

Caution!

Matthew 7:12-23

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“So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.” Matthew 7:12 (English Standard Version)

Take-Home Truth: A life of love flowing from a Kingdom heart is impossible apart from a vital connection to God in His Kingdom.

Warning Sign #1: CAUTION: **BROAD ROAD** AHEAD

“Go in by the narrow gate. The gate that leads to destruction, you see, is nice and wide, and the road going there has plenty of room. Lots of people go that way. ¹⁴But the gate leading to life is narrow, and the road going there is a tight squeeze. Not many people find their way through.” Matthew 7:13-14 (N.T. Wright)

*For he has rescued us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us into the Kingdom of his dear Son, ¹⁴who purchased our freedom and forgave our sins.
Colossians 1:13-14 (New Living Translation)*

Warning Sign #2: CAUTION: WATCH OUT FOR **WOLVES**

“Watch out for false prophets. They will come to you dressed like sheep, but inside they are hungry wolves. ¹⁶You’ll be able to tell them by the fruit they bear: you don’t find grapes growing on thorn-bushes, do you, or figs on thistles? ¹⁷Well, in the same way, good trees produce good fruit, and bad trees produce bad fruit. ¹⁸Actually, good trees can’t produce bad fruit, nor can bad ones produce good fruit! ¹⁹Every tree that doesn’t produce good fruit is cut down and thrown on the fire. ²⁰So: you must recognize them by their fruits.” Matthew 7:15-20 (N.T. Wright)

I know that false teachers, like vicious wolves, will come in among you after I leave, not sparing the flock. Acts 20:29 (NLT)

Application Tip: Stay connected to a strong local church and a spiritual community within that church. When you hear some “truth” that doesn’t quite ring true, take that to your spiritual community and discuss it.

Warning Sign #3: ROAD BLOCKED: TAKE ALTERNATE ROUTE

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Master, Master’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; only people who do the will of my father in heaven. ²²On that day lots of people will say to me, ‘Master, Master—we prophesied in your name, didn’t we? We cast out demons in your name! We performed lots of powerful deeds in your name!’ ²³Then I will have to say to them, ‘I never knew you! You’re a bunch of evildoers—go away from me!’” Matthew 7:21-23 (N.T. Wright)

Martin Luther’s teaching on idolatry: “Anything we look to more than we look to Christ for our sense of acceptability, joy, significance, hope and security is by definition our god—something we adore, serve and rely on with our whole life and heart.”
(As quoted in “Center Church” by Tim Keller)

Application: Ask yourself: What am I holding on to so tightly? What or who have I made my ultimate “god”? Am I willing to open my hands and let go of this “god”? As I let go, will I open my hands and heart to repent, give my life to Jesus and enter His Kingdom?