



# TRANSFORMED

DEVOTIONS CONNECTING TEENS TO CHRIST

**Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. By their fruit you will recognize them. Do people pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.**

*Matthew 7:15-20*

## Enemy #2 - False teachers

Remember Little Red Riding Hood? On the way to her grandmother's house, she runs into the Big Bad Wolf who wants to eat her. The wolf goes to her grandmother's house and tries to trick her by dressing up like her grandma. The wolf tries to get Little Red Riding Hood to come close so that he could eat her. But Little Red Riding Hood knew it wasn't her grandma because of the wolf's teeth. She recognized her enemy and escaped.

Jesus warned his disciples about false teachers. He warned them not to follow these teachers because they would be lead to destruction and hell. Here, Jesus tells his listeners how to discern between good teachers and false teachers—by their fruit.

In our Christian life, we are going to run into people who talk to us about the Bible but don't accurately teach what it says. We call these people "false teachers." They seem harmless and look innocent like sheep. They might be nice people. It is easy to listen to their message because it seems right. They have great youth programs. If a lot of other people follow them, they must be ok. The teachers appear safe, but their teachings are harmful and dangerous.

Why are they so dangerous? Because they don't point us to the Jesus of the Bible. They point us to a different version of Jesus, a different version of the cross, and a different version of how God wants us to live. They point us to ourselves rather than to Jesus.

Jesus says, "You'll know a false teacher by looking at their fruit." Their fruit is what they say about the Bible and about Jesus. We can look at what they teach, what they do, and even their attitudes. It was easy for the Big Bad Wolf to say the right things. But he couldn't hide his teeth and his bad breath. It's easy in the church world to say some of the right things, but mix in false things too. False teachers put on a good show and make a good argument but can't hide their false teachings. We need to watch out for those false teachers.

God's Word and his Spirit help us. We can watch out for false teachers because we have the Word. With the Word, we can learn to identify truth and lies. The Holy Spirit leads us to the truth. We know the message of the Bible: We are saved by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ. Good teachers will always point to Jesus and what he did for us on the cross.

**Prayer: Dear Lord, keep me safe from false teachers. Help me discern good teachers from bad teachers so that I may be with you forever in heaven. Amen.**