



UnLearn—Week 7 Devotionals

READ

Scripture: Matthew 7:15-20

We have arrived at the end of Jesus' sermon, which is perhaps the most challenging section of the whole message. He ends with several images to help explain what it means to follow him—a commitment that plays out in every area of our lives. Today's passage highlights the importance of "fruit," or visible signs of God's work in a person's life and influence on others. But this isn't just a helpful way for us to identify bad prophets, pastors, friends, or confidantes; as we learned in this weekend's sermon, Jesus' teachings aren't just about *everyone else*. He is also asking us to do the hard work of examining our own fruit.

REFLECT

What fruit can you observe in the lives of those closest to you, in whom you place your trust?

What is the fruit coming from your own life and your influence on others? In other words, how has God been at work in your character and your relationships?

RESPOND

Identify someone who has exhibited the fruit of God's Spirit in their life. Send them an encouraging note to thank them for their role in your life.

READ

Scripture: Matthew 7:21-23

Today's passage contains one of Jesus' most shocking teachings. Many kids in youth groups have stumbled upon these verses and experienced existential crises. With these words, Jesus is warning us to keep in mind what matters. And what matters is *not* the things we do for God, even incredible acts of supernatural ministry. While wonderful and sometimes thrilling, these will mean nothing at the final Judgment. What will matter is quite simple: knowing and being known by Jesus. It's relationship! Perhaps we need to unlearn the habit of finding our identity in the things we do, and instead learn to find it in the One who knows us.

REFLECT

What do you expect your experience will be like at the final Judgment? Why?

In what ways do you struggle with finding your identity in the things you do?

According to Jesus, what are the most important things about who you are?

RESPOND

Look at your schedule for this week and set aside some significant blocks of time to spend with Jesus. These times can contain whatever allows you to best grow in your relationship with God—worship, journaling, Scripture, prayer, etc.

READ

Scripture: Matthew 7:24-27

A fitting end for this Sermon—a reminder that Jesus didn't just say these things so that the people would hear them. He expected them to obey! And he points to a practical reason we should still obey his words today—our obedience can dramatically change how we respond to times of intense hardship. If we haven't allowed his words to soak in deeply and influence the way we actually live, life's trials will be more likely to wipe us out. But when we have cultivated a lifestyle of putting Jesus' words into practice, we will be much better equipped with his wisdom and strength to withstand every temptation, disappointment, and conflict.

REFLECT

Look back at the steps of obedience (the RESPOND sections) over the entire span of this devotional series. Which ones were most beneficial? Which were most difficult? Why?

RESPOND

What steps of faith and obedience is the Holy Spirit prompting you to take right now in your life? What will it look like for you to obey?