in the culture around us. That is at the heart of the message of the Sermon on the Mount.

Gospel Foundation

Before reading this week’s passage in Matthew 7:21-29, we remind ourselves that all of us need a Savior. Left to ourselves, none of us on our own possess a righteousness that is adequate before GOD. That is why Jesus came. An angel of the LORD came to a group of shepherds in a field outside Bethlehem. “I bring you good news of great joy that shall be for all the people. For to you is born in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the LORD (Luke 2:10-11). By virtue of the redeeming of Christ, the LORD is offering to anyone and everyone His saving grace. We receive this gift when we humble ourselves and trust Jesus. In Christ, there is no longer condemnation for those who believe (Romans 8:1). We are given the forgiveness of sin and the righteousness of Jesus through faith (II Corinthians 5:21).

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus is saying that life in the Kingdom of God is radically distinctive. It is not about going through the motions or maintaining a façade of devotion outwardly. The LORD desires our hearts. When our hearts are honestly surrendered in faith to Jesus, there is going to be an outward expression of that inward reality.



INTRO to Matthew 7:21-29

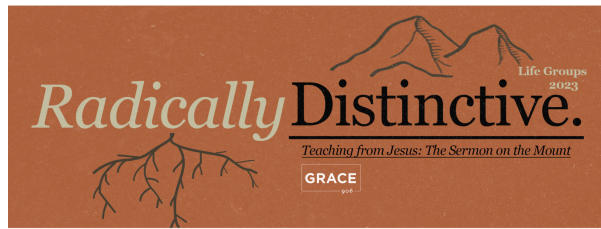
Jesus wraps up His sermon in verse 27. The Gospel writer, Matthew, includes some closing editorial remarks in verses 28-29 about the impression this sermon left on the crowd that had gathered to hear it.

The final verses of Jesus' sermon are challenging. Far from a crescendo, Jesus ends His sermon on a severe note. Why would He do that? Jesus was not teaching for applause or for "social media LIKES." He was lovingly communicating truth about life in the KINGDOM of God. So, He speaks the truth and He warns in love. He is saying that perseverance is an expression of saving faith. There is durability. Jesus calls for a decision and for fruitful action that is an expression of the root of faith. Jesus issued a storm warning at the end of His sermon. We are all building a house (a life), and all of us are going to face a storm. Durability is tied to foundation. Is the foundation of your life solid? Jesus made it clear that the distinctive measures of evaluation that matter to man are of little importance to God. Jesus implies that there are going to be some surprises at the judgment. For those who ignore HIM, collapse is just around the corner. What we must recognize is that Christ's warnings are honest expressions of love. May God give us ears to hear His words this week.

Matthew 7:21-29

²¹ "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' ²³ And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'

²⁴ "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. ²⁶ And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. ²⁷ And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it."



²⁸ And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching,
²⁹ for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

Introductory Questions:

What are some qualities of authenticity in the life of someone?

What are some qualities of durability in the life of someone?

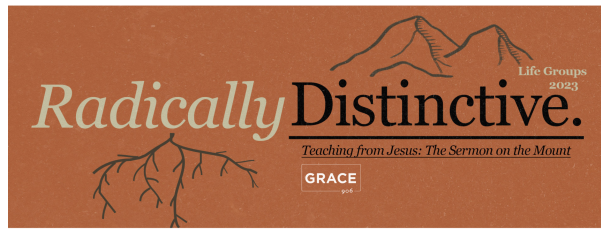
DISCUSSION BODY

(Before meeting, please read through Matthew 5:1 - 7:29.)

1. In verses 21-23, Jesus describes people who perform admirable deeds and speak admirable words, yet how did Jesus respond to them? Why?
2. What is authentic fruit that Jesus describes in these verses?
3. Did the people Jesus referred to in verses 21-23 perceive themselves as being in the Kingdom?

(Verses 24-27)

4. What are both the similarities and the differences between the two builders?



5. What are the storms of life revealing about your spiritual health?
6. How do we receive Jesus' teaching to prepare us for the storms of life?
7. Is Jesus ultimately talking about building a house, or is He referencing something else?
8. How do we evaluate authentic faith in the lives around us and in ourselves?
9. What's the danger of hearing and agreeing with the Word of God but not taking a step of obedience?
10. (Verse 28-29) The Sermon on the Mount ended in verse 27. Matthew makes an editorial statement in verse 28: "The crowds were astonished at his teaching." Why were they astonished?

CONCLUSION

11. Has any particular part of the Sermon on the Mount astonished you? Discuss which part and why.