

GROUP LEADERS NOTES – STUDY 27

Question 1

- a) If we are walking in the broad way then we are more open to false teaching. We are not so discerning about that which is truth and that which is not. Equally there can be the tendency to be more tolerant.
- b) The narrow way is more focused. However that does not mean that we are exempt from attack and we must constantly be alert: **2 Peter 2:1**.
- c) False teachers tend to offer an easier alternative to the narrow way of Christian discipleship as set out in the truth of scripture.

Question 2

- a) The point here is that false teachers look ordinary and are often very plausible. They don't have horns sticking out of their heads or big signs around their necks proclaiming that they are false.
- b) Neither will they normally advocate something way out. The differences with truth will often be subtle: **2 Cor 11:13-14**.
- c) It is easy to be taken in by someone who looks very pious and has all the marks of a true Christian. He will even use the correct language and clichés.
- d) Paul says that they will be dressed in sheep's clothing in order to blend in: **Acts 20:29-31**.

Question 3

- a) The ultimate test of spiritual reality is how someone lives; or fruit as the Bible describes it. And the ultimate test of that fruit is conformity to the person of Jesus.
- b) The true nature of the false prophet cannot be hidden for ever. Sooner or later he will be seen for what he is. His teaching and his life will not match up.
- c) This is as true as the fact that grapes are not picked from thorn bushes and figs from thistles. The falseness will come to light.

Question 4

- a) It is no coincidence that Jesus says all this in the context of the Sermon on the Mount which sets out the changed life of the follower of Jesus!
- b) However plausible a false teacher the message needs to be backed up with evidence of change in a person's life through the work of the Holy Spirit.
- c) You can discern the health of a tree by the quality of the fruit it produces.

Question 5

- a) Ultimately there will be a judgement when all our thoughts and deeds will be seen for what they really are: **1 Cor 4:5**.
- b) Paul applies the same test to himself and his colleagues showing that we are all answerable to the judge of all the earth; God himself.
- c) Jesus in repeating himself in verse 20 emphasises the saying that 'truth will out'!

Question 6

- a) True faith in Christ changes the life and produces fruit for God's glory. Paul recognises this in what he describes as the Fruit of the Spirit; that work which the indwelling Holy Spirit produces in us: **Gal 5:22-23**.
- b) That work of sanctification is ongoing and we have to play our part. Paul in Colossians 3 lists character traits to put on; but only after he has listed those to put to death.
- c) Whist we need God's help to do that; nevertheless we have some responsibility as to the fruitfulness of our lives in terms of lifestyle and witness: **John 15:8**.