

# Beware of Wolves

*Matthew 7:16-20*

**Main idea:** To educate the congregation on the importance of discernment and spiritual growth, and to warn against false teachings

**Topic:** Growth

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Suggestions for moving forward with your sermon on the topic of growth and the goal of "Beware of Wolves":

1. Emphasize the importance of discernment: Expand on the idea of recognizing false prophets or wolves in sheep's clothing by discussing the need for discernment in our spiritual growth. Highlight the characteristics of true disciples and how they can be distinguished from false ones.

Scripture suggestion: 1 John 4:1-3 - This passage warns against false prophets and encourages believers to test the spirits to see if they are from God.

2. Explore the role of spiritual fruit: Build upon the analogy of good and bad fruit mentioned in Matthew 7:16-20. Discuss the significance of bearing good fruit as evidence of genuine growth in our faith.

Scripture suggestion: Galatians 5:22-23 - This passage lists the fruits of the Spirit, which can serve as a guide for believers to evaluate their own spiritual growth.

3. Address the importance of spiritual nourishment: Discuss the need for believers to be rooted in God's Word and to seek spiritual nourishment through prayer, fellowship, and regular engagement with Scripture.

Scripture suggestion: Psalm 1:1-3 - This passage highlights the blessings of those who delight in God's law and meditate on it day and night, emphasizing the importance of being rooted in God's Word.

4. Highlight the dangers of false teachings: Expand on the idea of wolves in sheep's clothing by discussing the potential harm caused by false teachings and how they can hinder our spiritual growth.

Scripture suggestion: 2 Peter 2:1-3 - This passage warns about false prophets and teachers who will introduce destructive heresies, emphasizing the need to be vigilant and discerning.

Language suggestions from original languages:

- In Matthew 7:16, the Greek word for "fruit" is "karpos." You can explain that this word signifies the visible results or outcomes of a person's character or actions.
- In Galatians 5:22, the Greek word for "fruit" is also "karpos." You can emphasize the connection between the fruit of the Spirit and the fruit mentioned in Matthew 7:16-20, highlighting the importance of producing good fruit.

Additional verses to support your point:

- Matthew 12:33-37 - This passage speaks about how our words reveal the condition of our hearts, further emphasizing the importance of genuine growth and discernment.
- 2 Timothy 3:16-17 - This verse highlights the role of Scripture in equipping believers for every good work, reinforcing the need for spiritual nourishment and discernment.

Remember to weave these additional ideas and Scriptures into your sermon in a way that reinforces your current points and supports your overall message.