

## Guardrails False Teachers

**Jesus gives us a clear guardrail on the narrow road that leads to abundant life: beware of false teachers (Matthew 7:15-20).** Jesus gives this warning because He knows how susceptible we are to the teachings and influence of false teachers. When we embrace false teachers and their ideas, we begin to make small, subtle decisions that eventually lead us significantly away from the life God has for us. The good news is that truth – namely, Jesus – silences false teachers and their philosophies (John 14:6). We recognize and illuminate what is false by knowing what is authentic and real, by knowing Him. As we seek to know Jesus, He leads us to greater understanding and acceptance of His Word and the core pillars of our Christian faith. It is Scripture and these core tenets of our faith that help us identify and resist false teachers.

### GET THINGS STARTED

We live in world full of people trying to teach us their version of truth. Who are the loudest voices right now for you or for those around you (good or bad), and what do you think they are saying?

### GO DEEPER

1. In Matthew 7:15, why does Jesus use the imagery of ravenous wolves masquerading as sheep regarding false teachers? What makes false teachers and their ideas deceptively attractive?
2. From Matthew 7:16-20, how do we recognize false teachers? How does this apply to those we do not know personally but only hear or see on a particular media platform (e.g., a news channel, podcasts, YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, etc.)?
3. According to Scripture, truth is not just an ideology but a person: *Jesus* (John 14:6; 1:1-5). So, if knowing truth is knowing Him, what does it mean and look like to know Him? How do we know Him better and more easily identify and illuminate what is false?

### MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. What is your primary source of *truth* right now? Where do you spend most of your time hearing and receiving about what is true, and what is the spiritual, emotional, mental, and relational fruit of that source?
2. How will you know if you have embraced a false teacher and their ideas (or become a false teacher yourself)? What are the questions to ask, and where do you ask them?
3. If knowing truth is knowing Jesus, what is your next step in knowing Him better, regardless of how long you have been a Jesus follower?

### PRACTICE IT NOW

**As a group, take time in prayer to ask Jesus for an increased ability to know Him and to know what is true.** Ask Him to show you where you have possibly embraced or given an improper place to a false teacher or false teaching. Ask Jesus to show you how to come into alignment with Him, with His heart, His character, and His kingdom. Pray for the courage to detach from and repent of unhealthy habits regarding television, music, news channels, podcasts, and social media.