

Do These Sayings of Mine and You'll Be Wise¹

Proposition / Thesis: We'd be wise to follow Jesus' teachings

Purpose: To encourage people to follow the teachings of Jesus as given in Matthew, chapter seven.

Scripture Reading: "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall" (*Matthew 7:24-27*).

Introduction:

1. Often the first statements of a speech are intended to convey the importance of the message that follows. In this sermon, however, Jesus declares the significance of his message in his last remarks.
2. While the wisdom of Jesus is rightly applied to all his remarks, and not just these on the Sermon on the Mount, this lesson will focus only on that portion contained in Matthew, chapter seven.
3. Matthew, chapter 7, contains seven major ideas that we'd be wise to follow. These ideas will be discussed individually, after some initial observations regarding wisdom.

I. INITIAL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT WISDOM

A. *Wisdom is indicated not so much by what you say or know as it is by what your do.*

Supporting scriptures:

1. "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps" (Matthew 25:1-4).
2. "Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business" (Acts 6:3).
3. "Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time" (Colossians 4:5).
4. "Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom" (James 3:13).
5. "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy" (James 3:17).

¹Copyright © by author, Robert L. Waggoner, 1996; slightly revised, 2003. Permission is granted to duplicate and distribute this manuscript, if unchanged, for non-commercial educational purposes. All other rights reserved.

B. *Your wisdom is assured when you do what Jesus taught.*

1. Jesus claimed to be wise (implied by his statement in 7:24-27)
2. He was recognized by his contemporaries as speaking words of wisdom and doing wise works. "And when He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? (*Matthew 13:54*) And when the Sabbath had come, He began to teach in the synagogue. And many hearing Him were astonished, saying, "Where did this Man get these things? And what wisdom is this which is given to Him, that such mighty works are performed by His hands!" (*Mark 6:2*).

II. THE WISE IDEAS OF JESUS (FROM MATTHEW 7)

A. ***Don't be critical of others.*** "Judge not, that you be not judged. For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you. And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye;' and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye" (*Matthew 7:1-5*).

1. This passage does not teach against making judgments. Judging others is required by many passages of scripture, including by Jesus in Matthew 7:6 and 15-20. The Greek word from which "judgment" comes also may be translated as "condemnation," or "damnation."
2. This passage opposes criticizing others. "Do not speak evil of one another, brethren. He who speaks evil of a brother and judges his brother, speaks evil of the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge" *James 4:11*.
3. Two basic ideas are taught in this passage
 - a. We receive as we give. This principle is taught by both the law of reciprocity and also by scripture. "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" *Galatians 6:7*.
 - b. While we are quick to see faults of others, we generally overlook our own faults. While we are generally quick to forgive ourselves, we are not so generous with others.

B. ***Choose carefully those to whom you give your gifts.*** "Do not give what is holy to the dogs; nor cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you in pieces" (*Matthew 7:6*).

1. Perhaps a more logical sentence order would be "Do not give what is holy to the dogs lest they trample them under their feet, nor cast your pearls before swine lest they turn and tear you to pieces." Anyway, discrimination is in order.
2. Be discriminating to whom you give what you have.
 - a. Will the individual to whom you give respect what is given? If not, give what you have to someone else.
 - a. "what is holy" implies whatever is set apart for God, i.e., gospel, contributions, etc.
 - b. "pearls" implies whatever is of common nature, i.e., lands, houses, personal property, etc.

C. ***Ask God for what you want because he cares about you.*** "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your

Do These Sayings of Mine and You'll Be Wise

children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!" (*Matthew 7:7-11*). Luke's account also asks, "Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?" (*Luke 11:12*) The primary ideas in this passage are...

1. Don't hesitate to ask. You may not receive if you don't ask. Therefore ask!
2. If children ask their earthly parents for something, expecting to receive, should we not more readily expect to receive from our heavenly Father because he loves us more than earthly parents can love us.

D. ***Treat others the way you want them to treat you.*** "Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets" (*Matthew 7:12*).

1. Although many others had stated a similar concept in a negative manner, this Mt. Everest of ethical statements was positively stated in ancient times only by Jesus
2. While it is a simple matter to not harm others, it is often demanding to do good to others.

E. ***Choose the way you live by its results, not by its ease.*** "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it" (*Matthew 7:13-14*).

1. Life is filled with choices. We must make decisions.
2. Differences between these two ways are differences between...
 - a. difficulty and ease
 - b. long and short
 - c. disciplined and undisciplined
 - d. thoughtfulness and thoughtlessness

F. ***Examine your teachers by their fruits.*** "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them" (*Matthew 7:15-20*).

1. Characteristics of false teachers...
 - a. self-interests
 - b. quest for personal gain
 - c. quest for prestige
 - d. desire for transmission of own ideas
2. Fruits of false teachers may readily produce...
 - a. a religion which may consist primarily in observances of externals
 - b. a religion consisting primarily of prohibitions
 - c. an easy religion
 - d. a religion which divorces itself from life
 - e. a religion which is arrogant and separatist.

Do These Sayings of Mine and You'll Be Wise

G. ***Do the Father's will, not your own.*** “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’ (***Matthew 7:21-23***).

1. Behind this saying is the idea of judgment.
2. Obedience is required.
3. Many false teachers do and say wonderful and impressive things, but without obedience, these are insufficient.

Conclusion: “And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes” (***Matthew 7:28-29***).

1. Just as wisdom is in the sayings of Jesus, so also authority was observed in the manner of his teaching when he was earth.
2. We have a choice now to live by his wise sayings. There will come a time when we will have no choice but to be judged by his authority.