

7. Who do you think Jesus may have had in mind when he spoke these words? (Jesus also used the words 'false prophet' in the following verses: Matthew 24:11, Matthew 24:24; Mark 13:22; Luke 6:26)

8. Based on Jesus' criteria for 'false prophets', who would you consider to be the false prophets of our day? What help is available to you in discerning a 'false prophet'?

9. How should a Christian deal with one whom he considers a 'false prophet'?

# 9 The Blessed Life

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7

## Integrity and Discernment

### Matthew 7:13-23

#### Introduction

In the previous few studies of this series we have been (figuratively) sitting on the mountain-side at the feet of Jesus, marvelling at the radical nature of his vision of life in the Kingdom of Heaven. We have also wondered at Jesus' courageous critique of the accepted religious values of society. And now, as Jesus builds to the conclusion of his sermon in Matthew 7:13-27, the spot light is now focused squarely on us. Jesus poses two questions:

(i) Have you gone through the gate, are you on the road?

(ii) How can you know whether you are dealing with a real Disciple of the Kingdom or not?

*Discuss the following statement:*

"Since we're not supposed to judge others (cf Matthew 7:1-2), Christians who condemn others as 'false prophets' are just as liable to judgment."

## Read Matthew 7:13-23

1. Why do you think Jesus would conclude his Sermon with the sharp commands of vv 13-14?
2. Verses 13 & 14 leave us in a 'black' or 'white' situation. We will either choose to enter through the narrow gate, or we will remain on the broad road. As you understand the rest of the Bible, does God really view matters of salvation as a 'black' or 'white' situation? (If you're stuck, see Romans 2:12-16; John 14:6; Acts 4:12)
3. How do you think that as Christians we can best explain this to a world which refuses to think in such categories as 'saved for heaven' and 'condemned to hell'?
4. Have you entered through the 'narrow gate'? How do you know?
5. Verses 15-20 address the issue of discerning those who are 'false prophets.' How does one 'judge' whether another person is a 'false prophet'?
6. Does it concern you that Jesus does not, in this situation, apply any doctrinal evaluation to his category of 'false prophet'? If so, why? If not, why not? (in your discussion you may consider the following: Acts 13:6; 2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 4:1-2)