



DOVER DAILY DEVOTIONS

Daily Devotionals:

On Sunday, we explored Matthew 7:15–29, where Jesus closed the Sermon on the Mount with a sobering series of warnings. We looked at the danger of false prophets, those who appear spiritual but inwardly lead others astray, and learned that the true test of a person’s authenticity is not charisma or success, but the fruit of their life. Jesus then warned us that not everyone who says “Lord, Lord” will enter the kingdom, but only those who actually do the will of the Father. Passion without obedience is not enough. We also heard the parable of the two builders (one wise and one foolish) both of whom heard Jesus' words, but only one acted on them. When the storms came, only the house built on the rock stood firm. We were challenged to examine our foundations, to live not just as hearers but as doers of the Word, and to build our lives on active obedience to Christ, not on appearance, emotion, or performance.

Monday: “Wolves in Wool”

Scripture Reading:

“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 7:15–16*

Devotional:

Jesus begins His final section of the Sermon on the Mount with a strong warning: “*Beware of false prophets.*” These deceivers are not easy to spot; they come disguised, speaking the language of faith and blending in with God’s people. But Jesus doesn’t warn us about wolves out in the world; He warns us about those who come in. The greatest danger is not always persecution from the outside, but deception from within.

These false prophets appear trustworthy. They quote Scripture, pray in Jesus' name, and sound biblical. But their motives are not pure, and their mission is not the kingdom of God. Jesus says they are "*ravenous wolves*," devouring the flock rather than feeding it. Their words may be polished, but their fruit (what their lives actually produce) tells a different story.

So how do we guard against this danger? Jesus gives us the key: "*You will recognize them by their fruits.*" Not by their gifts, charisma, or platforms, but by the consistent evidence of godly character. In a culture where platforms often outshine integrity, we must learn to look beneath the surface.

Reflection Questions:

1. What qualities might make a false teacher appear trustworthy?
2. Why is it dangerous to focus on charisma over character in spiritual leaders?
3. How can you grow in discernment without becoming cynical?

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, You are the Good Shepherd, and You see what we cannot. Protect Your people from wolves in disguise. Help me to grow in discernment and to evaluate all teaching by the fruit it produces. Let me not be drawn to charisma, but to Christlike character. Keep my heart tender but wise. Amen.

Tuesday: "Fruit Inspection"

Scripture Reading:

"Every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit... Thus you will recognize them by their fruits." – Matthew 7:17–20

Devotional:

Jesus expands on the metaphor of trees and fruit. Every tree produces fruit according to its root. A healthy tree, deeply rooted in truth, will bear good fruit. A diseased tree, no matter how beautiful its leaves, will eventually produce what's corrupt. The same is true of people. Time and truth walk hand in hand.

This isn't just about others, though. It's about us too. What kind of fruit is your life producing? Is there evidence of the Spirit at work: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Gal. 5:22–23)? Jesus says that fruit is the outward evidence of an inward reality. You can fake gifting, but you can't fake fruit forever.

And what happens to the tree with no good fruit? Jesus speaks plainly: *“It is cut down and thrown into the fire.”* This is not just a gardening metaphor, it is a picture of judgment. God takes fruitfulness seriously, not for the sake of performance, but because it reveals the heart. Our lives are either rooted in Christ or not. There is no in-between.

Reflection Questions:

1. What kind of spiritual fruit is most visible in your life right now?
2. Are there areas where your “leaves” look healthy but your fruit is lacking?
3. How can you stay rooted in Christ so that your life produces good fruit?

Prayer:

Father, I want to be a healthy tree, one that bears the fruit of the Spirit and reflects the life of Jesus. Search my heart. Prune what needs to be pruned. Help me abide in You daily, so that my life may produce fruit that brings You glory. Amen.

Wednesday: “Empty Words, Full Judgment”

Scripture Reading:

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven...” – Matthew 7:21–22

Devotional:

This is one of the most sobering passages in all of Scripture. Jesus says that some who cry out “Lord, Lord” will not enter His kingdom. These aren’t outsiders. These are people who thought they were insiders, people who were involved in ministry, who prophesied, cast out demons, and did mighty works in Jesus’ name.

But Jesus exposes the danger of spiritual activity without relational intimacy. He’s not impressed by what we do in His name. What matters is whether we know Him—and whether our lives reflect submission to His will. Saying the right words or doing big things isn’t the same as doing God’s will. We can look the part, play the part, and even believe we belong, yet be far from Him.

This is a wake-up call to examine the foundation of our faith. Are we building our confidence on a résumé or on a relationship? Do we want Jesus, or just the blessings He brings? The danger is not just hypocrisy, it’s self-deception. May these words not drive us into fear, but into truth.

Reflection Questions:

1. What might cause someone to believe they belong to Jesus when they don't?
2. Is your spiritual life built more on routine or relationship?
3. How can you pursue deeper intimacy with Christ today?

Prayer:

Jesus, I don't want to just speak Your name—I want to walk in obedience to You. Reveal any false security in my life. Help me know You truly, not just use You outwardly. Lead me in Your will and let my life reflect Your grace and truth. Amen.

Thursday: “I Never Knew You”

Scripture Reading:

“And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’” – Matthew 7:23

Devotional:

What a heartbreaking sentence: “*I never knew you.*” These words are not spoken to atheists or mockers, but to those who thought they were serving Jesus. And yet, despite their activity, He says, “I never had a relationship with you.” This reveals something deep about what God truly desires: not performance, but presence.

To “know” in Scripture implies intimacy, love, and covenant. God is not looking for religious employees. He wants sons and daughters who walk with Him. The people Jesus rejects here didn't know Him. They only used His name for their own ends. They were more focused on their ministry than on their Master.

This passage isn't meant to produce despair but clarity. It's grace that exposes the gap between outward service and inward surrender. So, today, pause and consider: Do you know Jesus? Not just *know about* Him, but walk with Him? Obedience flows from intimacy. Activity without love is lawlessness.

Reflection Questions:

1. What does it mean to truly “know” Jesus?
2. Are there areas of your spiritual life where you've been performing rather than relating?
3. How can you shift your focus from doing for Jesus to being with Jesus?

Prayer:

Lord, I don't want to hear those words, “I never knew you.” Teach me to walk with

You in love and obedience. Strip away the performance and bring me into deeper relationship with You. Let knowing You be the joy and pursuit of my life. Amen.

Friday: “Wise or Foolish?”

Scripture Reading:

“Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock...” – Matthew 7:24–25

Devotional:

Jesus tells a simple parable with eternal implications: two builders, two homes, one storm. The difference wasn’t in what they built, but on what they built. One built on rock. The other on sand. One house stood. The other collapsed. What separated wisdom from foolishness wasn’t knowledge, but obedience.

The wise person hears the words of Jesus *and does them*. It’s not enough to be moved by a sermon or agree with truth. The foundation is laid when we put His teaching into practice. Jesus is telling us that storms will come; suffering, temptation, hardship, judgment. When they do, only obedience rooted in Christ will hold.

Building on the rock takes time. It’s slow, intentional, and often goes unseen. But it lasts. The sand might feel easier and more comfortable, but it cannot hold. So today, let’s commit to doing what Jesus says, not perfectly, but faithfully. Let’s choose the narrow way that leads to life.

Reflection Questions:

1. In what areas are you tempted to build on sand instead of rock?
2. How does obedience to Jesus provide strength in the storms of life?
3. What small step of obedience can you take today?

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, I want to be a wise builder. Help me not just to hear Your words but to do them. Strengthen my foundation. When the storms of life come, let me be found standing on You, the unshakable Rock. Amen.

Saturday: “Astonished or Transformed?”

Scripture Reading:

“...and great was the fall of it.” And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching...” – Matthew 7:26–29

Devotional:

Jesus ends His sermon with a warning, not a warm goodbye. And when He finishes, the crowd is *astonished* at His authority. But Jesus didn’t preach to impress. He preached to transform. Astonishment is not obedience. Being moved by truth is not the same as being changed by it.

Today’s Church can fall into the same trap, admiring Jesus, clapping for the sermon, loving the worship, but not applying the Word. The wise builder doesn’t just admire the blueprint; he follows it. The foolish hear, feel something, and go back to life as usual. Jesus isn’t looking for fans. He’s calling for followers.

The final collapse of the house built on sand is not just sad, it’s final. “*Great was the fall of it.*” We must ask ourselves: Am I merely astonished by Jesus, or am I surrendered to Him? Will His words be my foundation or just my inspiration?

Reflection Questions:

1. What is the difference between being impressed by Jesus and following Him?
2. Are there areas in your life where you’re hearing but not doing?
3. How can you daily surrender to Jesus’ authority?

Prayer:

Jesus, let me not just be impressed by You, let me be transformed by You. Teach me to build my life on Your truth, not just admire it. May Your authority shape how I live, think, and walk each day. Help me to follow, not just listen. Amen.