

I Never Knew You – Jesus (Introduction)

Jeff Rogers / Lamplighter Bible Study

Matthew 7:21-23

Matthew 7:21–23, *“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ 23 And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’”*

Jesus is continuing His invitation to His audience on the hillside in Galilee. He is giving reasons why so few enter the narrow gate of salvation.

1. He has said that few enter the narrow gate of salvation because it must be found (**Matthew 7:14**)
2. The narrow way is opposite the way of the world (broad, easy, & indulgent).
3. The narrow way requires going through alone, naked, without possessions, without works, forsaking pride, and no self-righteousness.
4. The narrow way must be entered striving in penitence and brokenness of heart (**Luke 13:24**)
5. False prophets must be avoided to avoid deception that would lead to destruction (**Matthew 7:15-20**).
6. He gives his final reason why so few enter the narrow gate: self-deception. He speaks to false professors. We can be deceived by false teachers, but we can also be self-deceived regarding our standing with Christ.

The result of sin and its impact on everything we are surrounded by as men causes pride. As prideful, sinful men, we tend toward bias in our favor. This bias causes men to tend toward rejection of the true gospel. Jesus is not addressing those who are far away from religion, the kingdom, and who are haters of religion. He is speaking to religious people who are self-deceived into believing they are on the road to heaven when the reality is they are on the road to hell. **2 Timothy 3:5**, *Having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.*

How do we become self-deceived? What is an unsaved Christian?

1. **The unsaved Christian has a false understanding of assurance.**
 - a. A false understanding of assurance begins with “*professing faith*” in Christ as the only requirement. This false understanding lacks repentance and faith.
 - b. We become self-deceived when we believe in the teaching, never to doubt our salvation.
 - i. It is the Holy Spirit who certifies our salvation, not man (**Romans 8:14-16**, **1 John 3:24**)
 - c. We deny that our calling to Christ is made secure by possession of and increasing in fruitfulness (**2 Peter 1:3-11**)
 - d. We deny the possibility of appearing saved but being lost (**Matthew 13:20-22**)
2. **The unsaved Christian fails to examine himself.**
 - a. We have a faulty understanding of grace if we believe we can go through life as believers and not be concerned about sin (**1 Corinthians 11:28-30**).
 - b. Our self-examination must go below the surface and into our heart, our inner motives, and desires to see if they align with God’s holiness and righteousness. Though he will let his flesh hinder him at times, true believers will have a pure desire for righteousness (**Romans 7:14-25**, esp. vss. 21-25).
 - c. We are explicitly instructed to test ourselves and our faith. (**2 Corinthians 13:5**, *Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!*)
 - d. A person not concerned about having his present sins cleansed has good reason to doubt that his past sin has been forgiven (**1 John 1:8–9**, *If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*)