

December 9, 2018

## ***Jesus is my Lord!***

***"By their fruit you will recognize them...Every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit..."***

Matthew 7:15-23

***"This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples."***

John 15:8

***"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."***

Matthew 7:21

***"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I need clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me...'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."***

Matthew 25:34-40

In this series we have considered what it means to really and truly let Jesus be the Lord and Master of our lives. In Jesus' day, as in ours, there were many who claimed to be followers of Jesus. However, not all who claim to be followers of Jesus are really what they claim. Maybe some of us are among those who claim to be followers of the Lord, but really aren't.

How can we tell who is and who is not really following Jesus? How can we tell if we are, in fact, following our Lord? Jesus concludes his 'Sermon on the Mount' by explaining that the test of true faith, in anyone's life, is not in what they say or claim, but in what they do.

Our Lord gives us a simple standard. He says, "***A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit.***" And he tells us, "***By their fruit you will recognize them...***" Every life, without exception, produces 'fruit'. All of us, no matter who we are or claim to be, are impacting our world in some way. Our impact is the product of everything we do and everything we say. We are either producing good or we are producing bad.

So, if we really want to understand who we are we do not look at what we claim, but at what we really do. I can sit in a church building every day, I can sing praises to God, I can give money to the church, I can read my Bible and I can pray and the product of my life may still be bad fruit. The measure of my life is in what I do for others.

The measure of a good life is found in what that life produces in the lives of others. But, Jesus warns us, "***Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.***" We can call Jesus Lord, we can claim that Jesus is our Lord, but ultimately our lives, how we treat others, will tell the truth about us.

The measure of our faith, the product of the Lordship of Jesus, is always found in how we treat others. The measure of our faith is found in the way we react to the simple needs of others. If we see someone who is hungry, what do we do? If we see someone who is a stranger, what do we do? The test of our faith that always tells the truth is not in the words we use, but in what we do.

Do we have hearts that see the needs of others? Are we willing to be the one who does something, the one who makes a difference? Do we feed the hungry? Do we welcome the stranger?

Do we clothe the poor? Do we care for the sick? The true measure of our faith is always in what we do. So, what are we doing in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ?

