

# *Mt. Lebanon Church*

Sermon

2.14.2021

Please look up and read all verses in their entirety. I have only written partial verses.

Make your own notes, write down other scriptures that you run across while studying, write down questions that you may have or comments as well. Allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to you what he would have you to see through the study of Gods word.

Wolves in Sheep's Clothing

## Matthew 7: 13 – 15

The word of God warns us to beware of false teachers. These are those who portray kindness with good intentions, but inwardly they are full of deceit and distrust. These are people who twist the truth of the scripture to fit their own agenda, deceiving others with false prophecies, teachings, and doctrines, all the while making it seemingly attractive, using the deceptiveness of the truth. Things that we once saw as accurate and complete without question, now it becomes harder to recognize those things which is true and that which is false. God's word, since the beginning of time, has been quoted by those who, twist it to manipulate the truth in order to deceive, and to lead others astray. When we find ourselves coming into this state of confusion, we must be spiritually prepared in our ability to see through the deception, not only to protect ourselves, but to have the ability to warn others.

**Matthew 7: 13 – 15,....**enter ye in at the strait gate, for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in there at, because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. Because of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves....

There are many things that we must learn as believers, so that we may have understanding of who these false prophets are, those who come in sheep's clothing, but are indeed ravenous wolves. Christ, when teaching his disciples, portrayed this through a twofold explanation of a wide gate, and a broad pathway that leads to destruction, and a narrow gate, with a pathway that seems difficult at times, but filled with the hope of eternal life. We must understand that those in which Christ was teaching, was in fact his disciples, these are those who represent the church, which is the body of Christ.

**Revelation 4: 4,....**around the throne were twenty four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty four elders sitting....

These, twenty four thrones and elders represent the church, the body of Christ. These are the twelve patriarchs of Israel, and the twelve apostles of the new testament.

As believers, we first look at this passage of scripture as, the choices, that must be made in our life. That choice is, whether to remain in our sinfulness, and stay on the broad path to destruction, or to choose the way of Christ and the cross, which is the saving grace of Jesus Christ, and our eternal life with God. Once we have chosen Christ and the cross, we begin to see the spiritual meaning in which Christ is portraying to the church. In our Christian life, Gods will, and his desire for our life, would be to choose the narrow gate, or the spiritual gate, which is that which will, by the leadership and guidance of the Holy Spirit, take us through trials, tribulations, and persecutions, but with the assurance of an abundance and victorious life in Christ, prosperous in our life of salvation, along with the reward of letting our light so shine before others that they may see within us, the example of the saving grace of Jesus Christ, to the acceptance of salvation, to the glory of God.

We also must be aware of the wide gate, which is lined with false prophets, and deception, luring the believer to follow after their carnal, worldly desires, where the final result will be spiritual death and separation from God. This can only end with a loss of our spiritual benefits and rewards, leaving us to live a wasted, defeated life, in self righteousness, without bringing glory to God. For this reason, Christ seen it fitting to teach his disciples, and the church, the importance of choosing the right pathway, growing spiritually, and maturing in our salvation, so that we may have the ability to recognize these false prophets in sheep's clothing. Whatever the gate in which we choose as a Christian, God is still faithful to us, with his eternal promises. We must remember that choosing to, follow after deception, and following the broad pathway, will lead to a destructive, unfaithful, life in Christ, losing our opportunity to die to self, which means we will not be living an abundant, victorious life in Christ, but will suffer a great loss of spiritual rewards, with nothing left to lay at the feet of Jesus. So, let us now look more fervently into the word of God, to see how that we might better learn to recognize these very well disguised ravenous wolves.

**2 Peter 2: 1 – 3,....**but there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teaching among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them....and many will follow their destructive ways....by covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words....

As maturing Christians, as ones who study and meditate on the word of God, we should not be amazed, and we should also expect to encounter false teachers as we walk, in our spiritual lives. They will arise within the church, claiming to be Christians, but will teach things which contradict the saving grace of Jesus Christ. Through this deception, they will try to persuade believers to deny Christ and the power thereof. This denial, which is not so much of a verbal expression, but lies more in our actions, and in our beliefs. Most are looking for power and money and are willing to distort Gods word and the faith of the believer, to do so. This is why it is so important to study Gods word and to pray.

**1 Timothy 4: 12 – 16,....**be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine....Meditate on those things, give yourselves entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourselves and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you....

As believers, we understand the word of God by reading it, by studying it, by preaching it, by teaching it, by rightly dividing the word of truth, and standing firm in the gospel of Gods grace. God tells us in his word, that it is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness. And even though we are warned by, and through the word of God, many will still depart from their faith in God, replacing their faith with worldly emotions, and versions of the gospel, which will be friendly with the teachings of the world. Through the leadership, and guidance, of the Holy Spirit, we are encouraged to trust in the word of God, and to apply the importance of his teachings to our lives. We must search the scriptures daily, read and study diligently, this will ensure that the message in which we receive, we will apply it unto our lives, so that we may become rooted and grounded in the word of truth.

**1 Peter 5: 6 – 11**,....humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God....be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil walks about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith....

Satan's objective is to discourage, discredit, and dishonor the believer and his calling. Thankfully, we have been given the spiritual tools to resist the devil, which means that we have been given all that we need to live a spiritual, Godly life, and have been given the power that is necessary to withstand, and to stand fast in our faith in God. Our hope is in Christ alone, and our strength is in the power of an almighty God, who will not only protect us, but will avenge us against that which comes against us.

**Romans 12: 19**,....avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written, vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord....

**Revelation 20: 10**,....The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever....

The consequences for these false prophets, and those who follow after them, will be harsh. God has not and will not forget those who reject him. His judgement will come at exactly the right time. We must take heed to study, to meditate, to pray, so that we may be able to recognize, and to resist those who confront us with worldly deception, and to continually pray for those, keeping them always in our thoughts, teaching and admonishing them in the will of God, to the end result of salvation and eternal life.

Let us pray.

If anyone has any questions, comments or would just like to discuss any of the scriptures, feel free to call, text or email me. Keep praying for each other and all the God lays upon your heart. Hope to see everyone soon. God Bless.

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