

Matthew 7:15–29 (NKJV) — Group Study Questions

1. What does Jesus mean by “false prophets,” and how can they be recognized today?

Jesus warns that false prophets often appear trustworthy and sincere, yet their influence is harmful (Matthew 7:15). Rather than focusing on appearance or words alone, Jesus teaches that they are recognized by their fruit—the results their message produces over time (Matthew 7:16). In everyday life, false teaching may sound encouraging but subtly shifts focus away from repentance, obedience, or trust in God. Discernment requires patience and attentiveness to whether teaching leads people toward Christlike character and truth (Deuteronomy 13:1–3; Galatians 5:22–23).

2. What does Jesus mean by judging a tree by its fruit?

Jesus explains that what a person truly is on the inside eventually shows on the outside (Matthew 7:17–18). Fruit represents consistent patterns of belief and behavior, not isolated actions. A healthy tree produces good fruit because it is rooted in what is good. Likewise, genuine faith results in a life that reflects obedience, humility, and love (Luke 6:43–45).

3. Why does Jesus emphasize obedience over verbal profession in verses 21–23?

Jesus warns that saying the right words—even calling Him “Lord”—does not necessarily reflect true submission to God (Matthew 7:21). Religious activity and spiritual language can exist without obedience. Jesus highlights that genuine relationship with Him is shown through alignment with God’s will, not just outward actions (Luke 6:46; John 14:15).

4. What does it mean to “do the will of My Father” in everyday life?

Doing the will of the Father involves responding to God’s Word with trust and obedience, not merely hearing or agreeing with it (Matthew 7:21). This includes allowing God’s truth to shape daily decisions, relationships, and priorities. Scripture emphasizes that those who hear and act on God’s Word are truly blessed (Luke 11:28; Romans 12:1–2).

5. Why does Jesus compare obedience to building on a rock?

Jesus describes obedience as a solid foundation that provides stability when life becomes difficult (Matthew 7:24). A house built on rock withstands storms because it rests on something firm. In the same way, lives shaped by obedience to Christ remain grounded during hardship, uncertainty, or pressure (Matthew 7:25; Psalm 62:6–7).

6. What do the rain, floods, and winds represent in the parable?

The storms represent challenges that test the strength of a person’s foundation (Matthew 7:25, 27). These challenges may include suffering, temptation, or moments that reveal what truly sustains faith. Scripture teaches that testing exposes the quality of what has been built and reveals what is genuine (1 Corinthians 3:13; 1 Peter 1:6–7).

7. How can someone avoid building on sand without realizing it?

Building on sand happens when hearing God's Word is not followed by obedience (Matthew 7:26). It may involve relying on knowledge, habits, or past experiences rather than ongoing faithfulness. Scripture encourages self-examination and responsiveness to God's Word so that faith remains active and alive (Psalm 119:105; James 1:22–25).

8. Why were the crowds astonished at Jesus' teaching?

The crowds were amazed because Jesus taught with authority, not merely repeating or citing the teachings of others (Matthew 7:28–29). In Jesus' day, people were accustomed to hearing scribes and teachers reference established rabbis and traditions to support their interpretations of the Law. Jesus, however, spoke directly and decisively, presenting God's truth without appealing to human authorities. His teaching carried weight because it flowed from who He is and demanded a personal response, calling listeners not just to understand God's Word, but to obey it (Deuteronomy 18:18; John 7:16; Colossians 3:16).