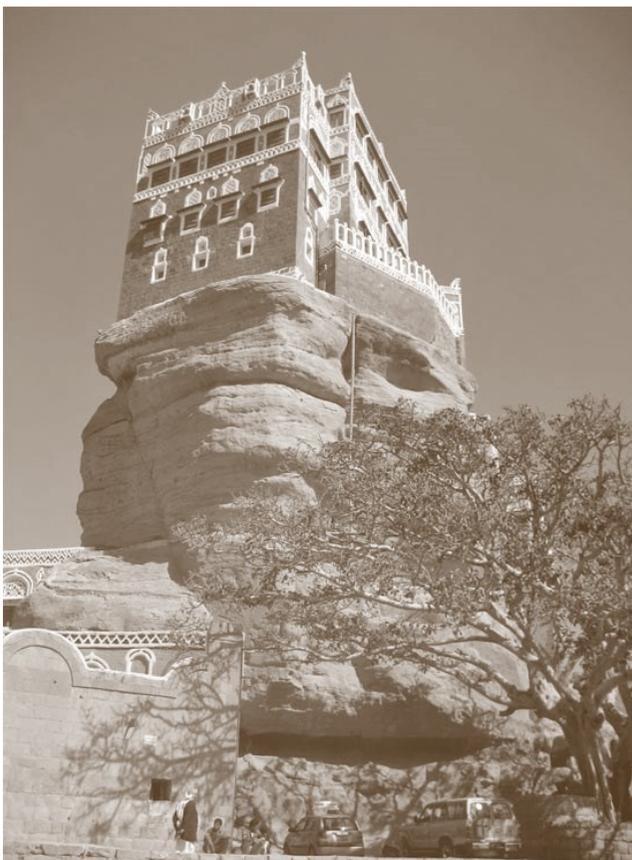


- 1) Judgement, 30 April, Tom Smith
- 2) Trusting God, 7 May, Jo Kerr
- 3) Choices, 14 May, Mike Strange



“... everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.” Jesus, in Matthew 7:27



A caring community with every member equipped to demonstrate Christ, working with others to advance God's Kingdom in Chard and the world

**Seek God** – in prayer, worship, study of the Scripture and fellowship, we value the pursuit of God in Jesus Christ;

**Love Generously** – in time, talent and treasure, to stimulate one another to good works and a lifestyle of generosity;

**Expect transformation** – to see God's Holy Spirit move in individual lives, in the church and across our community

You may have been coming to Forefront for years. Or maybe you just popped in for one Sunday. Either way, if you feel moved to act on the things mentioned in the talks, we would be pleased to pray with you.

Ask someone in the service to point you in the right direction, or call in during the week at Forefront Community Centre (next to Chard Post Office sorting centre).

Contact details and more at [forefront.org.uk](http://forefront.org.uk)

We need discernment in what we see, what we hear and what we believe.



Charles R Swindoll

Over the next three weeks we conclude our extended study of the Sermon on the Mount. In Matthew 7 we are going to learn about judging others, trusting God and discerning truth as we follow Jesus. We looked at the first chapter of the Sermon on the Mount from September to November 2016, and the second in February and March this year. Please keep this leaflet to hand so you can read the specific passage ahead, each Sunday. In addition, why not:

- Read the whole chapter before we get started;
- Read the whole book to get the context;
- Pray that God will show us all something new from his Word that we can put into practice



The sermon  
on  
the Mount

Part Three

## Judgment—Matthew 7:1-6

Tom Smith, 30 April

Matthew 7 begins with a famous saying: “Do not judge, or you too will be judged.”



But we do assess, discern and judge in everyday life – it is an important part of being human!

So what does Jesus mean? In verses 1-5, brother is the important repeated word – Jesus is teaching disciples about our relationships in the

Christian family. This is a challenging and practical message for every church community.

Verse 6 contains another famous phrase – pearls before swine! This is a shocking comment from the lips of Jesus – is He really saying that some people are like dogs and pigs? Who is He talking about?

“It is the Holy Spirit's job to convict, God's job to judge and my job to love.”

Billy Graham

As we continue our year-long reflection on God's personal, specific calling on our lives, Matthew 7 has some helpful pointers. Generosity toward others as they explore their calling (v2) is followed by an eagerness to ask God for doors to open (v7) and for the gifts required once we step through. The way may be narrow (v14), but the test for success straightforward—good fruit (v17). Busy-ness does not replace our fundamental calling to a relationship with Christ (v23). Hearing God's instruction, but not acting on it, risks calamity (v26).

## Trusting God—Matthew 7:7-12

Jo Kerr, 7 May

Even the best human examples of kindness fall so far short of God's loving generosity that Jesus sums up our motivations as 'evil' by comparison with God's desire to give good gifts. All that's needed to receive from God is to ask and to seek, to knock and keep knocking.

Why, then, do we so often feel like our prayers are not answered? Elsewhere in the New Testament—particularly in the letter from James—we are taught that motive matters. We ask selfishly, we seek our own will rather than God's, we try to escape suffering rather than persevere, we are double-minded, we pray in anger rather than love. We should be asking for the good things which God knows we need to fulfil his will—the “bread and fish” of our daily lives. Note that Jesus would later answer 5000 hungry people's needs with exactly those things (Matt 14:19).

## Choices—Matthew 7:13-28

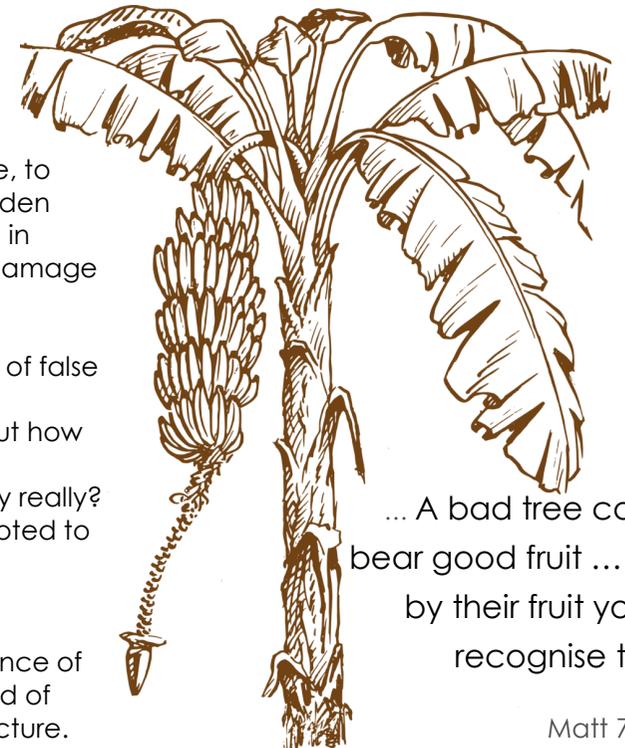
Mike Strange, 14 May

From the ancient Greeks, to Shakespeare, to modern spy fiction, the unmasking of hidden identities makes for great drama. People in masks and disguises can cause a lot of damage before their double identity is revealed.

Here, Jesus turns his attention to the problem of false identities in religious life.:

- Lots of people say they speak for God, but how can you know which are true?
- Many say they are Christians, but are they really?
- How do you know if someone is truly devoted to the word of God?

It's about the fruit, not the claim; about the relationship, not the activity; about the resilience of the life that is built on the Word, not the speed of construction or the impressiveness of the structure.



... A bad tree cannot bear good fruit ... Thus, by their fruit you will recognise them.

Matt 7:18-20

... narrow the road that leads to life,  
and only a few find it. Matt 7:13-20