

# Jesus – King of the Jews #17

## Empty Words and Empty Hearts

Matt 7:21-29

### Introduction:

1. The Master here deals with the problem of false profession.
  - a. Vs 21-23 deal with those who say, but do not do
  - b. Vs 24-27 deal with those who hear but do not do
2. The Lord is speaking to those who are deluded in thinking they are on the road to heaven when they are really on the broad road to hell.
3. Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones said "These... are in many ways the most solemn and solemnizing words ever uttered in this world... to open our eyes... to the terrible danger of self-deception and self-delusion."
4. This strong warning is not about cultists and false teachers and those who deny important doctrines of the faith or about intentional hypocrites, who for some personal gain make a profession of faith while they know full well that they are not believers.
5. This warning is about people who think they are saved but are not.
6. It is about people who have deceived themselves about the most important matter of life.
7. It should cause all of us to earnestly examine our hearts to make certain that our salvation is real indeed.
8. What a terrible thing to end up in hell thinking you were saved.
9. Various polls in recent years have estimated that perhaps fifty percent of Americans identify themselves as born-again Christians.
  - a. But on the basis of the Bible's description of true believers and the fact that few really come on God's terms, those estimates could not be remotely correct.
  - b. By scriptural standards, it is hard to believe that even half of the church members in the United States are true believers.

BYZ **Matthew 7:21** Οὐ πᾶς ὁ λέγων μοι, Κύριε, κύριε, εἰσελεύσεται εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν οὐρανῶν· ἀλλ' ὁ ποιῶν τὸ θέλημα τοῦ πατρὸς μου τοῦ ἐν οὐρανοῖς.

## I. Empty Words – vs 21-23

### A. The Description of False Profession – vs 21

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

- Christ gives a basic description of a person who makes a false profession.
- They have two significant trademarks.
  1. Lack of sincerity—“Lord, Lord”
    - a) *Lack of sincerity is one of the great trademarks of false profession.*
    - b) *Their profession of faith has never gotten to their hearts.*
    - c) *There is nothing wrong with calling Christ "Lord."*
    - d) *In fact it is the right thing to do.*
    - e) *But words are not enough, if the heart is not in it.*
  2. Lack of submission. "But he that doeth..."
    - a) *The person making a false profession has the trademark of not submitting to the will of God in his life.*
    - b) *He may talk a good talk and do great works—those things are fine, for Christ does not rebuke them.*
    - c) *What is wrong is that they do not submit to the will of God in their lives.*
    - d) *The evidence of salvation is in submission to God*
    - e) *Submission does not produce salvation, but proves it*

## B. The Defense of False Profession

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

- Those making a false profession are quick to defend their case.
  - They are so certain of salvation that they will argue with God about their being saved. Their argument is threefold.
1. Their words. "Have we not prophesied in thy name?"
    - a) *Prophecy is not limited to predicting future events but includes all spiritual messages and teaching.*
    - b) *False profession is capable of preaching a sound message, teaching a truthful doctrine.*
    - c) *But that does not save the one preaching or teaching.*
  2. Their works. "Have cast out devils... wonderful works"
    - a) *Christ did not deny this claim of the false professors*
    - b) *One can do great things in the name of the Lord and still be unsaved*
  3. Their warrant. "In thy name"
    - a) *3x this warrant is used in defense of those guilty of false profession*
    - b) *Doing things "in thy name" is right /proper, but that is not enough*
    - c) *It is scary how well one can perform in word and works and warrant and still be unsaved.*
    - d) *But if it is not real in the heart, it makes no difference how great your achievements, you are still unsaved.*

## C. The Doom of False Profession

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

- False profession will meet a terrible doom. Christ said so.
1. Day of doom - "In that day... then" – vs 22
    - a) *There will be a day of reckoning for false profession.*
    - b) *False profession will be exposed.*
  2. Declaration of doom - "Then will I profess"
    - a) *The word translated "profess" means a publication and open announcement and declaration.*
    - b) *The doom of those guilty of a false profession will be public.*
    - c) *What shame and humility will come upon those, who men thought were not only Christians but great Christians.*
  3. Denial in the doom - "I never knew you"
    - a) *This does not mean Christ was ignorant of them -He is omniscient*
    - b) *What it means and refers to is a special relationship.*
    - c) *Those guilty of false prof are not saved and were never saved*
    - d) *These did not lose their salvation, but were "never" saved*
  4. Departure in the doom - "Depart from me"
    - a) *This is a terrible doom, to be so abhorrent to God that He does not want you around Him.*
    - b) *The unsaved "shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord" (2 Thess 1:9).*
    - c) *Nothing could be worse than to be unwanted in God's presence.*
  5. Denunciation in the doom - "Ye that work iniquity"
    - a) *There are some religious charlatans whose iniquity is very evident to all the world.*
    - b) *But there are also those who outwardly make a fair show religiously who are no better, for they also "work iniquity."*
    - c) *God sees the heart.*
    - d) **Practice lawlessness** is a present participle in the Greek
      - (1) Indicating continuous, regular action, and identifies the unforgiven sin and unrighteous life patterns of those claimers of salvation.
      - (2) **You** continually and habitually **practice lawlessness** is the idea.
      - (3) Profession of Christ and **practice** of **lawlessness** are totally incompatible.
      - (4) A good tree *cannot* bear that sort of fruit (Matt. 7:18; John 3:4-10).
    - e) *Words and works may be impressive to man; but if there is not true repentance of sin, iniquity still abounds in the heart; and God sees it all and says of such folk, "Ye that work iniquity."*

<sup>BYZ</sup> **Matthew 7:22** Πολλοὶ ἐροῦσίν μοι ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ, Κύριε, κύριε, οὐ τῷ σῶ ὀνόματι προεφητεύσαμεν, καὶ τῷ σῶ ὀνόματι δαιμόνια ἐξεβάλομεν, καὶ τῷ σῶ ὀνόματι δυνάμεις πολλὰς ἐποιήσαμεν;

Did we not prophesy in thy name? The use of ou in the question expects the affirmative answer

<sup>BYZ</sup> **Matthew 7:23** Καὶ τότε ὁμολογήσω αὐτοῖς ὅτι Οὐδέποτε ἔγνω ὑμᾶς· ἀποχωρεῖτε ἀπ' ἐμοῦ οἱ ἐργαζόμενοι τὴν ἀνομίαν.

The expression "face the music" is said to have originated in Japan. According to the story, one man in the imperial orchestra couldn't play a note. Being a person of great influence and wealth, he had demanded that he be given a place in the group because he wanted to "perform" before the Emperor. The conductor agreed to let him sit in the second row of the orchestra, even though he couldn't read music. He was given a flute, and when a concert would begin, he'd raise his instrument, pucker his lips, and move his fingers. He would go through all the motions of playing, but he never made a sound. This deception continued for two years. Then a new conductor took over. He told the orchestra that he wanted to audition each player personally. One by one they performed in his presence. Then came the flutist's turn. He was frantic with worry, so he pretended to be sick. However, the doctor who was ordered to examine him declared that he was perfectly well. The conductor insisted that the man appear and demonstrate his skill. Shamefacedly he had to confess that he was a fake. He was unable to "face the music."

## II. Empty Hearts - vs 24-27

- The two builders represent the two kind of listeners— saved and lost
- The saved heard Christ and did what He taught - they are called wise
- The lost heard Christ but did not do what He taught, they are foolish.
- The exhortation in this parable is "Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only" ([James 1:22](#)).

### A. The Wise Builder – vs 24

24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

- This portrayal in building is of the man who hears Christ and does what Christ says to do.
  1. His Sweat - "Built his house upon a rock"
    - a) To build a house upon a rock meant the builder had to dig into the ground until he found a firm foundation of rock.
    - b) Luke says this builder "dugged deep" ([Luke 6:48](#)).
    - c) Sometimes a builder in Palestine had to go down as deep as thirty feet before he found rock.
    - d) This was hard work! It would produce much perspiration to dig deeply for a good foundation.
    - e) The Sears Tower in Chicago had to go down over a thousand feet before the builders found rock upon which to construct one of the tallest buildings in the world.
  2. His sagacity - "Wise man"
    - a) Christ calls the man a "wise man" who insists on building upon a foundation of rock.
  3. His survival – vs 25

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

    - a) The storm eventually came, which would expose how well the house was built.
    - b) Those who build their lives upon what Christ said will survive any storm in life contrary to those who build their lives upon the vain philosophies of man as we will see next.

### B. The Foolish Builder – vs 26

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

- This portrayal of building shows what a person is like who hears what Christ says but does not do what Christ says.
  1. His dispatch. "Built his house upon the sand"
    - a) This man did not take the time to dig deeply for a rock foundation, and so he could build his house in a hurry.
    - b) Satan always has shortcuts to reach our objectives faster, but every shortcut leaves out important ingredients of life.
  2. His display. "Built his house upon the sand"
    - a) All this man did was do work which could be seen of man.
    - b) Digging deeply for a foundation of rock means that much of a man's building may not be seen by man.
    - c) Only the house above the surface of the ground can be seen.
  3. His dumbness. "Foolish man"
    - a) "Foolish" here is the word from which we get our word "moron."
    - b) Those who reject the rock of Christ Jesus and only hear what He says and do not do what He says are called "morons" by Christ.
    - c) It is not a word that appeals to the world, but rejecting Christ does not appeal to God.
  4. His destruction

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

    - a) The destruction was great - The loss was extremely great.
    - b) No loss is greater than that which will be experienced by every Christ rejecter.

BYZ **Matthew 7:24** Πᾶς οὖν ὅστις ἀκούει μου τοὺς λόγους τούτους καὶ ποιεῖ αὐτοὺς ὁμοιώσω αὐτὸν ἀνδρὶ φρονίμῳ ὅστις ὠκοδόμησεν τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὴν πέτραν· ὁμοιώσω ind fut act 1ps from ὁμοιῶ make like (pass. resemble, be like; ὁμοιωθεὶς ἀνθρώπῳ in human form Ac 14.11); compare φρόνιμος wise, sensible, thoughtful; comp. shrewder (Lk 16.8)  
πέτρα (1) literally, living rock, bedrock (MT 7.24), in contrast to πέτρος (isolated stone); cliff rock, in which tombs may be hewn out (MK 15.46) or caves and clefts may be found (RV 6.15); rocky ground or soil (LU 8.6); (2) metaphorically, of Christ; (a) as the antitype fulfilling the event foreshadowed by the rock in the wilderness, offering "living water" when struck (1C 10.4)

BYZ **Matthew 7:25** καὶ κατέβη ἡ βροχὴ καὶ ἦλθον οἱ ποταμοὶ καὶ ἔπνευσαν οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ προσέπεσον τῇ οἰκίᾳ ἐκείνῃ καὶ οὐκ ἔπεσεν τεθεμελίωτο γὰρ ἐπὶ τὴν πέτραν κατέβη ind aor act 3ps from καταβαίω come or go down, descend; fall, fall down; be brought down (Mt 11.23; Lk 10.15); get out (Mt 14.29)  
ἔπνευσαν ind aor act 3pp from πνέω blow (of wind)  
προσέπεσον ind aor act 3pp from προσπίπτω fall at someone's feet, fall down before someone; beat against (Mt 7.25)  
τεθεμελίωτο ind pluperf pass 3ps from θεμελιῶ found; establish firmly; literally provide with a foundation, found, lay the foundation of (MT 7.25); figuratively, as providing a firm basis for belief or practice establish, strengthen, settle, cause to be firm and unwavering (1P 5.10)

BYZ **Matthew 7:26** καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀκούων μου τοὺς λόγους τούτους καὶ μὴ ποιῶν αὐτοὺς ὁμοιωθήσεται ἀνδρὶ μωρῷ ὅστις ὠκοδόμησεν τὴν οἰκίαν αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὴν ἄμμον· ὁμοιωθήσεται ind fut pass 3ps from ὁμοιῶ  
ἄμμος f sand; seashore (Re 12.18)

### III. The Appraisal by the Listeners – vs 28-29

- The last 2 verses give the appraisal of the listeners regarding Christ and His Sermon on the Mount.

#### A. The Time of the Appraisal – vs 28

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

- Whatever faults the listeners had, one of them was not the time in which they appraised the sermon and the giver of the sermon.
- They waited until Christ had finished before they made their appraisal
- Oftentimes on "talk radio" one hears the host responding to his listeners before they have completed their comments.
- It is an arrogant interruption that promises eventual shame and embarrassment.

#### B. The Trauma in the Appraisal – vs 28

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

- The response of the people to the Sermon on the Mount embodied much trauma.
- Character of the trauma - "Astonished."
    - The word means to "drive one out of his senses by a sudden shock, and therefore here of amazement.
    - They were astounded" (Vincent).
    - The people were amazed at Christ's teaching, both at what He taught and how He taught.
  - Condemnation in the trauma - "Astonished."
    - The people were amazed but they did not apply what Christ taught
    - They were simply amazed at the doctrine and method.
    - They were moved emotionally but not spiritually.
    - Many folk think that if they have an emotional experience at church, that God has really spoken to their hearts.
    - Emotional experience is worthless without application
  - Caution from the trauma - "Astonished."
    - Preachers and churches should be cautious in evaluating the response of people to their sermons.
    - When people strongly react emotionally it is often mistaken for a great moving of the spirit of Gods, when in fact it is not
    - It is not the emotional reaction after the sermon that matters but the application of the sermon that matters.
    - Many preachers and churches cater to this emotional reaction and create a lot of false decisions for Christ, especially at the invitation time when the emphasis on emotions is very strong.

#### C. The Teaching in the Appraisal – vs 28-29

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine: 29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

- Here we look at the teaching which so astonished the people.
- Contents of the teaching - "Doctrine"
    - The word translated "doctrine" means teaching.
    - The people were astonished / amazed at the things Christ taught
    - The religious leaders never taught anything so holy and upright as what Christ taught in the Sermon on the Mount.
    - Christ spoke about things the religious leaders avoided
    - Christ lifted the std of holiness far above the religious leaders
  - Custom in the teaching - "He taught"
    - "taught" is in the imperfect tense which means teaching was the continuous practice of our Lord.
    - Christ was interested in instructing people in the truth.
    - Too many churches are failing miserably to teach their people
    - They have many events /occasions to stimulate attendance, but they do not do much teaching, the result is people not grounded

BYZ **Matthew 7:27** καὶ κατέβη ἡ βροχὴ καὶ ἦλθον οἱ ποταμοὶ καὶ ἔπνευσαν οἱ ἄνεμοι καὶ προσέκοψαν τῇ οἰκίᾳ ἐκείνῃ καὶ ἔπεσεν καὶ ἦν ἡ πτώσις αὐτῆς μεγάλη  
πτώσει ἢ literally, as an action *falling, fall, crash*; of a house *collapse* (MT 7.27); figuratively, of a worsening condition *downfall, ruin, destruction* (LU 2.34)

BYZ **Matthew 7:28** Καὶ ἐγένετο ὅτε συνετέλεσεν ὁ Ἰησοῦς τοὺς λόγους τούτους, ἐξεπλήσσαντο οἱ ὄχλοι ἐπὶ τῇ διδαχῇ αὐτοῦ·  
Were astonished (ἐξεπλήσσαντο) From εκ, out of, and πλήσσω, to strike. Often to drive one out of His senses by a sudden shock, and therefore here of amazement. They were astounded. We have a similar expression, though not so strong: "I was struck with this or that remarkable thing."

BYZ **Matthew 7:29** ἦν γὰρ διδάσκων αὐτοὺς ὡς ἐξουσίαν ἔχων, καὶ οὐχ ὡς οἱ γραμματεῖς.

3. Character of the teaching - *"He taught them ...authority"*
  - a) *To teach with authority means one teaches with certainty.*
  - b) *Christ spoke with certainty and with dogmatism.*
  - c) *He did not fill His teaching with a lot of "perhaps" and "maybes."*
  - d) *It takes courage to teach with authority, for few in our day take well to dogmatism in spiritual matters.*
  - e) *Folk like the doctor to be dogmatic when operating, folk like the pilot to be dogmatic when flying to a specific destination, but folk do not want a dogmatic yes or no in spiritual matters, for they want self-will, not the Sovereign will, to reign.*
  - f) *Absolutes do not allow for the lust of the flesh.*
4. Contrast in the teaching - *"Not as the scribes"*
  - a) *Both the style and subject of teaching are involved here*
  - b) *Christ spoke with authority, but the scribes did not; they wanted to appease the people and gain favor with the people, so they taught what was advantageous to the scribes to teach.*
  - c) *And the scribes did not teach the subjects which Christ taught either.*
  - d) *They too often ignored the important and emphasized the unimportant.*
  - e) *Later Christ denounced these scribes for this when He said, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith" ([Matthew 23:23](#)).*
  - f) *And Christ aptly characterized these scribes as those who would "strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel" ([Matthew 23:24](#)).*

Conclusion:

1. The mark of true discipleship is not simply hearing and believing, but believing and doing. The true disciples of Jesus Christ, the only true converts of the gospel, are those who are "doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.
2. When I was a child I often had toothache, and I knew that if I went to my mother she would give me something which would deaden the pain for that night and let me get to sleep. But I did not go to my mother—at least, not till the pain became very bad. And the reason I did not go was this. I did not doubt she would give me the aspirin; but I knew she would also do something else. I knew she would take me to the dentist next morning. I could not get what I wanted out of her without getting something more, which I did not want. I wanted immediate relief from pain: but I could not get it without having my teeth set permanently right. And I knew those dentists; I knew they started fiddling about with all sorts of other teeth which had not yet begun to ache. They would not let sleeping dogs lie.