

Watch Out for Wolves

Matthew 7:15-20 | Student Prep Handout

Main Idea: Because false teachers lead to spiritual destruction by distorting the words of Christ, believers must be vigilant, discerning fruit through the lens of Scripture and community.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Jesus uses the word "ravenous" to describe wolves. Why do you think He uses such violent, intense imagery for false teachers instead of just calling them "mistaken"?

Dig Deeper: How does viewing false teaching as "predatory" change the way you select what you listen to or read?

2. If false teachers come in "sheep's clothing," they likely use Christian language and look "nice." What makes a "nice" but false teacher more dangerous than an "angry atheist"?

Dig Deeper: Have you ever found yourself drawn to a teacher or influencer because they were "likable," even if their message didn't quite line up with the Bible?

3. Based on the Sermon on the Mount (Ch. 5-7), what kind of "fruit" (character traits) should we actually be looking for in spiritual leaders?

Dig Deeper: Why is it often easier for us to overlook a leader's character if they are highly "successful" or "gifted"?

4. The Bereans (Acts 17:11) tested even the Apostle Paul's words against the Scriptures. Practically, what prevents us from doing that with the "voices" in our lives today?

Dig Deeper: What is one area of your "doctrine" that you've realized was shaped more by culture or a podcast than by the Bible?

5. Paul says (2 Timothy 4:3) people "accumulate" teachers to suit their own passions. What are some "passions" or desires in our current culture that make certain false messages really appealing?

Dig Deeper: Which part of Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount feels most "offensive" or "hard" to your flesh right now?

6. How does being in a community like a Lighthouse Group protect us from "wolves" in a way that listening to a sermon alone cannot?

Dig Deeper: Is there a "voice" or a "new idea" you've been following lately that you've been hesitant to share with the group or your leaders?

7. The identity of a tree, or a person, becomes clear over time. Why is it dangerous to either be too quick to judge or too slow to address bad fruit?

Dig Deeper: How do we balance the command to "beware" with the command not to judge hypocritically (from earlier in Matthew 7)?

8. If Jesus says His way is "hard" and the gate is "narrow," why should we still find His words more attractive than the "easy" messages of false teachers?

Dig Deeper: In what ways have you experienced the "hardness" of the Gospel actually being "good" for your soul?

What's one thing God impressed on you tonight that you want to carry into this week?
