



**Sermon Notes: *"Known By Our Fruit"***

Matthew 7:15-20

5.11.25

**Competing Voices:**

- **Discernment** as a skill needs to be developed in us and the next generation.
  - **Biblical literacy**: We cannot recognize counterfeits unless we know the real thing. Regular immersion in Scripture trains our minds to recognize God's truth.
  - **Spiritual maturity**: The ability to hold firm to truth while extending grace to those who disagree.
- **Teach critical thinking through everyday situations.**

**The Fruit:**

- **Fruitlessness:**
  - **Natural consequences**: Some results of fruitlessness happen automatically—a life devoted to false teaching naturally leads to harm and waste.
  - **Eternal implications**: Jesus clearly connects fruitlessness with His divine and final judgment.
- **Fruitfulness:**
  - Understand that authentic goodness produces good results reliably, not occasionally.
  - Only Jesus can take what was dead and dysfunctional and turn it into a testimony of grace that inspires others.

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**So What?**

**False teaching ultimately leads to destruction.**

### **For Study, Reflection, Discussion:**

1. Review the sermon notes from Sunday. Was there a particular point that stuck with you? *What* was it and *why* did it resonate with you?

### **Read Matthew 7:15-20**

2. Jesus warns us to "beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves" (v.15). What are some ways false teaching can appear harmless or even beneficial at first glance?
3. Jesus says we can identify false prophets "by their fruit, that is, by the way they act" (v.16). How is this different from judging based on appearance, eloquence, or popularity?
4. Verse 19 mentions trees being "chopped down and thrown into the fire." How does this sobering warning influence how seriously we should take spiritual discernment in our own lives?

### **Specific Action Step:**

***This week:*** Reflect on what Jesus talks about identifying false prophets by their fruit. Examine what you regularly consume—social media, news sources, entertainment, conversations—and apply Jesus's fruit test. Ask yourself: "What kind of fruit does this consistently produce in my life? Does it lead me toward the fruit of the Spirit, or does it produce something else?"

Then make one concrete change to your information diet based on what you discover—either by adding something life-giving or removing something that produces bad fruit.

### **Don't Forget:**

- Liz, Gabe and Ruthie Neveau are fundraising for their Honduras trip, coming up May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Liz specifically hopes to raise \$600 to purchase sutures. For online donations: <https://cvm.org/short-term-giving-project/liz-neveau>. You can also write a check to ECC – be sure to put "CVM" and/or "Neveau" in the memo line.
  - 6K for Clean Water, with Emily Sheahan through World Vision – May 17th
  - Graduation Sunday -- May 25<sup>th</sup>, Graduation Boards will be on display May 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>
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### **Prayer:**

Heavenly Father,

We thank you for the gift of discernment and for your Word that guides us toward truth. In a world full of competing voices, strengthen our ability to distinguish truth from falsehood. Help us become deeply rooted in Scripture so we can recognize counterfeits. Grant us not just knowledge but wisdom—not just rules but discernment.

Transform us from the inside out. Make us good trees that naturally produce good fruit. We confess the times we've been deceived, or when we've failed to bear good fruit. Thank you that your grace doesn't just forgive us but transforms us. Guide us as we seek to nurture discernment in the next generation.

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.