

## False Teachers and False Prophets Part 2

### Message

Tonight, we're going to continue in our series on the confrontational and challenging statements that Jesus made during his ministry and today's message just might be the most challenging, and perhaps one of the saddest statements in all of scripture.

**Turn with me if you would to Matthew 7:21-23**

**Read Matthew 7:21-23**

**Pray**

Today I want us to jump right in to our passage and look at 2 things. The first will be 3 Myths that we believe about eternal life and the 2<sup>nd</sup> will be 3 requirements in order to inherit eternal life. So let's get into our notes and unwrap this a bit.....

**3 Myths that we believe about eternal life.**

**1. All good people get to heaven – Rich Young Ruler - Mark 9:17-31 – “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” I’m a good person, I’ve kept the rules.....I’m good enough, right? I’ve done what I’ve needed to, right?**

Here's why this is a myth:

a. **Because good people can never be good enough** – being good enough implies that what we do will EARN our way into heaven. The RYR was trying to earn his way into heaven and it wasn't working! Friends, our entry into heaven is not based on our works, our entry into heaven is foundationally built on the acceptance of the saving grace of Christ working in our lives. It doesn't end here, and we'll talk about this in a few minutes, but this is where it starts!

b. **Because good people are fundamentally deceived about their true condition.** The RYR was deceived about how he was doing spiritually! At the end of the story when Jesus told him to give everything away to help people, he couldn't do it.....his priority was still himself and his stuff, not Christ. In Romans 10:2 – Paul writes, **“For I can testify about them (the Jewish people) that they are zealous for God, but their zeal is not based on knowledge”** (v. 2). When Paul says they were zealous for God, he knew what he was talking about. When we think of the law, we usually limit it to the Ten Commandments. But observant Jews went much further. By their own count, there were 613 commandments in the Old Testament–“Do this, don't do that, don't touch this, eat this, don't eat that, bring this sacrifice, don't bring that sacrifice.” To those commandments, the rabbis had added thousands of additional commands. They had rules on top of rules, all designed to keep people from sinning.

There were two problems with that system: *1. There were so many rules that the average person could never be sure of keeping them all.* That's what Jesus meant when he accused the Pharisees of putting a heavy yoke on people ([Matthew 23:4](#)). There was too much to remember. *2. There were so many rules that many people ended up trying to keep the rules but not worshiping God from the heart.* So you either ended up failing or you became a hypocrite who just went through the motions.

Religion tends to do that to people. *It turns people into failures or hypocrites or both.* The same thing happens today when people base their acceptance with God on outward conformity to rules and regulations and it gives us a false sense of our true condition!! You either feel guilt because no one is perfect or you feel proud of how good you are—and that pride is sin.

[Isaiah 64:6](#) uses a very graphic picture to describe the truth: **“All our righteous acts are like filthy rags.”** *That's what God sees when he looks down from heaven at your life.* Even the good things you do are polluted with sin. We say, “Look at me, God, I'm so good.” And God says, “All I see is a pile of dirty rags.” And if we look at the meaning of filthy rags in this text, friends it is a very disgusting illustration of what God means

here.

### c. And the 3<sup>rd</sup> reason why this is a myth is found in Romans 10:34

Again, Paul writes in Romans 10, “Since they did not know the righteousness that comes from God and sought to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes”

It’s here where we have the root of the problem and the reason why this is a myth. ***Good people don’t go to heaven because they think they don’t need Jesus.*** That’s what happened to the Jews. Because they didn’t seek the righteousness that comes from God, they sought to establish their own. That’s what all those rules and regulations were about. That’s why they added so much to what God had already said in the Old Testament. They were trying to “establish” their own righteousness. To put it in simple terms, they didn’t want God’s way so they set up their own way to go to heaven. *They didn’t understand God’s plan (salvation by faith) so they came up with one of their own.* They made up their own rules, so to speak.

They didn’t understand that Christ is the end of the law. The word “end” means completion, fulfillment. Everything in the Old Testament points to him. All those animal sacrifices pointed to his bloody death on the cross. Even the Ten Commandments pointed to him because he’s the only one who ever kept them perfectly. Many of the Jews thought that by keeping the law they could be good enough to go to heaven. But they had it backwards. *The law was meant to show them that no one was good enough to go to heaven.* They missed the whole point. The law was like a schoolmaster to lead the Jews to Christ ([Galatians 3:24](#)). How? By revealing their failure and showing them their need for a Savior. But they missed it. Everyone of us here today needs Jesus and we can’t be fooled by this myth.

Here’s the second myth

**2. There are many roads to heaven** – If we look just above our passage in Matthew 7:13-14, we will find where Jesus is speaking to his followers and instructs us to, “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. <sup>14</sup> But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it”.

III. It’s a little outdated, but I think the numbers would be even worse today. However, according to a [2005 Newsweek/Beliefnet poll](#), “eight in 10 Americans—including 68 percent of evangelicals—believe that more than one faith can be a path to salvation.” George Barna reported that 64% of Americans agreed with the following statement: “Christians, Jews, Muslims, Buddhists and others all pray to the same God, even though they use different names for God.” Barna reported that 62% of those surveyed agreed that “it does not matter what religious faith you follow because all religious faiths teach the same lessons about life.” What can we say in the face of those statistics? *For one thing, we’re living in a confused generation.* Once we lost the concept of absolute truth, it was only a short step to opening the door to universalism. Barna’s findings ought not to surprise us or depress us. They simply alert us to the fact that lost people are truly lost. Lacking any solid foundation for truth, they have adopted a kind of “anything-goes” mentality. “If it works for you, it must be okay.” And that is a lie, straight out of the pit of hell!!

I wish I had more time to address this one today but friends, Jesus says it himself here.....there is only 1 road to heaven....and it’s the narrow road. The wide roads are where the false teachers teach, where the world religions reside., and where the false professions are made! I’ll remind us again of Acts 4:12 that says, “<sup>12</sup> Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”

Here’s the 3<sup>rd</sup> myth

**3. Profession of faith in Christ will get me to heaven.** Let me re-read our passage for you: Matthew 7:21, 22, 23

Let me point out a few things here in these passages for us this evening:

**a. The fact that the people cried out “Lord, Lord” indicates that these people understood who Jesus was and that they thought they had made a commitment to Him.**

John MacArthur in his commentary on Matthew says the following, “To address Him as Lord, Lord was to add a spirit of intense zeal to demonstrate strength of devotion and dedication. In verse 22, the three references to “your name” are emphatic and convey the significance of who He is. Jesus is therefore talking about those who make a profession of faith in Him.

**b. Jesus is telling the people that lip service is not what God is looking for. Lip service without obedience is meaningless.**

William Barclay in his commentary on Matthew says, “There are two great permanent truths within this passage. There is only one way in which a man’s sincerity can be proved, and that is by his practice. Fine words can never be a substitute for fine deeds. There is only one proof of love, and that proof is obedience. There is no point in saying that we love a person, and then doing things which break that person’s heart. So often we confess God with our lips and deny him with our lives. It is not difficult to recite a creed, but it is difficult to live the Christian life. Faith without practice is a contradiction in terms, and love without obedience is an impossibility.”

A life without “doing” the will of God cannot save us. Doing the will of God means our life is one that displays an overall obedience to the will of God. When you become a Christian, more is supposed to happen to us than just going to church or going to church once and a while. When we are saved and then baptized into Christ, we are telling Jesus that we belong to Him and that we are going to live for Him.

**c. We do not do God’s will in order to receive salvation; we do it because we already possess it.** James tells us that faith WITHOUT works is dead and useless.

In the next verse the scene starts to change. Now after Jesus has explained that unless you have done the will of the Father, you will not enter into the Kingdom of God, the pleading starts. Look at verse 22.

This is where we try to stand before Jesus and justify to Him our lack of desire to put Him first. The pleading involves telling Jesus about all the “good” things we have done to “earn” our pass to heaven. Again, we cannot earn our salvation by works. These people here in the passage are laying out an impressive list of things they did for “Jesus”. But He remains unimpressed.

Hosea 6:6 is a powerful verse for us on this matter. God tells us, “For I delight in loyalty rather than sacrifice, And in the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.”

The false prophets were able to do some of the things that these people were pleading with Jesus over. In Acts 19:11-20 the seven sons of Sceva (see va) were healing and casting out demons, but they did not belong to God. The people here in our passage were telling Jesus that they were doing miracles, preaching and so forth in His name. When they say this they are telling Jesus they were doing it by His authority. The basic message was that they acknowledged Jesus with their lips, and expected entrance into heaven but in reality, their hearts were far off and their eternity would not be spent in heaven.

Friends, Religion will not make you right with God, only a relationship with Jesus will do that. God is all about

the relationship. The relationship will motivate us to do the actions that are pleasing to God.

JOHN 14:21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me;  
**Don't give in to these myths about your eternity. It's not worth it.**

**Now, let me talk to you about 3 Requirements to inherit eternal life as we wrap it up here tonight....**

1. The first requirement ~ We have to believe in Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior– John 3:16 –  
“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

The word believe here is the key word and it simply means that we have faith in , put our trust in, and accept Christ as our Lord and Savior. And when we do that, we are making a statement and making a decision of where our priorities lie.

Let me ask you a question today.....have you put your faith in, trusted in, and accepted Christ into your life as your first priority?

2. The 2<sup>nd</sup> requirement is that We have to give up everything –Matthew 16:24-26a

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup> For whoever wants to save their life[a] will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. <sup>26</sup> What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?

3. The 3<sup>rd</sup> requirement - We have to do the will of the Father....we have to abide by his commandments)– Matthew 7:21b (see page 2 of notes) The Greek word translated *keep* is *tereo*, which means “to guard, to watch, to observe closely, to hold fast.” And the commandments are those things that we are to hold on to!

#### **The responsibility & rewards of keeping Christ's commands:**

**Showing Our Love for Christ** ~ “If you love me, keep my commandments” (John 14:15).

**Perfecting God's Love** ~ But those who obey God's word truly show how completely they love him. That is how we know we are living in him” 1 John 2:5

**Having God Live Within Us** ~ “23 Jesus replied, “Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. (John 14:23).

**Experiencing God's Love** ~ “Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.” (John 14:21).

**Knowing Christ Intimately** ~ We know that we have come to know him if we keep his commands. (I John 2:3).

**Being a Truthful Witness** ~ Whoever says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in that person. (I John 2:4).

**Bearing Much Fruit** ~ “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, you will ask what you will, and it will be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that you bear much fruit; so will you be my disciples” (John 15:7–8).

**Loving One Another** ~ “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous” (I John 5:2–3).

**Being a True Disciple** ~ “A new commandment I give unto you, That you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this will all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another” (John 13:34–35).