

"Jesus Was Talking To You?"

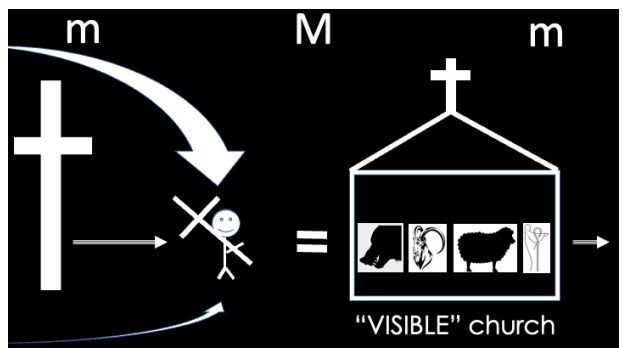
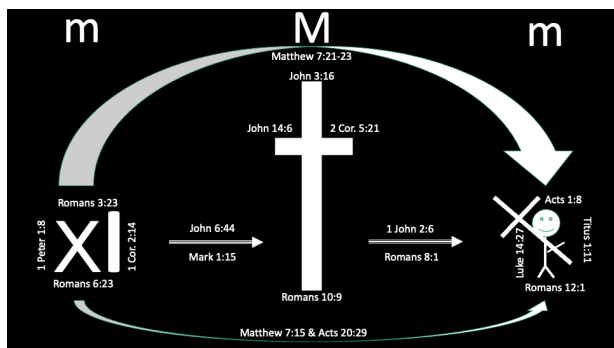
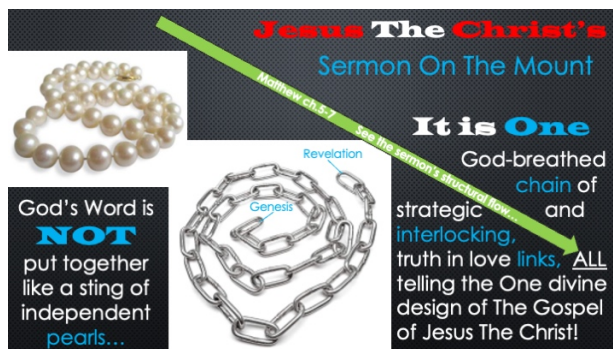
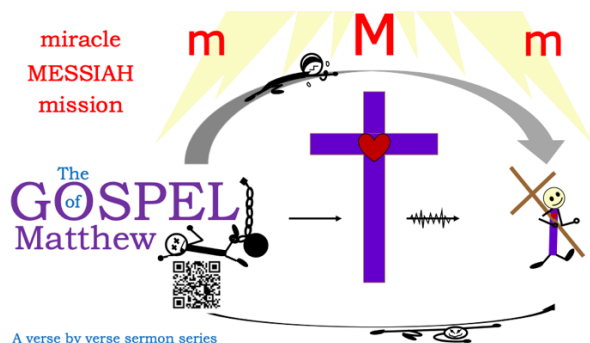
Matthew 7:21-23

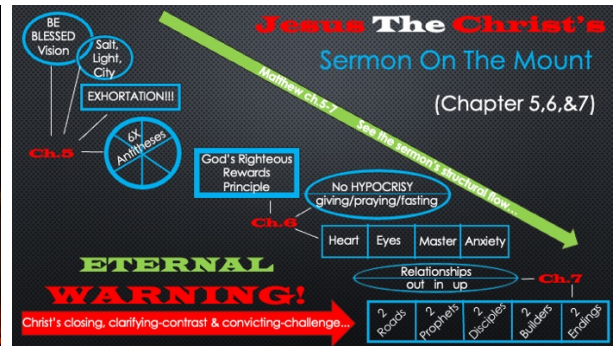
October 12, 2025

INTRO: Who was Jesus talking to...?

PRAYER

CONTEXT:





BIG IDEA: Christ's preaching & teaching clearly **declared** that **"many,"** (all but a **"few"**) **"church-goers" are going to hell.**

PREVIEW:

1. DEFINE Reality
2. DESCRIBE Restoration
3. DEPLOY Reproducers

NOTE: This is NOT a sermon for **"listening."** **No.**
This is a sermon for learning, loving, & living!

TEXT:

Matthew 7:21-23

I. DEFINE Reality

Listen carefully to what Jesus preaches & teaches

²¹“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but (instead) the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²²On 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?’ ²³And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you evil-doers / you workers of lawlessness.’

What did Jesus just say & who was He talking to?

1. Jesus declared that the kingdom of heaven is exclusive.
2. Jesus is going to divide & deny “many” on Judgment day.
3. Jesus will not decide based on people’s words or deeds.
4. Jesus will turn away “many” who call Him: “Lord, Lord!”
5. Jesus will cast out churchy ministry/miracles workers.
6. Jesus does not explain HOW, but rather WHO will enter.
7. Jesus declares, the few WHO are the faithfully obedient.
8. Jesus declares God’s Word & will are His “narrow gate.”
9. Jesus says only those who, like Him, seek righteousness.

VIDEO 1: *Jesus And His Active, Righteous Obedience*

See the biblical guardrails!

➤ SOVEREIGN GRACE:

John 6:40

For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

Luke 7:50

"Jesus told her, Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

➤ HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY:

- James 2:17

- John 3:36

➤ GOSPEL HARMONY: Eph. 2:8-10

10. Jesus also declares His "way" is to biblically obey.
11. Jesus warns false-convert's of their shock & terror.
12. Jesus rejects superficial works without worship...
 - i. No lip service up... *"Lord, Lord!"*
 - ii. No lip service out... *"prophesying in your name"*
 - iii. No works based assumptions:
 1. Christ working thru you... even...
 2. Calling demons out by you
13. Jesus warns beyond exposure... to eternal rejection!
14. Jesus declares "away from Me, I NEVER knew you!"

VIDEO 2: *What Jesus meant by: "I Never Knew You..."*

15. Jesus explains WHY:

- i. The fakes were never His “known” faith family.
- ii. The fakes are active evil-doers, workers of sin.
- iii. The fakes don’t really love or want Him as Lord

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

*To this end also we pray for you always, that our **God will** count you worthy of your calling, and fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power, ¹²so that the name of our Lord Jesus will be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

8 STEPS OF CHRISTIAN Sanctification (relationship between sovereign grace & human responsibility for OBEDIENCE:

1. God
2. God’s Grace
3. God’s Power
4. Our Faith (“work of faith”)
5. Our Resolve
6. Our Work (see 1 Cor. 15:10)
7. Fulfilled by God (see Phil. 2:12)
8. Jesus is glorified!

*** By His Grace & for His glory bookends... with human responsibility in between! Faith is the connector. Thus, holiness is a work of God’s grace, worked out thru our faithful obedience.

10 Samples of Shocking:

(The shock will be on them... & in some cases, to us.)

1. **LOST** **WORLD AT LARGE**
2. **CURIOUS CROWD ON THE HILL**
3. **7 SPIRITUAL SONS OF SCEVA**
4. **5 OIL-LESS BRIDESMAIDS**
5. **1 “99%-ER” RICH YOUNG RULER**
6. **ALL HYPOCRITICAL SCRIBES & PHARISEES**
7. **THE SINFULLY TOLERANT CHURCHES**
8. **THE DEAD CHURCHES W/ GOOD REPUTATIONS**
9. **THE SELF-SATISFIED, LUKEWARM CHURCHES**
10. **BEST OF THE WORST** (he did miraculous works)

II. DESCRIBE Restoration

VIDEO: *Mac On Understanding*

Believe is the Gate (John 5:28-29)

Jonathan Edwards'

"DISTINGUISHING SIGNS OF TRUE SPIRITUAL EMOTIONS"

I want to lay down the following guidelines:

A. I am not going to help anybody to distinguish infallibly between true and false spiritual emotions in other people. Christ has only given us enough tools for our own safety, to prevent us from being led astray. He has also given us many rules in Scripture which church leaders will find useful in counseling church members about their spiritual state. However, God has not enabled us to make an infallible separation between the sheep and the goats.

B. I am not going to help Christians who have grown spiritually cold to obtain assurance of their salvation. It is not God's plan that such Christians should have assurance. **We gain assurance, not so much by self-examination, as by action.** The apostle Peter tells us to make our calling and election sure, not in the 1st place by self-examination, but by adding to our faith moral excellence, see 2 Peter 1:5-7.

C. No one should expect to find rules which will convict hypocrites diluted by imaginary revelations and false emotions, who have become fixed in a false assurance. Such hypocrites are so sure of their own wisdom, and so blinded by a subtle self-righteousness disguising itself as humility, that they often seem beyond repentance. However, these rules will be useful to convict real Christians who have mixed false emotions with true.

1. TRUE SPIRITUAL EMOTIONS ARISE FROM SPIRITUAL, SUPERNATURAL, & DIVINE INFLUENCES ON THE HEART.

- a. "Spiritual," then, means sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

- b. Christians are spiritual because they are born of God's Spirit and because the Spirit lives within them. Things are spiritual because of their relationship to the Holy Spirit, see 1 Corinthians 2:13.
- c. Scripture, then, calls Christians spiritual, because God unites his Spirit to them in this way.
- d. When the Spirit of God only acts upon the soul, but does not become a source of spiritual life within the soul, that Soul has not become spiritual.
- e. **The Holy Spirit within Christians produces results which are in harmony with the Spirit's own true nature.**
- f. Holiness is the beauty and sweetness of the divine nature, and is the essence of the Holy Spirit, as heat is the nature of fire.
- g. Jude, verse 19, describes worldly minded men as not having the spirit.
- h. The effects which the Holy Spirit produces in true Christians are different from anything men can produce by natural human powers. True spiritual emotions arise from supernatural influences.
- i. We know false prophets had dreams and visions from false spirits, the Bible is filled numerous examples.
- j. **Emotions arising out of ideas in the imagination are not spiritual.**
- k. The Holy Spirit us our spiritual understanding of spiritual truth
- l. **The Holy Spirit gives us evidence that we are God's children, by dwelling in us, leading us, and inclining us to behave towards God as children of the Father.**
- m. So the witness of the Holy Spirit is not some spiritual whisper or immediate revelation. It is the holy effect of God's Spirit in the hearts of his believers, leading them to love God, hate sin, and pursue holiness. Again see Romans 8:13-16.
- n. Terrible harm has resulted from thinking that the Holy Spirit's witness is a kind of inward voice, suggestion or declaration from God to a man, that he is loved, forgiven, elect, and so forth. How many lively but false emotions have arisen from this delusion!

2. THE OBJECT OF SPIRITUAL EMOTION IS THE LOVELINESS OF SPIRITUAL THINGS, NOT OUR SELF INTEREST.

- a. The primary object of spiritual emotions is the excellence and beauty of spiritual things, not the relation they have to our self-interest. A person must love God before he will regard fellowship with God and God's glory as his own happiness.
- b. Love for God which arises essentially out of self-love cannot be spiritual in nature. Self-love is a purely natural principal. Nothing can be spiritual if it is merely the result of self-love
- c. The deepest cause of true love for God is the supreme loveliness of God's nature.
- d. People whose love for God is based on God's usefulness to them are beginning at the wrong end. They are regarding God only from the viewpoint of their own self-interest. They are failing to appreciate the infinite glory of God's nature, which is the source of all goodness and all loveliness.
- e. **Men may love a God of their own imaginations, when they have no love at all for the One true God!**
- f. True love begins with God and loves him for his own sake... Self-love begins with self, and loves God in the interest of self!
 - i. A. True gratitude to God for his blessings flows out of a love for God.
 - ii. B. In spiritual gratitude, God's goodness touches people's hearts. Grace revealed in the work of redemption, and shining in the face of Christ, is infinitely glorious in itself.
- g. We love him, because he graciously inclines our hearts to love him. So God's love for us produces in us a love for God's moral perfection
- h. Spiritual delight in God arises chiefly from his beauty and perfection, not from the blessing he gives us.
- i. **In all the joys of false Christians, their eyes are on themselves. Their minds are occupied with their own experiences, not the glory of God or the beauty of Christ.**
- j. They are great talkers about themselves. The true Christian, when he feels spiritually warm and lively, loves to speak of God and Christ in the glorious truths of the gospel.

3. SPIRITUAL EMOTIONS ARE BASED ON THE MORAL EXCELLENCE OF SPIRITUAL THINGS.

- a. God's holiness is the sum total of his moral perfections, his righteousness, his truth, and his goodness. I am talking about the qualities of God's character.
- b. **What a true Christian loves about spiritual things is their holiness. He or she loves God for the beauty of God's holiness.**

- c. **It is holiness that makes qualities lovely.**
- d. Holiness is the beauty of all spiritual things.
- e. Scripture points to the beauty of holiness as the true object of a spiritual appetite
- f. what an unspiritual person hates about holy things, is precisely their holiness!
- g. Is our desire for heaven based on a mere craving for selfish happiness?

4. SPIRITUAL EMOTIONS ARISE OUT OF SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING.

- a. Spiritually emotions are not heat without light. They arise out of spiritual illumination.
- b. The true Christian feels, because he sees and understands more of spiritual things
- c. Doctrinal knowledge involves the intellect alone
- d. Spiritual knowledge always involves the intellect in the heart together.
- e. **We need to understand Scripture intellectually, and taste the holy beauty of that meaning with our hearts.**
- f. A person can have great knowledge of doctrines intellectually in his head, while he does not know spiritually these truths in his heart.
- g. **Spiritual understanding sees what is actually in Scripture; it does not make a new meaning for it!**
- h. Making a new meaning for Scripture is equivalent to making a new Scripture
- i. **The true spiritual meaning of Scripture is the meaning it originally had when the Spirit first inspired it.**
- j. **Church leaders must be constantly on their guard against these delusions, especially during times of revival.**
- k. If our emotions rise out of these imaginary ideas, and not out of spiritual knowledge, then our emotions are spiritually worthless.
- l. **Keep this distinction in mind: Imaginary ideas can arise out of spiritual emotions, but spiritual emotions can not arise out of imaginary ideas.**
- m. **Spiritual emotions can only arise out of spiritual knowledge...**

5. SPIRITUAL EMOTIONS BRING A CONVICTION OF THE REALITY OF DIVINE THINGS.

- a. The gospel becomes settled and indisputable in his mind.
- b. Invisible things of the gospel influence his heart as powerful realities. They have a practical influence on his heart and his behavior.
- c. There are many religious experiences which failed to bring this conviction. Many so-called revelations are moving but not convincing. They produce no lasting change in a person's attitude and conduct. There are people whose emotions blaze up for a while, then die away again, to spiritual behind no lasting conviction.
- d. The fact is that rational arguments will sometimes convince a person intellectually that Christianity is true, and yet that person remains unsaved. See Acts 8:13 and 23. Intellectual belief can produce emotions, as in the demons who believe and tremble (James 2:19).
- e. **Only when God's Spirit enlightens our minds to understand spiritual realities, can we have a spiritual conviction of that truth.**
- f. Unless we see the beauty of holiness, we will be blind to the ugliness of sin. In consequence, we will not understand the way Scripture condemns sin.
- g. **A person can only see and feel the desperate depravity of his own heart, if the Holy Spirit gives him the ability to taste the sweetness of holiness and the bitterness of sin.**
- h. We cannot obtain certainty from what scholars and historians tell us.

6. SPIRITUAL EMOTIONS ALWAYS EXIST ALONGSIDE SPIRITUAL HUMILIATION.

- a. Spiritual humiliation, by contrast, springs out of the true Christians sense of the beauty and glory of God's holiness. It makes him feel how vile and contemptible he is in himself because of his sinfulness. It leads him to prostrate himself freely and gladly at God's feet, and to deny himself and renounce his sins.
- b. **Spiritual humiliation is the essence of Christian self-denial.**
- c. Proud hypocrites pretend to be humble.
- d. The proud man compares himself with others and has a superior opinion

- e. Another sign of spiritual pride is that the proud man tends to think very highly of his humility, whereas the truly humble man thinks of himself as very proud!
- f. Dear reader, be careful, lest you become proud of your humility! Examine yourself...

7. SPIRITUAL EMOTIONS ALWAYS EXIST ALONGSIDE A CHANGE OF NATURE.

- a. If there is no real and lasting change in people who think they are converted, their religion is worthless,
- b. The converted person becomes the enemy of sin.
- c. A person who says he has experienced conversion, but whose religious emotions soon die away, has his actions speak against him much louder than any religious experiences or claims may speak for him.
- d. Conversion will have a powerful effect on those evil inclinations. They will no longer be part of his true character

8. TRUE SPIRITUAL EMOTIONS DIFFER FROM FALSE ONES, IN PROMOTING A CHRIST-LIKE SPIRIT OF LOVE, HUMILITY, PEACE, FORGIVENESS AND COMPASSION.

- a. **Holiness and all its aspects belong to the Christian character.**
- b. The great shepherd of the sheep is himself a lamb, and he calls believers his lambs.
- c. True Christians will exhibit the same dove-like qualities of gentleness, peace, and love which characterized Jesus.
- d. The most outstanding Christians are the greatest warriors, and have a brave and intrepid spirit. It is our duty as Christians to be vigorous and resolute in opposing those who try to overthrow Christ's kingdom and the cause of his gospel.
- e. The courage and resolution of the Christian soldier appears most gloriously when he maintains a holy calmness and humility and love against all the storms, injuries, strange behavior, and disturbing events of an evil and unreasonable world.
- f. True boldness for Christ, however, will rather offend all parties than offend Christ. In fact, boldness for Christ appears more clearly when a man is ready to lose the admiration of his own party, then when he opposes enemies with his party behind him.

- g. Scripture is quite clear about the absolute necessity of forgiveness, love, and mercy, as qualities in the character of every Christian.**
- h.** Scripture is very plain that all true Christians have a loving spirit. Love is the quality that Scripture insists on more than any other, as a sign of genuine Christianity
- i.** Scripture is also clear that only those who have a merciful spirit are true Christians. Read Psalm 37 verse 1; Proverbs 14 verse 31; and James 2 verse 15 and 16.
- j.** Scripture knows nothing of true Christians who have a selfish, angry, quarrelsome spirit. No matter what a person's religious experiences may be, he has no right to think himself truly converted if his spirit is under the control of bitterness and spite.
- k.** All real Christians are under the government of the Lamb-like, Dove-like Spirit of Jesus Christ.

9. TRUE SPIRITUAL EMOTIONS SOFTEN THE HEART, AND EXIST ALONGSIDE A CHRISTIAN TENDERNESS OF SPIRIT.

- a. False emotions may seem to melt the heart for a time, but in the end they harden it.**
- b. Such people do not accept Christ as their Savior FROM sin. They trust in him as the savior OF their sins!**
- c. They think Christ will allow them the quiet enjoyment of their sins... and protect them from God's displeasure. (Jude 4 & Ezekiel 33:13)**
- d.** A true Christian resembles a little child. In spiritual things, the tallest and strongest saint is the smallest and tenderest child.

10. TRUE SPIRITUAL EMOTIONS, UNLIKE FALSE ONES, HAVE A BEAUTIFUL SYMMETRY AND BALANCE.

- a. true Christians never display grotesque lack of balance which marks the religion of hypocrites.
- b. In the true Christian, joy and comfort go along with godly sorrow in mourning for sin. See Matthew 5:4.
- c. The joy of salvation and a godly sorrow for sin go together in true religion.
- d. On the other hand, many hypocrites rejoice without trembling.
- e. **A Christian's love must be universal!**
- f. True Christian love extends both to the souls and to the bodies of our neighbors.
- g. Christ's compassion for the people's souls moved him to teach them, and his compassion for their bodies moved him to feed them.
- h. A true Christian, feels more concerned over his own sins than the sins of other people.

11. TRUE SPIRITUAL EMOTIONS PRODUCE A LONGING FOR DEEPER HOLINESS, BUT FALSE EMOTIONS REST SATISFIED IN THEMSELVES.

- a. The more a true Christian hates sin, the more he desires to hate it, and grieves that he still loves it so much.
- b. Someone may object, saying, how is this ceaseless striving consistent with the satisfaction that spiritual enjoyment brings?
 - i. A. Great desire produces great anticipation.
 - ii. B. If we are not as spiritually satisfied as we could be, the fault lies in us.
- c. When false experiences have deceived him into thinking he is saved, he rests content with this. He no longer desires grace and holiness, especially if his experiences have been very impressive. He does not live for God and Christ in the present, but lives off his conversion in the past.
- d. The true Christian is totally different. He is constantly seeking God
- e. Scripture depicts the seeking and striving of the Christian as occurring mainly after his conversion.
- f. Doubtless some hypocrites will say that they do constantly seek more of God and Christ in holiness, but a hypocrite does not really seek spiritual things for their own sake. He wants better spiritual experiences for the sake of the selfish assurance. He wants to feel God's love for himself, rather than to have more love for God.
- g. Because he knows a real Christian is supposed to have certain desires, he imitates them.
- h. **The best sign is a longing for a holier heart and a holier life.**

12. THE FRUIT OF TRUE SPIRITUAL EMOTIONS IS CHRISTIAN PRACTICE.

a. Christian practice means 3 things:

- i. A. The true Christian directs all aspects of his behavior by Christian rules.**
- ii. B. He makes holy living the main concern of his life.**
- iii. C. Perseveres to the end.**

b. Let us establish these 3 points from Scripture.

- i. A. The true Christian seeks to conform every single area of his life to the rules of God's Word. Read John 15:14; 1st John 3:3 and 7; 1st Corinthians 6:9 and 10; and Galatians 5:19-21**
 - 1. This commitment to total obedience does not mean a mere negative avoidance of evil practices. It also means positively obeying God's commands.**
- ii. The true Christian makes holy living the main business of his life. Christ's people not only do good works, they are zealous for good works! Read Titus 2:14. All true Christians are good and faithful soldiers of Christ Jesus. See 2nd Timothy 2:3. All true Christians fight the good fight of faith! Read 1st Timothy 6:12.**
 - 1. Lazy and negligent people are not running so as to obtain the prize. Read 1 Corinthians 9:24. The true Christian puts on the whole armor of God. Read Ephesians 6:13-17. He forgets the things which are behind, and reaches forward, pressing towards the goal, of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Read Philippians 3:13-14. Laziness in serving God is as damning as open rebellion; a lazy servant is a wicked servant, and will be cast into outer darkness. Read Matthew 25:26 and 30. A real Christian is one who is diligent, earnest, and committed. If there is any doubt, read Hebrews 6:11 and 12.**
- iii. C. The true Christian perseveres in his obedience to God throughout all the difficulties he meets, to the end of his life. Scripture teaches very fully that true faith perseveres**
 - 1. Scripture emphasizes in the doctrine of perseverance, that the genuine Christian keeps on believing and obeying despite the various problems he meets.**
 - 2. God allows problems to come into the lives of people who claim to be Christians, to test the reality of their faith.**

- a. The sign of the genuine Christian is that he perseveres through these problems and difficulties, and remains true to Christ.
- b. "Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life." (Revelation 2:10)

c. **True spiritual emotions, then, always result in Christian practice**

- i. Christ is not in the heart of the Christian as a dead Savior, but as a risen and living Savior in His temple.
- ii. People have a defective Christianity because they are seeking their own interests and not God's.
- iii. Consequently, they accept Christianity only to the extent that they think it serves their interests. A person's private interests may after a time clash with Christianity. So a person who accepts Christianity from selfish motives is liable to abandon it from selfish motives.
- iv. Spiritual emotions result in Christian practice because they bring a conviction of the reality of divine things. If a person was never fully convinced there is any reality in Christianity, he or she will not commit to a persevering obedience.
- v. **Humility before God inspires obedience, just as pride inspires rebellion.**
- vi. Men will not thoroughly change their practice unless they have a change of nature.
- vii. **Until the tree is good, the fruit will not be good. If an unconverted person tries to live a Christian life, it is like throwing a stone upwards. Nature finally prevails, and the stone comes down again.**
- viii. The softened heart & tender spirit of the true Christian make him painfully sensitive to sin, creating a profound influence & impact on the way he lives his life.
- ix. The Christian will NOT obey some of God's commands and ignore others.
- x. He is determined to be holy in every area of his life, in all circumstances, at all times.
- xi. Spiritual emotions result in Christian practice because they produce a longing for deeper holiness.
- xii. It is clear, Christian practice is a distinguishing feature of true conversion.

- xiii. Christian practice is the most important of all the marks and signs of conversion, both to the believer and to others.

13. CHRISTIAN PRACTICE IS THE CHIEF SIGN TO OTHERS OF A CONVERT'S SINCERITY.

- a. Christian practice is the chief sign by which we are to judge the sincerity of professing Christians. Scripture is very clear about this. Read Matthew 7:16 and Matthew 13:33.
- b. Nowhere does Christ say, you will know the tree by its leaves and flowers.
- c. Nor will you know men by their talk, by the story they tell of their experiences, by their tears and emotional expressions.
- d. No! A tree is known by its fruits.
- e. Jesus said, "let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven" - Matthew 5:16.
- f. **Everything we say is worthless, if it is not confirmed by what we do. See [James 2:14](#).**
- g. Everyone knows that actions speak louder than words.
- h. **Words are cheap.**
- i. **It is by costly, self-denying, Christian-practice that we show the reality of our faith.**
- j. Along with Christian practice, there has to be an acceptance of the basic truths of the gospel.
- k. **No outward appearances are infallible signs of conversion.**
- l. Christian practice is the best evidence we have that a professing Christian is a real Christian.
- m. **We cannot be certain how far an unconverted person can go in an outward appearance of Christianity.**

14. CHRISTIAN PRACTICE IS A SURE SIGN OF CONVERSION TO A PERSON'S OWN CONSCIENCE.

- a. When Christ says, by their fruits you will know them, this is in the 1st place a rule for judging others, but Christ also wants us to judge ourselves by this rule...
 - i. Listen to Matthew 6 verse 21:
 - ii. “not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my father in heaven.”
- b. Christian practice refers more to the inward obedience of the soul than to the outward actions of the body.
- c. The Christian has to judge his own practice, not just by what he does outwardly with his body, but by the inward motives of his soul.
- d. We cannot divorce soul and body like that.
- e. **Holy motives produce an obedient lifestyle.**
- f. So a person who lives an outwardly sinful life cannot make the excuse that his heart is in the right place.
- g. **Christian practice includes both the inward motives and the outward actions!**
- h. We need to pass the test in both areas.
- i. Let me offer 6 arguments to prove this point:
 - i. The proof that a man prefers obeying God to disobeying him, is that he obeys
 - ii. Our choices show whether we love God supremely or not. Read Deuteronomy 8:2. These tests are for our benefit. God already knows what is in our hearts. God brings us into testing situations so that we might know what is in our hearts.
 - iii. **Our practical obedience perfects our love for God. Christian practice perfects faith and love.**
 - iv. Scripture emphasizes practice more than any other evidence of salvation.
 - 1. It is dangerous to stress things which the Bible does not stress.
 - 2. **We have lost our biblical balance if we major on feelings and experiences which do not express themselves in practical & faithful obedience.**
 - 3. **If we ignore God's clear emphasis on Christian practice, and stress other things as tests of sincerity, we are on our way to delusion and hypocrisy.**
 - 4. Scripture speaks very clearly about Christian practice as the true test of sincerity.

5. The evidence on which the Judge will accept or reject us will be our practice!

- 6. From these arguments, it is clear that Christian practice is the best evidence, to ourselves and others, that we are true Christians.
- v. There are 2 main objections people will raise to what I have said...
 - 1. To speak of spiritual experience and Christian practice as if they were 2 separate things is completely wrong.
 - a. **Christian practice is spiritual practice. It is the action of soul and body together... the soul moving and governing the body.**
 - b. There is an outward religious practice without inward experience. That is good for nothing. However, there is also a religious experience without practice, without Christian behavior. This is worse than nothing!
 - c. **True religious experience is where we love God, and our love makes us choose him, and obey him, and stand by him in all difficult in testing situations.**
 - 2. The 2nd objection is that my emphasis on practice is legalistic
 - a. **This is nonsense!**
 - b. **I have not said that our practice is the price of God's favor. It is the sign of God's favor.**
 - c. **God accepts us as righteous because of Christ's obedience, not ours.**
 - d. Faith means receiving, accepting, and resting on Jesus with our souls.
 - e. **We are united to Christ by faith alone.**
 - f. To have a casual attitude toward good works because they do not justify us, is really no different from being casual about all obedience, all holiness, all spiritual mindedness, because they do not justify us either!

- g. Yet what Christian will say that a zeal for obedience, Holiness, and spiritual mindedness is inconsistent with justification by faith?
- h. **Holy practice is the sign of faith, just as activity and movement are the signs of life.**

EDWARDS' CONCLUSION:

- **What a lot of trouble the church would have escaped if Christians had kept to what Scripture teaches about a true experience of salvation!**
- If only we kept to this, it would expose hypocrisy and self deception more powerfully than anything else could.
- Worldly people would cease to laugh or scorn Christianity because of the follies of Christians;
- Knowledge is the key that first opens the hardened heart to receive spiritual emotions, which unlocks the kingdom of heaven to us.
- **If our emotions do not have their basis in an enlightened grasp of God's truth, those emotions are not spiritual in nature, no matter how powerful the emotions may be.**

Obey is the Way (John 3:36)!

Think about “name-dropping,” parasite people who have little more than superficial connections & relationships with famous & powerful people, but/yet they act as though they are super close & intimate with the person of interest.

VIDEO: *Gospel Duty & Delight*

REMEMBER:

- ***Faith without works is dead!***
- ***Works without faith is dead!***
- 1 John 3:18
- Ephesians 2:8-10
- John 3:36
- ***Why do you say to Me: "Lord, Lord..."***
- Titus 1:10-16
- Luke 14:27
- John 14:15 & 20:21
- Revelation 2&3
- Matthew 28:18-20

*** NOTE: Odd & SPECIAL sense of emphasis that we only find about 15X in all of Scripture: "addressing someone with the repetition of their name." ***

- *Abram, Abram*
- *Jacob, Jacob*
- *Moses, Moses*
- *Samuel, Samuel*
- *Absalom my son, Absolom my son*
- *Martha, Martha*
- *Jerusalem, Jerusalem*
- *Simon, Simon*
- *Saul, Saul why are you P-ing Me?*
- *Simon, Simon*
- *Eloi, Eloi... My God, My God*
- *Lord, Lord*

*** EVERYTIME the repetition personal address is used, it communicates an intense & profound sense of personal affection. - R.C. Sproul

*** KEY APPLICATION: on that last day, MANY will come to Him (in part, because false prophets had come to them - the many) and they will say intimate words, while only having superficial worship for The Lord Jesus Christ.

***** THAT SHOULD LEAD ALL BELIEVERS TO ASK:
OK, THEN WHAT CONSTITUTES AND PROVES,
VALIDATES & AUTHENTICATES A MIRACULOUS &
SAVING RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LIVING & LOVING,
MESSIAH & LORD?**

(How can anyone hear what Jesus is saying & NOT ask that question? Answer: they don't really believe Him, to some extent/degree... OR... they don't want what He is offering... OR... they are not willing to pay the price of His terms.

*** For those who do ask the original question, Jesus has answered the question with His sermon... as summarized in **Matthew 7:12...**

"Therefore, in EVERYTHING... BE the Law & the Prophets."

***** SEE HOW ALL OF GOD'S WORD HARMONIZES! *****

III. **DEPLOY** Reproducers

Where did you fit in?

- The lost world at large (not listening)?
- The many Pharisees & Scribes listening?
- The curious crowd on the hill?
- The 7 sons of Sceva?
- The 5 oil-less bridesmaids?
- The 2 of the 3 soils in the Sower's Parable?
- The single rich young ruler?

It may not have to be that way... Cry out to Jesus and beg Him for the miracle of His Gospel & grace!

VIDEO: *The Uncomplicated Essentials*

I pray, by contrast, that you fit into His faith family like:

- The wild-man in the wilderness...
- The average everyday fishermen...
- The widely hated tax-collectors...
- The area's leading business women...
- The Roman-fighting zealots...
- The faithful Roman centurions...
- The now holy, ex-harlots...

REVIEW:

How to know & then do & affirm God's (revealed) will:

1. **Word** (God's inspired revelation)
2. **Wisdom** (our Rom. 12:2 applied renewed minds)
3. **Worship God** (biblical love vs. cultural lists)

*** Give yourself to God & His Word as much as possible!

- Meditate
- Marinate
- Saturate
- Demonstrate

*** *"Get serious about a renewed mind!"* – John Piper

- A. There are 2 guardrails defining the narrow way!
- B. The Door-Way of eternity will be SHOCKING!
- C. The vast majority of confident church-goers will learn that they were never really Christians.
- D. Even though they will call Jesus Lord, He will declare them to be LOST... (Think about that!)
- E. The "many" who chose the "easy," "wide way" will be turned away from heaven & cast into hell
- F. ***Faithful obedience is the validating fruit of the kingdom of heaven.***
- G. Jesus is going to expose the false prophet's false teachings, false gospels, false church's, & false hope in the false churches & false converts.
- H. The "narrow gate & way" to the kingdom of heaven are NOT entered or affirmed by our words...

CLOSE:

While Jesus was talking TO you... the eternal question:
Was Jesus talking ABOUT you?

This word of wrath-filled warning is
the medicine the world needs...
not the candy that it wants!

**LISTEN CAREFULLY ON THIS DAY SO YOU DON'T
HEAR FROM CHRIST ON THE LAST DAY:**

*Away from Me you evil doers...
I NEVER knew you!*

(you who practice lawlessness!)

**CONTRAST JUDAS & PAUL...
SEE JUDAS & PAUL THRU CHRIST & HIS CROSS**

See God's Gospel, 5-fold exhortation:

1. Truth & Love
2. Grace & Mercy
3. Holiness & Righteousness
4. Clarity & Intensity... and finally
5. His justice & His wrath.

PRAYER

STUDY NOTES:

Philippians 1:8-11

8For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. 9And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, 10so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, 11filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

V.21

“Not everyone”

- NOTE the “filtering” intent of these words...
- “Not everyone” means:
 - SOME...
 - But NOT ALL
- Jesus is again creating a CONTRAST
 - Some will & Some won’t
 - Some do & Some don’t
- There is also a corrective component that is addressing wrongful assuming...
 - The assumption: “Everyone” that follows...
 - The correction: “Only some/few that follow”

“who says to Me”

- Talk is commanded...

λέγω is more than a grammatical tool; it is the conduit of revelation, redemption, and response. From Genesis-echoing creation commands on Jesus’ lips to the consummating “Come” of the Spirit and the Bride ([Revelation 22:17](#)), the verb underscores that the living God is a speaking God who calls forth a speaking people.

- Talk alone is cheap!
- 1st John 3:18
- *“Let us not undo with our lives what we say with our lips.”* – Puritan Richard Baxter

“Lord, Lord”

- This is literally: “God, God!”
- There is a subtly embedded in the repetitious address...

“will enter”

1525. eiserchomai ►

Lexical Summary

eiserchomai: To enter, to go into, to come into

Original Word: εἰσερχομαι

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: eiserchomai

Pronunciation: ay-ser'-khom-ahee

Phonetic Spelling: (ice-er'-khom-ahee)

KJV: X arise, come (in, into), enter in(-to), go in (through)

NASB: enter, entered, come, came, go, went, enters

Word Origin: [from [G1519 \(εἰς - so\)](#) and [G2064 \(ἔρχομαι - came\)](#)]

1. to enter
{literally or figuratively}

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance

arise, come into, enter into, go through.

From [eis](#) and [erchomai](#); to enter (literally or figuratively) -- X arise, come (in, into), enter in(-to), go in (through).

see GREEK [eis](#)

see GREEK [erchomai](#)

HELPS Word-studies

1525 *eisérxomai* (from 1519 */eis*, "into, unto" and 2064 *erxomai*, "come") – properly, come into, go (enter) into; (figuratively) to enter into for an *important purpose* – for the believer, doing so to experience *the result* of the Lord's eternal blessing.

Topical Lexicon

Overview of Usage

Appearing one hundred ninety-four times, the verb translated “enter,” “go in,” or “come in” spans the entire New Testament narrative. It describes literal movement through a doorway, divine access to holy presence, acceptance into covenant blessings, and even the intrusion of sin and demonic forces.

ITS BREADTH ALLOWS SCRIPTURE TO SPEAK WITH ONE VOICE ABOUT WHO MAY APPROACH GOD, HOW SALVATION IS RECEIVED, AND WHAT JUDGMENT AWAITS THE UNREPENTANT.

Physical Entry into Places

1. Everyday locations – homes, towns, synagogues, boats, tombs.
• [Luke 1:40](#); [Mark 11:11](#); [John 18:1](#).
2. Public institutions – the praetorium ([John 18:33](#)), courtrooms ([Acts 23:10](#)), prisons ([Acts 16:40](#)).
3. Geographic regions – Jesus enters Galilee ([Mark 1:21](#)) or disciples enter Macedonia ([Acts 16:10](#)).

These accounts ground the incarnation and apostolic mission in real space and time. The Gospel moves by footsteps through open doors.

Entry into Houses and Fellowship

Repeated instructions surround hospitality: “When you enter the house, greet it” ([Matthew 10:12](#)). The command assumes believers will cross thresholds to bring peace, teach, heal, and share meals. A refusal to enter ([Matthew 8:8](#)) or to allow another to enter ([Luke 11:52](#)) reveals faith or unbelief. Early churches met in homes ([Acts 18:7](#)), so entering became synonymous with fellowship in the body of Christ.

Entry into the Temple and Sacred Spaces

Jesus twice “entered the temple courts and drove out those buying and selling” ([Matthew 21:12](#); [Mark 11:15](#)). His authoritative entrance fulfills Malachi’s promise: “The Lord you are seeking will come to His temple.” Later Hebrews draws on Old Testament priestly imagery:

- “He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, not by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood” ([Hebrews 9:12](#)).
- “Jesus has entered on our behalf as a forerunner” ([Hebrews 6:20](#)).

Such verses connect the earthly temple to the heavenly reality, highlighting Christ’s unique access and the believer’s confidence to follow.

Entry into the Kingdom of God

SALVATION LANGUAGE DOMINATES GOSPEL EXHORTATIONS:

• *“Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven”* ([Matthew 5:20](#)).

• “It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God” ([Mark 10:25](#)).

• *“I am the gate; whoever enters through Me will be saved”* ([John 10:9](#)).

Entrance is granted through repentance, childlike faith ([Mark 10:15](#)), and new birth of water and Spirit ([John 3:5](#)). Acts reaffirms that *“through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God”* ([Acts 14:22](#)), merging present discipleship with future inheritance.

Entry into Rest and Promise

Hebrews applies Israel’s wilderness story: “We who have believed enter that rest” ([Hebrews 4:3](#)). The verb shows that faithful believers presently experience spiritual rest while anticipating consummation. Failure to enter ([Hebrews 3:18-19](#)) warns the church against unbelief.

Entry of Sin and Spirits

The same term pictures hostile invasion:

- “Sin entered the world through one man” ([Romans 5:12](#)).
- Demons enter a herd of pigs ([Mark 5:13](#)); an unclean spirit re-enters a swept house

([Matthew 12:45](#)).

• “Satan entered into Judas” ([Luke 22:3](#); [John 13:27](#)).

These references remind readers that gateways can open to righteousness or to evil.

Christ's Entry and Messianic Mission

Key salvific moments are marked by Jesus' entering:

1. Incarnational humility – He enters the world ([Hebrews 10:5](#)).

2. Prophetic ministry – He enters Nazareth's synagogue to announce good news ([Luke 4:16](#)).

3. Triumphal approach – He enters Jerusalem amid prophetic acclaim ([Matthew 21:10](#)).

4. Passion – He enters Gethsemane ([Matthew 26:36](#)) and the praetorium ([John 18:33](#)).

5. Resurrection vindication – He enters locked rooms to reveal Himself alive ([John 20:19, 26](#)).

6. Heavenly exaltation – He enters the true sanctuary ([Hebrews 9:24](#)).

Each entrance unfolds redemptive history, assuring believers that the Captain of their salvation has opened the way.

Apostolic Ministry Patterns of Entry

Acts records Paul's custom: “According to his custom, Paul went in to them, and for three Sabbaths he reasoned with them from the Scriptures” ([Acts 17:2](#)). Entering synagogues, marketplaces, and homes enabled proclamation. The sameness of vocabulary between Christ and His servants illustrates imitation of the Master's itinerant compassion.

Eschatological Entry and Exclusion

Parables climax with either welcome or shut door:

- Wise virgins “went in with him to the wedding feast” ([Matthew 25:10](#)).
- The man without wedding clothes hears, “Friend, how did you get in here without wedding clothes?” ([Matthew 22:12](#)).
- New Jerusalem’s gates “will never be shut,” yet “nothing unclean will ever enter it” ([Revelation 21:27](#)).

Ultimate reality will manifest the moral decisions already revealed by who or what now enters hearts, homes, and holy places.

Theological Themes

- **Access:** God invites, but on His terms—repentance and faith in Christ.
- **Authority:** Jesus commands the gates of every sphere—cosmic, cultic, communal.
- **Holiness:** Entrance into God’s presence demands cleansing; Christ provides it.
- **Mission:** Gospel advance follows the pattern of entering new territory.
- **Warning:** Illicit entry by sin or false teachers threatens the flock.

Practical Ministry Applications

1. Hospitality: Receive messengers of the gospel; their entrance blesses households.
2. Evangelism: Boldly step into new contexts, trusting God to open hearts.
3. Personal holiness: Guard spiritual gateways; do not “give the devil an opportunity.”
4. Worship: Approach God with confidence, remembering Christ has already entered on our behalf.
5. Hope: Anticipate the unrestricted entrance into the eternal city promised to all who wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb ([Revelation 22:14](#)).

By tracing every doorway crossed—from Bethlehem to the heavenly sanctuary—the New Testament urges believers to enter life, rest, and glory through the One who first entered for them.

“the kingdom of heaven,”

‘but’

The particle ἀλλά regularly signals a sharp pivot from human assumption to God-given truth. When Jesus rebuffed Satan He declared, “Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God” ([Matthew 4:4](#)). The contrast elevates spiritual sustenance above physical need. Similar shifts appear in [Luke 4:4](#); [John 3:17](#); and [Acts 1:8](#), where earthly expectations yield to heavenly priorities. In each setting ἀλλά protects the integrity of revelation by marking what must replace incomplete or erroneous thinking.

Summary Points

- Ἀλλά marks decisive, sometimes radical, contrast.
- It often introduces God’s perspective over human perception.
- Core doctrines—grace, Christ’s deity, justification, sanctification, perseverance—are clarified through its use.
- Pastoral counsel and ethical commands depend on the “not this, but that” structure it provides.
- Its ubiquity testifies that the gospel is not an add-on to fallen thinking but a complete reversal brought by divine revelation.

“the one who does”

λέγω is more than a grammatical tool; it is the conduit of revelation, redemption, and response. From Genesis-echoing creation commands on Jesus’ lips to the consummating “Come” of the Spirit and the Bride ([Revelation 22:17](#)), the verb underscores that the living God is a speaking God who calls forth a speaking people.

Topical Lexicon

The Dynamic Scope of ποιέω in the New Testament

Chosen by the inspired writers almost six-hundred times, ποιέω stands behind an enormous range of activity—creation, covenant obedience, miracle, sin, worship, pastoral labor, and eschatological consummation. Whether rendered “make,” “do,” “produce,” “practice,” or “cause,” the verb always stresses purposeful action. Its frequency and flexibility show that biblical faith is never mere contemplation but an embodied, God-directed way of life.

Covenant Obedience and Moral Choice

Jesus presses ποιέω into ethical service: “Whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother” ([Matthew 12:50](#)). The Sermon on the Mount culminates with the wise man “who hears these words of Mine and does them” ([Matthew 7:24](#)). Paul applies the same verb to civil righteousness—magistrates reward “the one who does good” ([Romans 13:4](#))—and James cites it for whole-law obedience ([James 2:10](#)). Thus ποιέω links hearing and doing, confession and conduct.

Sin and Lawlessness

Negative uses expose rebellious practice. [John 3:20](#) notes that “everyone who does evil hates the light,” and [1 John 3:4](#) equates “practicing sin” with lawlessness. [Romans 1:32](#) indicts a culture that “not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who do them.” The same verb that celebrates obedience unmasks depravity, sharpening moral accountability.

The Works of Christ

The Gospels spotlight ποιέω for the Savior’s redemptive mission. Jesus testifies, “The works the Father has given Me to accomplish—the very works I am doing—bear witness about Me” ([John 5:36](#)). His earthly ministry is summarized in [Acts 1:1](#) as what He “began to do and to teach,” an unfinished program extended through His body, the church ([Acts 1:8](#)). John piles up the aorist forms to catalog specific signs (for example [John 2:11](#); [9:6](#); [11:45](#)), culminating in the narrative’s purpose statement: “Jesus performed many other signs... that you may believe” ([John 20:30-31](#)).

“the will of My Father”

Topical Lexicon

Definition and Scope

Strong’s Greek 2307 (thelēma) signifies a determinate will, wish, purpose, or desire. In Scripture it ranges from the unassailable counsel of God to the fickle preferences of fallen humanity. The term appears sixty-three times in the Greek New Testament and clusters around four great themes: the sovereign plan of God, the redemptive mission of Jesus Christ, the sanctifying path of the believer, and the conflicted will of sinful mankind.

God's Sovereign Will

Thelēma most frequently describes the all-encompassing purpose of God that governs creation, redemption, and consummation.

- [Revelation 4:11](#) locates the origin of all things in that will: "For You created all things, and by Your will they existed and were created."
- [Ephesians 1](#) repeatedly anchors election, adoption, revelation, and inheritance "according to the good pleasure of His will" ([Ephesians 1:5, 1:9, 1:11](#)).
- [Hebrews 10:10](#) affirms that believers are "sanctified through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" accomplished "by that will."

The New Testament never portrays this divine will as tentative or contingent; it stands as the irresistible foundation for every saving act.

God's Moral and Redemptive Will

Alongside sovereign decree, thelēma depicts God's expressed desire for human conduct.

- "For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality" ([1 Thessalonians 4:3](#)).
- "Give thanks in every circumstance, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus" ([1 Thessalonians 5:18](#)).
- "For it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorance of foolish men" ([1 Peter 2:15](#)).

Here thelēma discloses God's revealed standards, inviting obedience. While sovereign will cannot be thwarted, moral will can be resisted; hence Scripture urges transformation so that believers "may prove what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God" ([Romans 12:2](#)).

Christ's Obedience to the Father's Will

Jesus Christ embodies perfect submission to thelēma.

- "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to finish His work" ([John 4:34](#)).
- "I have come down from heaven not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me" ([John 6:38](#)).
- In Gethsemane He prays, "My Father, if this cup cannot pass unless I drink it, may Your will be done" ([Matthew 26:42](#)).

Through that obedience, the new covenant is ratified ([Hebrews 10:7–9](#)) and eternal life secured for "everyone who looks to the Son and believes in Him" ([John 6:40](#)).

Human Discovery and Practice of God's Will

Believers are exhorted to align personal volition with God's.

- The pattern prayer petitions, "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" ([Matthew 6:10](#); [Luke 11:2](#)).
- "Do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is" ([Ephesians 5:17](#)).
- Servants are to obey earthly masters "as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart" ([Ephesians 6:6](#)).

Such alignment is neither mystical nor optional; it is cultivated through Scripture, prayer, and Spirit-enabled renewal.

The Conflicted Will of Fallen Humanity

Thelēma also exposes the desires of unregenerate hearts.

- The crowd demanded Barabbas "as they had requested" ([Luke 23:25](#)).
- Unbelievers once "gratified the cravings of our flesh and followed its desires" ([Ephesians 2:3](#)).
- Those ensnared by the devil need repentance "that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, who has taken them captive to do his will" ([2 Timothy 2:26](#)).

Thus Scripture contrasts God's righteous will with the self-will that characterizes rebellion.

Prayer According to God's Will

Confidence in prayer arises when requests harmonize with divine purpose. "If we ask anything according to His will, He hears us" ([1 John 5:14](#)). The Lord's Prayer and Christ's Gethsemane submission model petitions that seek conformity, not resistance, to God's design.

Apostolic Calling by the Will of God

Eight epistles open with Paul's self-identification as "an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God" (for example, [1 Corinthians 1:1](#); [2 Corinthians 1:1](#); [Ephesians 1:1](#)). His authority rests not on personal ambition but on divine appointment, underscoring that ministry gifting and placement arise from thelēma.

Sanctification, Suffering, and Perseverance in the Will of God

Participation in God's will may involve trial.

- "After you have done the will of God, you will receive what He has promised" ([Hebrews 10:36](#)).
- "Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to their

faithful Creator and continue to do good” (1 Peter 4:19).

- Even righteous suffering serves redemptive purposes: “It is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil” (1 Peter 3:17).

Eschatological Permanence of God’s Will

Human desires fade, but “the one who does the will of God lives forever” (1 John 2:17).

Final judgment will distinguish mere profession from genuine obedience: “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of My Father in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

Historical and Ministry Significance

Early Christian writers emphasized thelēma when articulating martyrdom’s purpose and communal discernment. The Didache urges believers to pray, “May Your will be done,” echoing Gospel tradition. Patristic theology framed God’s will as both causa prima and telos of history, a conviction that shaped creeds, liturgy, and missionary zeal.

In contemporary ministry the doctrine of thelēma offers:

1. A foundation for confidence: God’s plan is neither arbitrary nor uncertain.
2. A criterion for decision-making: churches evaluate strategies by biblical revelation rather than cultural preference.
3. A motive for endurance: suffering is interpreted within God’s benevolent purpose, fostering hope.
4. A summons to holiness: sanctification is the stated will of God, not a negotiable ideal.

Key Theological Observations

- Thelēma unites sovereignty and responsibility; divine will guarantees ultimate outcomes while calling for human obedience.
- The incarnate Son’s submission provides both atonement and paradigm.
- Prayer is effectual when synchronized with God’s revealed intentions.
- Eternal life is promised not to will-power but to will-alignment.

Related Greek Concepts

Boulē (1012) highlights counsel or plan; prothesis (4286) stresses purpose; eudokia (2107) expresses good pleasure. Together with thelēma they enrich the biblical portrait of God’s deliberate, gracious governance.

Summary

Strong’s Greek 2307 portrays the majestic, saving, and sanctifying will of God as disclosed in Jesus Christ, applied by the Holy Spirit, and embraced by believers for the

glory of the Father “who works all things according to the counsel of His will”
([Ephesians 1:11](#)).

“who is in heaven.”

v.22

“On that day”

“many”

“will say to Me,”

“Lord, Lord,”

“did we not”

(1) “prophecy” - “in Your name.” “AND”

(2) “cast out demons” – “in Your name” “AND”

(3) “do many mighty works” – “in Your name?”

v.23

“And then”

“I will declare”

“to them”

“I never knew you.”

“Depart from Me,”

“I never”

“I never knew”

“I never knew you.”

“You evildoers”

“You workers”

“of lawlessness/inequity”

CONTEXT:

- After preaching & teaching the bulk of His famous Sermon On The Mount, Jesus summarized His message in **Matthew 7:12...** (*"Therefore, in everything... BE... the Law & Prophets."*)
- Then, as He transitioned to His exhorting close, Christ warned His hearers to choose His narrow, hard, wildly-unpopular, entry-gate & walk-way thru life. In fact, Jesus was crystal clear... any & all wide-open, easy, popular gates & ways in this world will lead to destruction – to hell.
- Now, in vv.15-20, Christ shifts His warning to a word of caution regarding those you listen to and follow...
 - It's not enough to hear Him...
 - **We all need to heed Him!**
 - In order to heed Him we need to know:
 - What is good fruit?

Truly "good" Christ-like Christian fruit
is God-glorifying, biblical, & missional faithfulness.

- Which are the good trees?
- What is authentic sheep's wool?
- Who are the **wolves** with wool on?
- Who are the false prophets?

If we were a car... Jesus would/should be the owner, driver, engine, license plate, & paint job. Sadly, instead, most people live as though they are their own owners, they live in the driver's seat & might let Jesus be the copilot (or at least ride in the back seat). As for the engine, license plate & paint, their own works are the engine, their horizontal relationships are who they are registered to, and the outer appearance (witness) of the vehicle is not deemed to be very important at all, leaving it open to personal preferences and senses of expression.

MacArthur Commentary:

Empty Words and Empty Hearts (7:21–29)

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. 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.”

Jesus is still giving the invitation of his sermon—calling people from false religion to the true kingdom. He has said that few enter the narrow gate of salvation because first of all it must be found (v. 14), implying that it must be sought and searched for. No one stumbles into the kingdom inadvertently. Second, the narrow and demanding way of salvation is the complete opposite of the way of the world, which is broad, easy, and indulgent. Third, the narrow gate into the kingdom requires going through alone and naked, taking no possessions, no works, no pride, no self-righteousness. Fourth, as the Lord mentions in the parallel account in Luke 13:24, we must strive to enter in penitence and brokenness of heart. Fifth, false prophets must be avoided, because they deceive many people by luring them into the broad way that leads to destruction (vv. 15–20).

Now Jesus gives a final reason why so few enter the narrow gate of salvation: self-deception.

J. C. Ryle says, “The Lord Jesus winds up the Sermon on the Mount by a passage of heart-piercing application. He turns from false prophets to false professors, from

unsound teachers to unsound hearers” (*Expository Thoughts on the Gospel: St. Matthew* [London: James Clarke, 1965], pp. 69–70).

NOT ONLY CAN FALSE PROPHETS DECEIVE US ABOUT THE WAY OF SALVATION, BUT WE CAN DECEIVE OURSELVES. AFTER WARNING US ABOUT FALSE PROPHETS, THE LORD NOW WARNS MEN ABOUT THEMSELVES. SINFUL MAN IS BIASED IN HIS OWN FAVOR AND, BECAUSE OF PRIDE, TENDS TO REJECT THE TRUE GOSPEL.

The two categories of self-deception are those of mere verbal profession and of mere intellectual knowledge. The first, described in verses 21–23, involves those who say but do not do, and the second, described in verses 24–27, involves those who hear but do not do.

The Lord is not speaking to irreligious people, to atheists or agnostics. Nor is he speaking to pagans, heretics, or apostates. He is speaking specifically to people who are devotedly religious—but who are deluded in thinking they are on the road to heaven when they are really on the broad road to hell.

They are not unlike those in the last days who Paul says will hold a form of godliness but will deny its power (2 Tim. 3:5).

Various polls in recent years have estimated that perhaps fifty percent of Americans identify themselves as born-again Christians. But on the basis of the Bible’s description of true believers and the fact that few (cf. Matt. 7:14) really come on God’s terms, those estimates could not be remotely correct. By scriptural standards, it is hard to believe that even half of the church members in the United States are true believers.

The New Testament not only gives extremely high standards for judging the true Christian life, but also gives many warnings about spiritual self-deception in regard to salvation.

In Matthew 25 Jesus tells of the five foolish virgins who pretended devotion to the bridegroom but missed meeting him because of their unpreparedness (vv. 1–12), and of those professed believers (symbolized as goats) who are surprised that the Lord rejects them because they never truly served Him (vv. 32–33, 41–46).

What lulls people into such deception? First of all, many professed Christians—and even many true Christians—hold a false doctrine of assurance. Often it is because the person who witnessed to them told them that all they had to do was make a profession of faith, walk an aisle, raise a hand, say a prayer, and never doubt what the Lord had done in *their lives*. Perhaps they have been taught that to ever doubt their salvation is to doubt God's Word and integrity.

UNFORTUNATELY, MANY EVANGELISTS, PASTORS, AND PERSONAL WORKERS ATTEMPT TO CERTIFY A PERSON'S SALVATION APART FROM THE CONVICTING WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE EVIDENCE OF FRUIT WITH CONTINUANCE IN OBEDIENCE TO THE WORD (John 8:31).

But we have no right to assure a person of something we cannot be certain is true.

***God's own Holy Spirit will witness His reality
to those who truly belong to Him*** (Rom. 8:14–16).

Peter makes clear that one's calling and choosing are made secure by increasing qualities of fruitfulness that demonstrate the genuineness of salvation and eliminate stumbling over doubt **(2 Pet. 1:3–11)**.

And our Lord teaches that some people appear saved, but are not (see Matt. 13:20–22).

Quick and easy assurance can deceive.

A SECOND CONTRIBUTOR TO SELF-DECEPTION IS FAILURE OF SELF-EXAMINATION. Through a faulty and presumptuous view of God's grace, some professed believers blithely go through life oblivious to and unconcerned about their sins. Yet the Lord tells His people to examine their lives each time they come to His table **(1 Cor. 11:28)**.

Paul tells us, "Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?" **(2 Cor. 13:5)**.

Such examination looks at the heart and the inner motives and desires to see if they are set toward God's holiness and glory.

Even the weakest Christian has pure longings in his heart for righteousness—even though he lets his flesh hinder their fulfillment (Rom. 7:14–25).

John tells us, “If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:8–9).

**A PERSON WHO IS NOT CONCERNED
ABOUT HAVING HIS PRESENT SINS
CLEANSED HAS GOOD REASON TO
DOUBT THAT HIS PAST SIN HAS
BEEN FORGIVEN.**

A person who has no desire to come to the Lord for continued cleansing has reason to doubt that he ever came to the Lord to receive salvation.

When a couple lives together without being married, when a person practices homosexuality, is deceptive and dishonest in business, is hateful and vengeful, or habitually practices any sin without remorse or repentance, such persons cannot be Christian—no matter what sort of experience they claim to have had or what sort of testimony they now make.

God’s Word is explicit: *“Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor. 6:9–10).*

Again Paul warns, *“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. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience”* (Eph. 5:5–6).

In each of those extremely somber warnings Paul pleads with his readers not to be deceived.

THE PERSON WHO PROFESSES TO BE A CHRISTIAN BUT WHO HABITUALLY AND UNREPENTANTLY CONTINUES IN KNOWN SIN MAKES OUT GOD TO BE LIAR, BECAUSE HIS WORD EXPRESSLY DENIES THAT ANY SUCH PERSON BELONGS TO HIM (1 John 3:6–10).

A THIRD CAUSE OF SELF-DECEPTION IS INORDINATE CONCENTRATION ON RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY.

Attending church, hearing sermons, singing songs of the faith, reading the Bible, attending Bible studies, and many other perfectly good and helpful activities can actually insulate a person from the very God he is supposedly worshiping and serving. Those things can cause a believer to think he is being faithful and obedient, when in reality he may not be; and they

can cause an unbeliever to think he is saved, when in reality he is not.

A FOURTH CAUSE OF SELF-DECEPTION IS WHAT MAY BE CALLED THE FAIR EXCHANGE, OR BALANCING OUT, APPROACH.

Instead of confessing and asking forgiveness for his sins, a person may give himself the benefit of the doubt and rationalize his salvation by thinking that the good things he does balance out the bad, that the positive cancels the negative.

But in the first place, *apart from God it is impossible to do anything that is truly good, because “there is none who does good, there is not even one,”* Paul tells us (Rom. 3:12), quoting David (Ps. 14:1–3; 53:1–3).

In the second place, it is the sin itself—not an excess or imbalance of it—that separates us from God and brings death and damnation (Rom. 5:12; 6:23). Whatever good we might somehow accomplish would not cancel those consequences of sin, any more than eating right and exercising will save the life of a person infected with a deadly disease. His only hope is in receiving a cure for the disease, not in trying to balance off its deadly effect by keeping his body otherwise healthy. *Isaiah said that the best deeds of men before God are as “a filthy garment,” that is, a menstrual cloth* (Isa. 64:6).

Apart from outright hypocrites and the blatantly disobedient, there are two other common kinds of deceived people who believe they are Christians when they are not. One is the superficial person, the one who has had little or no instruction in the gospel and who thinks that his attending Sunday school as a child, having been baptized, being a church member, or other such things put him in good standing with God.

THE OTHER TYPE OF PERSON IS MUCH MORE KNOWLEDGEABLE ABOUT THE BIBLE AND THE GOSPEL, AND

IS OFTEN HEAVILY INVOLVED IN CHURCH ACTIVITIES OF VARIOUS SORTS. BUT HE LIVES IN A CONSTANT STATE OF SINFULNESS, WITH NO THOUGHT OF CONFESSING AND FORSAKING HIS SIN OR OF SEEKING AFTER RIGHTEOUSNESS. HE LOOKS TO FEELINGS, EXPERIENCES, HEALINGS, ANGELS, EARTHLY MATERIAL BLESSINGS, PROMISES, AND A HOST OF OTHER EXTERNAL THINGS FOR PROOF OF HIS SALVATION.

He is not concerned about decreasing sin or increasing righteousness. He is not concerned about God's commands, God's standards, or God's glory, but only what he can get out of God for himself.

As Martyn Lloyd-Jones suggests, he is more concerned about the by-products of the faith than the fruit itself (*Studies in the Sermon on the Mount* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977], 2:285).

This group includes those who are more committed to a denomination or Christian organization than to the Word of God. It includes those who are academically interested in theology—even orthodox, biblical theology—but not in obedience to the Bible on which that theology is based. It includes those who overemphasize and distort a particular aspect of biblical truth, to the exclusion and sometimes contradiction of other truths. It encompasses those who are overindulgent in the name of grace but lack penitence.

Just as there are many people who are deceived by the broad road that leads to destruction (Matt. 7:13), there are also many ways in which those people are deceived, of which the ones mentioned above are only a sampling.

THERE IS ALMOST NO LIMIT TO THE MEANS BY WHICH MEN CAN BE DELUDED BY SATAN, BY OTHER MEN, AND BY THEMSELVES. IN EVERY CASE THERE IS FAILURE TO COME THROUGH THE NARROW GATE WITH REPENTANCE, SUBMISSION TO THE LORD, HUMILITY, AND A DESIRE FOR HOLINESS.

It is therefore of immeasurable importance to recognize and be on guard against beguilings of every sort. But **the most important objective is not to identify all of the many deceitful ways but to find and follow the one true way.**

The many delusions found in the broad way of destruction are evidenced in two basic manifestations, which Jesus focuses on here: empty words and works and empty hearts. Those in the first group make mere verbal profession of faith and works. Those in the second have mere intellectual knowledge of the gospel they hear. Those in the first group *say* but do not do; those in the second *hear* but do not do.

EMPTY WORDS

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. 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.” (7:21–23)

A Jew could use the term lord simply as a title of respect and honor, given to any political, military, or religious leader, including teachers. But for those people to say, Lord, Lord, suggests much more than human respect, as their following

comments make clear. That they claimed to have prophesied, cast out demons, and performed miracles in Jesus' **name** indicates they acknowledged Him as Lord in a supernatural way.

Lord was a common Jewish substitute title for Jehovah, or Yahweh, which name they considered too holy to utter. Therefore to address Jesus as **Lord** was to address Him as the one true God.

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.

These people claim to be followers of the God of Israel, the Creator and Lord of all earth. Not only that, but they acknowledge Jesus Himself to be divine, because they will say to Me [that is, to Jesus] on that day, "Lord, Lord." And the fact that they

*have claimed so many outstanding works in His **name** tells us they are especially fervent religious workers.*

The final judgment, **on that day**, is presented here in general, without reference to the distinction between the separate tribunals for believers (2 Cor. 5:10) and for unbelievers (Rev. 20:11–15).

That day is a frequently used reference to the era of divine judgment known throughout Scripture as “the day of the Lord” (Isa. 2:12; Joel 2:1; Mal. 4:5; 1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10; etc.).

MATTHEW USES THAT DAY HERE AND IN 24:36, WHERE IT REFERS TO THE SECOND COMING OF THE SAVIOR.

It is noteworthy that **the second coming parable of the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1–13) makes reference to those virgins who are shut out of the kingdom as crying out, “Lord, Lord,” to which He also replies, “I do not know you” (vv. 11–12).** These few passages together reveal that Matthew has in mind the unspecified season of judgment that will accompany the return of Jesus Christ.

That some of the ones Jesus is talking about here are true believers is shown by His saying, **Not everyone** and **many**. The same **many** who entered the wide gate (v. 13) are now at the end of the broad way facing the Judge. For some people, however, the claim **Lord, Lord** will be legitimate, because Jesus will have indeed been their Lord on earth and they will have served Him genuinely.

If Jesus is speaking about the great white throne judgment, many professing believers who are *not* genuine will already have spent centuries in hell awaiting their final judgment (see Luke 16:23–26; Acts 1:25). **Because they were so zealous and**

active and diligent in religious work—in the Lord's own name—they are incredulous that they are even standing before Christ to be judged.

*Even at that time they will address Christ as **Lord** and speak to Him in desperation with the greatest respect and sincerity. Their words and their works will seem impressive to them, but their lives will not support the claim of their lips.*

In [Luke 6:46](#) Jesus said,

*“Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’
and do not do what I say?”*

**IT IS NOT THE ONE WHO SIMPLY CLAIMS
THE LORD, BUT THE ONE WHO DOES THE
WILL OF MY FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN
WHO IS SAVED.**

The issue is obedience to the Word of God.

***“If you abide in My Word,
then you are truly disciples of Mine,”***

Jesus said (John 8:31; cf. 6:66–69; Matt. 24:13; Col. 1:22–23; 1 Tim. 4:16; Heb. 3:14; 10:38–39; 1 John 2:19).

Salvation and obedience to the will of God are inseparable,

as the writer of Hebrews makes clear: “He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation” (5:9; cf. Rom. 1:5; 6:16; 15:18; 16:19, 26; 1 Pet. 1:2, 22).

Jesus’ word to the disobedient claimers will be, **I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness**. All their words of respect and honor and all their works of dedication and devotion will be declared empty and worthless. They may have had God’s name in their mouths, but rebellion was in their hearts.

His saying, **I never knew you**, does not, of course, mean that Jesus was unaware of their identity. He knows quite well who these persons are; they are deceived professing Christians whose lives were spent in the **practice** [of] **lawlessness**.

“To know” was a Hebrew idiom that represented intimate relations. It was frequently used of marital intimacy (see Gen. 4:1, 17; etc.; where “had relations” is literally “knew,” as in the KJV). It was also used of God’s special intimacy with His chosen people Israel and with all of those who trust in Him. In a unique and beautiful way the Lord “knows those who take refuge in Him” (Nah. 1:7). The Good Shepherd knows His sheep intimately (John 10:1–14).

Jesus therefore will say to those who claim Him but never trusted in Him, **I never knew you**. “I have never known you as My disciples, and you have never known Me as your Lord and Savior. We have no intimate part of each other. You chose your kingdom, and it was not My kingdom.” **Depart from Me** is the resulting final sentence to hell, and is identical in thought to the judgment of Matthew 25:41 at the Lord’s return: “Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.” The lake of fire awaits all false professors (Rev. 20:15).

Practice lawlessness is a present participle in the Greek, indicating continuous, regular action, and identifies the unforgiven sin and unrighteous life patterns of those claimers of salvation. **You** continually and habitually **practice lawlessness** is the idea. Profession of Christ and **practice of lawlessness** are totally incompatible. A good tree *cannot* bear that sort of fruit (Matt. 7:18; John 3:4–10).

A good tree not only can but will bear good fruit, and a life that professes to be Christian, but in no way reflects Christ's righteousness, has no part in Him. That kind of profession comes from the kind of faith that has no works and is dead (James 2:17). It is the demon faith James refers to (James 2:19), which is orthodox and accurate, but unholy. In the ultimate and most tragic sense such a false profession is to take the Lord's name in vain. "The blasphemy of the sanctuary," G. Campbell Morgan observed, "is far more awful than the blasphemy of the slum" (*The Gospel According to Matthew* [New York: Revell, 1929], p. 79). Mere professed devotion to Christ is but another Judas kiss.

The Lord knows well that even His most faithful disciples will fail, stumble, and fall into sin. Otherwise He would not have told us to pray, "Forgive us our debts" (Matt. 6:12). And when "we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). No Christian is sinless, but the fact that we continually confess our sins, seek the Lord's forgiveness, and long for righteousness (Matt. 5:6) is evidence that we belong to Him. God's will may not be the perfection of the true believer's life, but it is the direction of it.

Those who continually **practice lawlessness**, however, give evidence that they do *not* belong to Christ. They do not recognize or confess their sins or hunger for righteousness, because they have no part of Christ. All religious activity, no matter how orthodox and fervent, that does not result from obedience to the lordship of Christ and the pursuit of His glory is rebellion against the law of God, which demands heart conformity.

This passage is all the more amazing when one considers the impressive works that those professing believers claim to have accomplished. They tell the Lord, **Did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?**

As already mentioned, we know from verse 21 (**not everyone**) that some of these claims will be made by genuine believers. And because Jesus does not question the factualness of the claims, it is possible that actual prophecies were made, demons cast out, and some kind of miracles performed even by those who were not genuine believers.

There are three possible explanations for the claim of the false believers. It may be that they were allowed to do those amazing works by God's power. God put words in Balaam's mouth, even though that prophet was false and wicked (Num. 23:5). King Saul, after he became apostate had the "Spirit of God [come] upon him mightily, so that he prophesied" (1 Sam. 10:10). The wicked high priest Caiaphas unwittingly and unintentionally "prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation" (John 11:51).

A second possibility is that those amazing acts were accomplished by Satan's power. Jesus predicted that "false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect" (Matt. 24:24). The unbelieving sons of Sceva, for example, were Jewish exorcists, who made their living casting out demons (Acts 19:13–14). Mark 9:38–40 tells of someone outside the apostles casting out demons. Paul promises false signs in the last days, lying wonders of Satan (2 Thess. 2:8–10). Acts 8:11 describes the work of a satanic

sorcerer. Today there are miracle workers, healers, and exorcists who claim to work for Jesus Christ but are satanic deceivers.

A third possibility is that some of the claims were simply false. The prophecies, exorcisms, and miracles were fake and contrived. No doubt all three will be represented.

But whether the works themselves were done in God's power or not, the people who did them did not belong to Him and did not truly recognize Him as **Lord**, despite their profession. They had no part in His kingdom or its righteousness, and those works, whether genuine or false, divine or Satanic, would stand them in no good stead before the judgment seat of Christ.

The words of an engraving from the cathedral of Lübeck, Germany, beautifully reflect our Lord's teaching here:

Thus speaketh Christ our Lord to us, You call Me master and obey Me not, you call Me light and see Me not, you call Me the way and walk Me not, you call Me life and live Me not, you call Me wise and follow Me not, you call Me fair and love Me not, you call Me rich and ask Me not, you call Me eternal and seek Me not, if I condemn thee, blame Me not.

GotQuestions.org

Who were the seven sons of Sceva?

The book of Acts records that, in Ephesus, God was performing “extraordinary miracles through Paul” ([Acts 19:11](#)). These apostolic miracles were to substantiate Paul's message. Some of these miracles involved casting out [demons](#) from those who were possessed (verse 12). Jesus had earlier given His apostles specific authority over demons ([Mark 3:15](#)). Paul, as an apostle, had received that authority as well (see [2 Corinthians 12:12](#)).

There were some religious charlatans in Ephesus who pretended to have special, miracle-working powers. Sceva, who is identified as “a Jewish chief priest” ([Acts 19:14](#)), had seven sons “who went around driving out evil spirits” (verse 13). Seeing the success that Paul had in exorcising demons, the seven sons of Sceva began using a new formula invoking the name of Jesus. They would say to the demon, “In the name of the Jesus whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out” (verse 13).

This ploy of Sceva's seven sons backfired one day. A demon they were trying to cast out refused, saying, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know about, but who are you?” ([Acts 19:15](#)). The demon then turned on them viciously. The demon-possessed man “jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked

and bleeding” (verse 16). The seven sons of Sceva were no match for the demonic power they were toying with (see [Mark 5:1–4](#)).

The result of the demon’s attack on the seven sons of Sceva was that everyone in Ephesus was “seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor” ([Acts 19:17](#)). In comparing the work of Paul with that of the seven sons of Sceva, the Ephesians could readily see the difference between the power of Christ and the impotency of pretenders. The gospel made great inroads into that city (verses 20 and 26).

We learn several things from the account of the seven sons of Sceva. First, demons are dangerously powerful spirit beings—much stronger than we—who can cause the people they possess to do incredibly violent and uncontrollable things. The seven sons of Sceva obviously didn’t have the proper respect for demons (see [Jude 1:8–9](#)). Second, demons recognize valid authority, and they fear God (see [James 2:19](#)). It’s important to note that the authority over demons belongs only to Jesus (see [Luke 8:28, 31](#)) and to those to whom Jesus gave it. The demon in [Acts 19](#) says that it knows Jesus and Paul (one of Jesus’ [chosen apostles](#)). It refused to recognize any other authority in Ephesus. The demon’s question “who are you?” is chilling in its implications to the seven sons of Sceva and their total lack of authority. Third, demons cannot be cast out via a formula or a ritual or invoking Jesus’ name. There is no power in incantations, even if they include the name of Christ. The power belongs to Jesus alone. Probably the greatest mistake the seven sons of Sceva made was their failure to realize that Paul was not doing the exorcisms. Jesus Christ was doing the exorcisms through Paul.

The problem faced by the seven sons of Sceva was that they had no power over the demon they confronted. They were not apostles. More than that, as religious as they were, they had no relationship with God. They were not believers in Christ. They did not possess the power or the presence of the Holy Spirit. There was nothing in them or their words that would cause a demon to pay them the slightest heed. One proud demon in particular seems to have been fed up with their stage show and gave them a beating they would remember.

At one point in Jesus’ ministry, He sent out 70 disciples to whom He had given His authority over demons. When they came back to report to the Lord what had happened, they were excited about being able to [exorcise evil spirits](#): “Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name” ([Luke 10:17](#)). Jesus immediately provided some perspective: “Do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven” (verse 20). What is greater than authority over demons? Knowing God is your Father and heaven is your home.

ADDITIONAL Resources:

[Spiritual Warfare in the Storyline of Scripture: A Biblical, Theological, and Practical Approach by Cook & Lawless](#)

GOOGLE AI:

Jesus empowered Judas by giving him the authority to heal and cast out demons, according to Matthew 10:1-4 and other biblical accounts. This empowerment demonstrated that miraculous works are not proof of being a true believer and highlighted that even those associated with Jesus' inner circle could harbor hidden motives and ultimately betray him.

Details of the Empowerment

- **Authority over Spirits and Illness:**

Jesus gave all twelve of his chosen apostles, including Judas Iscariot, the power to drive out evil spirits and heal every disease and affliction.

- **Active Participation:**

Judas actively ministered alongside the other apostles for about three years, performing these miracles and serving as part of their apostolic ministry.

Significance of the Empowerment

- **Evidence of God's Sovereignty:**

THE FACT THAT JESUS EMPOWERED JUDAS, WHO WAS DESTINED TO BETRAY HIM, SHOWS THAT RELIGIOUS ASSOCIATIONS, PRACTICES, AND MIRACLE-WORKING DO NOT GUARANTEE SALVATION.

- **Demonstration of Free Will:**

Jesus also gave Judas warnings and pleas, indicating that he had free will to turn away from his betrayal and sin, but chose not to.

- **Biblical Illustration:**

Judas's actions and his temporary empowerment serve as a warning, illustrating the people in [Matthew 7:22](#), who performed mighty works in Jesus's name but to whom Jesus will declare he never knew them.

Popular Mechanics Magazine:

She Was Pronounced Dead—Then They Found Her Gasping for Air in a Body Bag

A surprising number of patients have been mistakenly declared dead in recent years, raising questions about what it truly means to die.

BY [ASHLEY STIMPSON](#) PUBLISHED: JUN 13, 2024 12:45 PM EDT

ABOUT TWO HOURS AFTER THE BODY of 74-year-old Constance Glanz arrived at the Butherus, Maser, and Love funeral home outside of Lincoln, Nebraska, earlier this month, an employee there noticed something strange. Glanz, who had been pronounced dead at a nearby nursing home, was breathing.

After she was given CPR and transported to a local hospital, Glanz survived for a few more hours. She was later declared dead for a second time.

The Jerusalem Post:

Lazarus syndrome: How a US woman survived 17 hours of clinical death

Velma Thomas' 17-hour "miracle" was "one of the things that physicians and nurses can't always explain," her doctor said at the time.



Alessandro Magnasco's The Raising of Lazarus, created circa 1715–1740(photo credit: Wikimedia Commons)ByJERUSALEM POST STAFFNOVEMBER 22, 2022 21:26Updated: NOVEMBER 23, 2022 08:27

Velma Thomas, an American citizen, is the holder of an unusual world record.

In 2008, Thomas suffered a cardiac arrest at her Virginia home. Following hospitalization, she suffered two further heart attacks and was connected to a ventilator.

During her stay in hospital, Thomas' heart stopped beating a remarkable three times as she received treatment from doctors and entered a state of [clinical death](#), the medical term for when the heart stops beating in a regular rhythm, causing the body to stop breathing and halting blood circulation.