



# TREES AND FRUIT PART 1

**Matthew 7:15-16** *"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits."*

**Matthew 7:22-23** *On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you;'*

**What do you think of when you hear the word heretics?**

**What is the dumbest belief you have ever heard that someone adhered to?**

If you are anything like me, the first thing that comes to mind is BURN THOSE HERETICS. This week in Sermon on the Mount we learned many heretics in the early church actually identified themselves as Christians and were attempting to understand the gospel in the fullest sense; they were not hell bent on destroying the church.

**The sermon defines a heretic as someone whose teachings the church at large considers erroneous and even dangerous to the faith.**

**What are some "heresies" our culture is tempted to believe?**

**What do you think is at the core of most heresies?**

At the heart of heresies is often our desire to remain in control, the belief that we are good enough without God. Just like the Ebionites, we are tempted to view Jesus as a great teacher, but not our God, and not our redeemer. We have two choices, just like the broad and narrow road we looked at last week. Either we have to abandon our self-will or abandon our hope. The two seem mutually exclusive; when we trust ourselves we lose all hope.

**Where are you tempted to trust yourself over God?**



Authentic Christians and inauthentic Christians can look a lot the same in many areas, but people who truly follow Jesus have done two things:

- The authentic Christian surrenders their will. A Christian is not necessarily more moral, more self-controlled, or of greater character than others, but they are teachable.
- The authentic Christianity trusts in the grace of God.

**How do we become authentic Christians?**

The doctrines we believe aren't meant to simply be doctrines; they are love letters to us as well. The doctrines we believe are truths that God can use to heal and change us, but also challenge and disturb us.

**What doctrines do you believe that bring you the most comfort?**

**What doctrines do you find most challenging or disturbing?**

Jesus intends for us to know Him, not just know about Him. The Holy Spirit takes us into relationship with God so we can grow in grace and knowledge of the truth.

**How can a proper knowledge of truth lead to a greater understanding of grace?**

**How can a proper understanding of grace teach us to live lives on mission in this world with, and for, Jesus?**

**Philippians 3:7-11** *But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.*

**If you were asked to label what you have lost and gained in Christ, what would you say?**