

Jesus Warns Us

Matthew 7:21-23

TEXT

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'"

Matthew 7:21-23 NASB

SYNOPSIS:

In the judgment, many people will be surprised when they are denied entrance into the kingdom of heaven. They have been deceived. They wrongly believe they will be accepted, even though they have not done the will of the Father but instead have practiced lawlessness (iniquity, wickedness, unrighteousness).

STUDY:

Jesus' warning and the four parables:

In [Mt.7:13-27](#) Jesus gives a very solemn warning in the midst of four parables which illustrate the warning. These are, in order:

1. The narrow path and the wide path
2. The wolves in sheep's clothes
3. The good and bad fruit trees
4. Jesus' solemn warning
5. The two houses and their foundations.

The four parables have common concepts that relate to the warning. The moral of the fourth parable reinforces the warning.

What do the four parables have in common?

1. In each of the parables we have a comparison: two life paths, two kinds of prophets, two fruit trees, and two houses.
2. The two may look alike, at least superficially, but one is good and the other bad. It's possible to desire a good outcome, but be deceived about which option to choose.
3. We do not see the final outcome of the two options until after some period of time.
4. That outcome may be very good, or very bad.

How do these parables relate to Jesus' warning in [Mt.7:21-23](#)?

1. Jesus' warning is given to people who want to enter the kingdom of heaven; who want to receive eternal life. At the judgment, some will be able to enter; but many will not.
2. As with the parables there are two very different outcomes. We have:
 - People who do the will of the Father and will enter the kingdom of heaven.
 - People who practice lawlessness and will be told to depart.
3. We also have some period of time before the outcome is revealed. In this case, at the Judgment.

4. As in the parables, one of the two outcomes was not what was expected or desired. In the terms of the parables, people thought they were on the right path; they thought that they were being taught rightly; they thought that God would see them as a good tree, they thought their foundation was good enough.
5. The people who were told to depart were surprised at Jesus' words. They had been deceived into believing they could "practice lawlessness" and still be welcomed into the kingdom.

How does the parable of the two houses reinforce Jesus' warning?

The parable:

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. "And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock." 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, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell--and great was its fall." Matthew 7:24-27

The moral of this parable is apparent. We must be DOERS of Jesus' words; not hearers only. This parable is descriptive of the people in His warning. Those who heard Jesus words and did them are those who obeyed the will of God and were welcomed into the kingdom. Those who heard Jesus words and did not do them, are those who practiced lawlessness and were told to depart.

It is deception to believe that you can hear (and even believe) Jesus' words but not live your life according to them, and still be saved in the end.

TEACHINGS:

1. Jesus tells us how people who think they're on the right path, can fail to enter the kingdom of God
 - they do not do the will of God.
 - they practice lawlessness.
 - they hear His words but do not act upon them.
 - they have been deceived.
2. We are repeatedly warned in Scripture not to be deceived into thinking you can hear and not do. [See](#)
3. Our life is a process, a journey, a [walk with God](#).
4. People who are walking (living) by faith
 - Do the will of God.
 - They do not practice lawlessness
 - They hear Jesus' words and act upon them.
5. The parables and warning are directed to people who are seeking salvation through Jesus. How do we know this? The hearers are people who have been following and listening to Jesus. In Jesus' warning, BOTH classes of people were expecting to enter the kingdom. Both were seeking the way of salvation.
6. Jesus, Paul, James, and John all teach the necessity of doing what Jesus said. [See](#)
7. How you live your life DOES impact your eternal destiny.

CONCLUSION:

This passage is a solemn warning by Jesus to the church. It is especially relevant for those who believe they are "going to Heaven when they die", and yet they walk as the world walks. Jesus gave these parables and warning so that people would NOT be deceived in regard to the way of salvation. But we must pay close attention. And we must be sober and vigilant because we have an enemy who is on the prowl and was a liar from the beginning. Search the scriptures to know the truth of this matter.

APPLICATION:

In our teaching and service, let us follow Paul's example. He says of himself in Acts 20:

“serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and with trials which came upon me . . . ; I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, . . . teaching you publicly and from house to house, solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

1. The people who could not enter the kingdom were deceived because they believed they could “practice lawlessness” and still be welcome into the kingdom. In addition, they thought that since they did miracles in the name of Jesus they must be acceptable to Him.
2. Note that Jesus does not refute their claim to those miraculous deeds. But, outward works are no proof of one's inner spiritual state.
3. There are many today who teach that “There's nothing you have to DO to be saved except believe in Jesus, or even just believe these things “about” Jesus.” Do not be deceived.
4. This passage does not contradict Paul's teaching of salvation by grace through faith, when properly understood. The relationship between salvation by grace through faith and our deeds, is the subject of a more extensive study.

RELATED STUDIES:

The Narrow and Wide Paths “What's the difference”.
Matthew 7, Four Parables and a Warning – a study preparation.
Do I have to do anything to be saved?
Walking the Narrow Path
Doctrines that Hinder
Faith and Works - How do we understand the inter-relationship?
What it means to “obey” the Gospel

RESOURCES:

Scripture passages:

Our Text: Matthew 7:13-27

Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. 14 "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it. 15 "Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 "You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? 17 "So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. 18 "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. 19 "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 "So then, you will know them by their fruits. 21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. 22 "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.' 24 "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them,

may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 "And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. 26 "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. 27 "The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell--and great was its fall."

[\(Back\)](#)

Scripture warns of deception.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.

1 Corinthians 15:33 Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals."

2 Corinthians 11:3 But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

Galatians 6:7-8 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. 8 For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

Ephesians 5:5-6 For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

Colossians 2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.

Titus 3:3 For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another.

James 1:16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

Revelation 20:10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

[\(Back\)](#)

Hearing and doing

Luke 6:46 Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?

Romans 2:13-15 "for it is not the hearers of the Law who are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified. For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,"

1 John 3:7-10 Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; 8 the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. 9 No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. 10 By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother.

James 1:22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.

Significantly, James links deception with the subject of hearing and doing. 1 John 3:7, and 1 Cor.6:9 do the same. Many people must have been deceived on the subject of hearing and NOT doing.

How you actually live your life has eternal consequences. This is VERY important scriptural truth is too often ignored or denied.

[\(Back\)](#)

Summary of the Law, for Christians

Romans 13:8 Owe nothing to anyone except to love one another; for he who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law.

Galatians 5:14 For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word, in the statement, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF."

James 2:8 If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF," you are doing well.

5/6/2016