

# JESUS ON LISTENING TO JESUS (MATTHEW 7:13-27)

## Video 1

As we come to the end of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, the language gets intense.

According to Jesus, it's all too easy to be on the road that leads to destruction. It's possible to be a kind of tree that bears bad fruit, which is cut down and thrown into the fire. Jesus will say to certain people on the day of judgement, "I never knew you." And it's possible to live in such a way that, when the storm comes, your house will fall with a great crash.

The end of the Sermon on the Mount isn't a comfortable read. In fact, it's packed with warnings. Jesus clearly wants us to pay attention. But what is Jesus warning us against?

Jesus' is comparing two ways of living:

Those who hear Jesus' words and put them into practice. And those who don't.

He explores these two ways of living through three word pictures:

In the first word picture, Jesus describes two roads, each of which passes through a gate. One road is broad. It's easy to walk. It's easy just to hear Jesus' words at a surface level and do nothing about it. But it ends in destruction.

Whilst the other road is narrow. It's a more difficult path to walk. It's probably why it's the less popular way. It's harder to do the work of letting Jesus' words change your life at the deeper level. Yet this road leads to life.

In the second word picture, Jesus describes two types of bushes, each bearing a different kind of fruit. If you listen to Jesus' words and let them change you at the deepest inside level – your life will show it on the outside. You'll be like a good tree, bearing good fruit.

If you don't, eventually it will be hard to fake it. Just like grapes can't grow on thorn-bushes and figs can't grow on thistles. If you're a bad tree, you can't bear good fruit.

In the final picture, Jesus describes two identical houses. The only difference is the material of their foundations. One is built on sand, the other on rock.

It's quicker and easier to build on sand. It's simpler to listen to Jesus' words and not put them into practice. It's harder to dig foundations into rock. It's harder to let Jesus' words really change you.

These houses would have looked the same on the outside. But when the storm came, only the one built on rock 'did not fall'.

Jesus is warning his listeners – either we hear his words and put them into practice. Or we don't.

And Jesus clearly thinks it's possible for us to think we're in one category, yet be mistaken. After all, Jesus says,

Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven.

Are you feeling unsettled? Perhaps you should be.

It leaves us asking, why would Jesus unsettle us in this way?