

**The Messiah Has Come**  
**Week 31**  
**Matthew 7:21-29**  
**“The Invitation (Part 2)”**

**Introduction**

**But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith without works, and I will show you faith by my works. You believe that God is one. Good! Even the demons believe — and they shudder. Senseless person! Are you willing to learn that faith without works is useless? James 2:18-20**

I like to listen to a lot of preachers online. Some are really good, and I learn from them, while others are completely clueless as to what the gospel really teaches. I listened to one such false teacher just a week or so ago. He claimed that salvation was obtained simply by believing in Jesus, and that repentance was not a requirement for saving faith. In other words, he was saying that as long as you claim to have faith in Jesus, you can pretty much live any way your selfish heart desires. I'm sure that position has garnered him a lot of followers. But what good is it to be a follower of someone who is leading you down the broad road to destruction (**Matthew 7:13**)?

I am often saddened when I read the closing invitation in Christ's *Sermon On The Mount*, for I cannot help but think of all those people who will stand before Him on that final judgment day, truly believing that they had been redeemed, only to hear those fateful words, “***I never knew you.***” I tell you this, my heart breaks more for those who have been led astray by the false teacher far more than it does for those who have been taught the truth and have rejected it. I hurt for the deeply religious person who has been deceived and will find out only after it is too late. The false prophets are deserving of no one's sympathy. Why? Because they know exactly what they are doing. With careless disregard, in order to build up their own personal wealth and prestige, they are willing to sacrifice the very souls of their unsuspecting victims.

At the end of His sermon, Jesus offered a warning to those who would mistakenly fall prey to the pseudo gospel of the false teachers. He pointed out the distinct differences between the false profession of faith and the genuine. And in truth, it all boils down to one simple distinction: a genuine conversion of the heart and soul will bring with it an earnest desire to obey the commands of The Savior. Or as James has so eloquently stated for us: “**Faith (belief) without works (obedience) is a dead faith.**” **James 2:17.** Genuine faith begets works. You cannot separate the two.

The Savior warned us to watch out for those who would “water down” the truths of Scripture in order to make them more palatable to the masses. And I am more than certain that there are many who would argue strenuously that those of us who take The Word of God literally are merely modern day Pharisees and legalists, who preach salvation by works. Let me make this as clear as I possibly can this morning. I know, without question, that the very best that I can do falls far short of the glory of God. I know, without question, that apart from the saving grace that is afforded to me by the shed blood of Jesus on the cross, that I am hopeless. But I also believe, just as strongly, that if I truly believe in Him, then I will be given an intense desire by The Holy Spirit within me to live a life that is pleasing to Him. And if that means I need to forsake a particular sin that God finds offensive, then I will forsake it willingly. For as The Apostle Paul has so eloquently stated:

**In fact, we are confident, and we would prefer to be away from the body and at home with The LORD. Therefore, whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to be pleasing to Him.** **2 Corinthians 5:8-9**

So how can you tell if someone has truly been “born again” from above, regenerated by The Holy Spirit of The Living God? It will show up in the way that they live, or as Jesus would say, by the fruit they bear (**Matthew 7:20**). So, as we come to the close of this powerful *Sermon On The Mount*, let us take heed of Jesus' warning and be completely certain that we are not placing our hope in a *False Faith*, producing *False Fruits*, as a result of building upon a *False Foundation*. Please allow me to explain.

**False Faith (vs. 21)**

**Not everyone who says to Me 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of My Father in heaven.** **Matthew 7:21**

I am not ashamed to say this. Many times in my life, I have read this verse and was terrified by it. After all, what if, after a life spent fully convinced that you belong The LORD, you one day stood before Him and found out that you had been deceiving yourself all along? What you mistakenly thought had been your "Christian" walk was merely a blind stroll down the broad path that led to destruction. How would it feel to know you had been deceived by false teaching to such a degree that you were led astray, only to find out in the end that it was too late to choose the right path? No wonder, so many have been terrified by this one verse! And to be honest, a bit of fear would be a wise thing, when a person chooses how they will enter into eternity.

If The LORD Himself warned us that many who are convinced they are right with God will one day learn that they were deceived, then would it not be wise for us to do a careful examination of our own lives in order to determine whether or not we have a saving faith or a false one? Of course it would! And thankfully Jesus tells us how we can know for sure. It is a matter of obedience. All the fourteen carat gold "lip service" in the world does not insure a saving faith. You may say all good things about Jesus, and even acknowledge Him as LORD, but do you realize that even Satan himself knows that Jesus is LORD? It really comes down to a simple reality: **It's not enough to know that Jesus is LORD. The real question comes down to whether or not Jesus is your LORD.** And if He is, then you will obey Him. In the gospel of Luke, Jesus expounded on this very topic, and He asked the question:

**"Why do you call Me, 'LORD, LORD,' and don't do the things that I say?"** **Luke 6:46**

So, you see, obedience to The Word of God is proof positive that someone has really surrendered themselves to the lordship of Christ. You cannot "do your own thing" and follow Christ at the same time. This is why The Scriptures have commanded us to deny ourselves and take up our cross to follow Jesus. With saving faith, comes repentance from sin and obedience to the commands of The Savior. These things cannot be separated one from the other. No, the works themselves cannot save you, but the works absolutely prove there is a saving faith. And those who follow Christ will have the assurance of their salvation.

**The one who has My commands and keeps them is the one who loves Me. And the one who loves Me will be loved by My Father. I also will love him and will reveal Myself to him.** **John 14:21**

What a powerful reassurance for those who have a saving faith. They live to please The LORD they claim to believe in, and He has promised to reveal Himself to them. So if you truly love Jesus, if you have committed yourself to being obedient to His commands, even when you stumble and struggle, you can have the calm assurance that you do not have a false faith, but rather a saving one. Many call Him LORD, but only those who obey Him as LORD will be able to stand in His holy presence. False faith lives to please self, but saving faith lives to please God. Now listen to the verse again:

**Not everyone who says to Me, 'LORD, LORD' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but ONLY THE ONE WHO DOES THE WILL OF MY FATHER IN HEAVEN.** **Matthew 7:21**  
**(emphasis added)**

If you truly love Christ, and are striving to follow His commands, in order to please Him alone, then you have nothing to fear upon your day of judgment. If you make the claim that He is your LORD, then your life of obedience will validate that claim. So do not be afraid, He loves you and will reveal Himself to you more and more as you walk in a manner that is worthy of Him. And He always keeps His promises.

**My sheep hear My voice. I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one will snatch them out of My hand.** **John 10:27-28**

**False Fruit (vs. 22-23)**

**On that day many will say to Me, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in Your Name, drive out demons in Your Name, and do many miracles in Your Name?' Then I will announce to them, 'I never knew you. Depart from Me, you lawbreakers!'**

**Matthew 7:22-23**

I believe strongly that this verse was primarily designed as a warning to the false teachers and preachers out there, who pretend to do The LORD'S bidding but inside they are ravaging wolves (**Matthew 7:15**). The LORD told us that we could recognize them by their fruits. When people truly love The Word and commit themselves to study so they may obey its teaching, then they will easily be able to spot someone who distorts The Word for their own selfish purposes. These false prophets would have us believe that they do great things in the Name of Jesus, but Jesus Himself will not be the least bit deceived by their lies. They may indeed bear fruit, but upon their day of judgment, their fruits will be shown as false.

Many *Bible* Scholars have questioned this passage as to whether the wondrous works that these false teachers will proclaim to have done, will be actual miracles or merely tricks intended to deceive their followers. Whether the claims of wondrous deeds performed by these people are genuine or no, it is not my decision to judge. I know that there is power in the Name of Jesus, and that His Name will certainly cause the demons to flee. But I also know that the demons know the difference between a true preacher of the gospel and a false prophet.

**God was performing extraordinary miracles by Paul's hands, so that even facecloths or aprons that had touched his skin were brought to the sick, and the diseases left them, and the evil spirits came out of them. Now some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists also attempted to pronounce the Name of The LORD Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying "I command you by the Jesus that Paul preaches!" Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish high priest, were doing this. The evil spirit answered them, "I know Jesus, and I recognize Paul — but who are you?" Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them, overpowered them all, and prevailed against them, so that they ran out of that house naked and wounded.** **Acts 19:11-16**

Now, I know it probably shouldn't, but every time I read that story it never fails to bring a smile to my face! The moral is plain. If you are planning of throwing the Name of Jesus around like that, it would probably be best if you actually *knew* Him. At any rate, there will be many on judgment day, who will claim that they did great things on Christ's behalf, only to hear the words, **"I never knew you."**

Now, before we go too much further in this exposition, we must understand that when Jesus said He did not know them, He is not saying that He was unaware of their existence. What He *is* saying is that He has no personal relationship with them, nor they with Him. The Greek word for "*knew*" in this context actually means to have intimate knowledge of someone, much like a husband and wife have intimacy with one another that no one else can claim. Jesus knows those who are His, and just because you claim to perform great things in His Name, doesn't mean that you belong to Him.

Imagine if you will, some false teacher who shares from the Word of God in regards to salvation, and someone who hears him actually believes and surrenders his life to the lordship of Christ. That person may be genuinely saved, but that doesn't necessarily mean that the preacher was. Always remember that God's Word doesn't return to Him void (**Isaiah 55:11**). The Word of God has power, even if the one sharing it has none!

One more thing that is worth mentioning. According to the book of *Revelation*, those who die in their sin will go to hell instantaneously, and at the Great White Throne Judgment they will be resurrected to stand before God. So imagine you are a false prophet, and you've spent the last three hundred years or so in hell's torment. You are snatched from the flames for a brief moment to stand in your final judgment. You beg and plead for mercy and try to argue that you did great things in Jesus' Name while you lived upon this earth. Only to hear, **"depart from Me, I never knew you."** And then you are subsequently cast back into hell for all eternity. What a horrific fate awaits those who would use the gospel of Christ as a means to financial wealth and fame. The price for such "*false fruits*" will be a heavy one to pay indeed. So do not align yourself with those who would prostitute themselves while carrying a *Bible*. God sees the inner workings of the heart, and these false prophets are nothing more than lawbreakers.

## **False Foundations (vs. 24-29)**

**"Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock. The rain fell, the rivers rose, and the winds blew and pounded that house. Yet it did not collapse, because its foundation was on the rock. But everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, the rivers rose, the winds blew and pounded that house, and it collapsed. It collapsed with a great crash." When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astonished at His teaching, because He was teaching them like one who had authority, and not like their scribes.** **Matthew 7:24-29**

When Jesus asked the question, **"Who do you say that I AM?"** in **Matthew 16:13-20**, Simon Peter made his declaration the Jesus was **"The Christ, Son of The Living God."** The Savior went on to say that it was **"on this rock that He would build His church."** The rock in this instance was none other than Christ Himself. He is the Chief Cornerstone of the church, and it is upon His foundation that we stand. Which would lead Peter to one day write:

**Like newborn infants, desire the pure milk of The Word, so that by it you may grow up into your salvation, if you have tasted that The LORD is good. As you come to Him, a living stone — rejected by people but chosen and honored by God — you yourselves, as living stones, a spiritual house, are being built to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.** **1 Peter 2:2-5**

We know that as Believers, Christ is the very foundation upon which our hope is built. However, at the close of His *Sermon On The Mount*, The Savior is actually speaking about us building our house upon a slightly different, albeit related foundation. Here He is comparing His Word to a rock upon which the wise will build their lives. To have saving faith in Jesus is to have a hunger to not only know His Word, but to live according to His Word. To say we believe in Him, and yet live according to our own fleshly desires and feelings is to build a house upon the sand. **There is a way that seems right to a person, but its end is the way to death (Proverbs 14:12).** Only a fool would claim to have faith in Christ, and yet, ignore the teachings of Christ. And in the end such a person will not be able to stand in judgment. They may claim to believe in Jesus as LORD, they may even claim to have done great works in His Name, but to ignore His teaching is to do so at one's own peril.

In my many years of ministry, I cannot begin to tell you how many folks I have known who call themselves Christians, and many of them even attend church fairly regularly, but they never adjust their way of living to the statutes laid down in The Word of God. May I tell you, that it will always end in disaster for those people, for their very foundation is not built upon truth. You cannot stay where you are, and go with God. And no one, who has been regenerated by The Spirit, would ever willingly choose to go back to their sinful ways. But as Scripture has told us:

**For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness than, after knowing it, to turn back from the holy command delivered to them. It has happened to them according to the true proverb: A dog returns to its own vomit, and, "A washed sow returns to wallowing in the mud."** **2 Peter 2:21-22**

Jesus taught The Scriptures with authority because He was, as John has so eloquently said, The Word made flesh (**John 1:14**). When Christ spoke the Word of God, it was His own Word that He was speaking. The important thing for us to know, the firm foundation that we must build our very lives upon, is to take Him at His Word, and to live accordingly. For as The Scripture has said:

**...Man must not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.** **Deuteronomy 8:3b & Matthew 4:4b**

**TRUTH!!!**