

“JESUS’ KINGDOM MANIFESTO”

BIG IDEA . . . Part 18: True Judgment – Ultimate Delusion

(Matt. 7:21-23)

INTRO: As SOM closes, Jesus continues giving His hearers an invitation to abandon the self-righteous, works-driven, human achievement focus of man’s religions and to enter His kingdom based upon divine accomplishment where we repent of our sin and trust Him to impart His true righteousness to us by His grace and our faith (Eph. 2:8-9). To receive His gift of grace and eternal life with Him and His people, we must accept His invitation (vv. 13-14). We must enter the narrow gate, which is not easy, for several reasons (review):

- it must be searched for – few find it; not stumbled upon
- it is demanding – unlike man’s way to God, which is broad, easy and popular; it is narrow, hard and unpopular. We must strive (agonize) to enter and live (Lk. 13:22-24).
- its tickets are sold by fake prophets, shepherds in sheep’s clothing (vv. 15-20). They are master liars and deceivers, like their master, the devil (Jn. 8:44).

Another reason why so few enter the narrow gate of salvation is *self-deception*. Not only can false teachers deceive us about the true way to salvation, we can deceive ourselves (the ultimate delusion) and miss the true gospel. Bible contains many warnings about self-deception (Jesus, Paul, John, James). Many warnings because many are self-deceived. Why?

- wrong basis for salvation - grace not works; substitute religious activities for real relationship
- false doctrine of assurance – told not to doubt, so many never truly examine (2 Cor. 13:5). Best evidence of salvation is long term obedience based upon love and empowered by His Spirit. Swindoll . . .

Jesus presents two categories of self-deception: (vv. 21-23) Verbal Professors, they say but don’t do and (vv. 24-27) Intellectual Hearers, who hear but don’t do. Today, look at the Verbal Professors (“say” 2 Xs) who say but don’t do – empty words and works (vv. 21-23). **READ vv. 21-23 . . . context tied to vv. 15-20**

THE CONVERSATION/DIALOGUE

- Remarks of the Self-deceived:

- Note Jesus says, “not everyone.” – He didn’t say not anyone. We must say but not all who say are true.
- “Lord, Lord” (2Xs) – indicates respect and fervency; not necessarily submission to His will and hunger for His Word. All true Christians say “Lord, Lord,” but NOT all who say this are true Christians! Must do “His will” (Jn. 3:36; 6:28-29).
- “in my name” (3 Xs) – Enjoyed successful service. We did what we did for you (preached, delivered, miracles) – Don’t know if actually did or just claimed. If true, empowered by Satan to do so, (Acts 19:13-16). Ex.: Judas as a disciple preached and did miracles (Lk. 9:2). 2 Thess. 2:9
- Response of the Lord (v. 23; Psa. 6:8): Obviously, as Lord, He knows who they are. “Know” refers to a close and intimate relationship based upon love that acts and obeys (Jn. 10:30). They were actually “workers of iniquity”, who continually acted lawlessly. A profession of faith in Christ is worthless if it isn’t backed up by a consistently obedient heart and life (and when fail, a beatitude – attitude). Condemnation “depart from me.” As we’ll see in vv. 24-29 we must be consumed with doing the will of God! Submitting to His Lordship is essential. In NT Jesus is called “Lord” almost 750 times and “Savior” only 24 times (In Acts 90 vs. 2!). What’s the emphasis? James said that faith without works is dead – just empty words from empty hearts.

CONC: Many who believe they are Christians aren’t. They are self-deceived – the ultimate delusion – and one that is forever damning. How can I know? Honestly answer these difficult questions (2 Cor. 13:5):

1. Have you asked the Holy Spirit to confirm your relationship with Christ? Rom. 8:16
2. Are there clear and specific evidences (fruit) how my relationship with Christ is changing my life? Lk. 3:8
3. With all my heart do I seek to follow Christ, and when I fall short am I convicted and do I confess? Lk. 9:23, 57-62

This teaching is critical. The right foundation is essential. We don’t want to be wrong here, or we may hear words we could never have imagined – but it’s too late to change!