

I Never Knew You
The Gospel of the Kingdom
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Bible Text: Matthew 7:21-23
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Take your Bibles with me this morning and open to Matthew 7, returning this morning to our series through the gospel of Matthew. The title of the series has been "The Gospel of the Kingdom." Took a short break in December for Christmas themed, incarnational themed messages, gold, frankincense and myrrh, as we looked at what the gifts of the magi, of the wise men proved about and prophesied about who Christ was and what he had come to do, and then last week preaching and looking at the delusions that have seemed to have overtaken the world.

This morning, we're returning back to the Sermon on the Mount and here in Matthew 7:21-23 and as soon as several people knew this was my text, I started getting messages this week, "We're back in Matthew and you're back at that passage and, oh, those dreadful, dreadful words." This has to be one of the most frightening passages of Scripture for us to read, but at the same time also one of the most encouraging because it's a warning from Christ given at the end of the Sermon on the Mount before he finishes out. We actually won't finish the Sermon next week. I'm going to preach two messages on this text from Matthew 7, I'm actually going to pull a Lloyd-Jones on you. In look at Lloyd-Jones's preaching on these three verses, he actually preached three messages on them and I wanted to go through the text this morning and look at the warning that Jesus gives, and then next week want to come back and spend another message looking at the causes and the signs of self-delusion or self-deception, to look at what it is that works in our minds to lead us to doubt the word of God and to not take God at his word and to trust his promises. But this morning we're just looking at the warning, at these verses itself as what Jesus tells us. Here in the application part of the Sermon on the Mount right near the end, all we have after these verses will be the end summary, "whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock," we'll close there, Lord willing in two weeks.

But here we're looking from false prophets, the last paragraph we were in, chapter 7, verses 15 through 20, where Jesus tells us to beware of false prophets and we're going to be able to know them by their fruits. Now in verses 21 to 23, he addresses false professors. They are those who falsely preach error and doctrinal heresy but they are also those who believe that error and that heresy. So he moves from false prophets to a warning about false professors, warning, and the frightening part of this warning is that

he says that many will say to him, "Lord, Lord," and yet have no relationship to him. For that devastating statement, for Christ to look to someone who says with a profession, "You are Lord, Lord," and with practice presumably doing good works, even preaching and performing miracles, and yet Jesus says, "Depart from Me, I never knew you." There's no relationship at all.

That drives us this morning from the text to answer two questions. First, what are you actually trusting for salvation? What are you relying on for your salvation? And secondly, how can we know that we know Jesus? In fact, that is the question that I ask most often in my personal witnessing, I want to ask people not have they accepted Christ because whether they've accepted him or not doesn't matter, what matters is whether God has accepted you in Christ. God is the one who does the accepting. The question is not have you accepted Christ, the question is do you know him? Do you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ? Have you repented from your sin, turned from all that you are outside of him and before him and turned to him in absolute faith, trusting him alone to save you?

In the warning, Jesus says, "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." Man, wasn't that Jesus a legalist?

21 "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. 22 "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

We start with words and how words can actually be a false evidence of salvation. Just because you say something doesn't make it so. Somebody needs to remind the media that that's true. Just because you say something doesn't make it so because Christ starts and he says, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven." This "Lord, Lord" is a profession. It is a profession, in fact, of at least a mental assent, a belief that Jesus is Lord. It is an agreement with the truth about who he is.

The reality is, we know from Scripture, is that everyone will one day profess that Jesus is Lord. We're told in Philippians, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus who being in the form of God did not consider it robbery to be equal with God but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bond-servant, coming the likeness of men and being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." Everyone should confess that. Everyone will profess that. But there's a difference between the two. If you profess it now with saving faith, truly trusting that he is who he

says he is, that is a profession unto salvation. But one day every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that he is Lord simply before the judgment seat confessing that Jesus is who he's told us that he is all along, and it will not be a confession of faith but a confession just of bare fact that Jesus is Lord. Of course, the question is how much better to profess it now willingly than there simply because you have to admit it's true as you have stood before him as your judge?

But please understand that a profession of faith does not save. A profession of faith by itself is not the means of your salvation. You can be coached. I saw this happen. I was trained to do this, thankfully had the wisdom and the mentors to tell me not to do this. I had a professor that told us that we needed to go and preach and hand out tracts to everybody and on the tracts he would print out the sinner's prayer and he would say, "Go and get them to read the tract, explain the tract to them, and whether they agree with it or not, whether you see any sign of conviction or not, turn it over to the back and just ask them to pray the prayer with you on the back, and if they just say those words and those words come and pass over their lips, whether they actually believe it or not because they've made confession," now we're forgetting Romans, "confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved." And this guy actually believed that if you handed out a tract and just got somebody to repeat that prayer, you could give them assurance of salvation and they would never go to hell no matter whatever happened to them for the rest of their life. That's a damning ministry. That gives false assurance because it is not simply a profession of faith that saves. We know this, by the way, because even the demons believe. Not that there's an opportunity for salvation but if professing faith was a means of saving you, the belief there in James 2:19, you believe that there is one God, you do well, even the demons believe and tremble. Even the demons believe.

A profession of faith does not save but a profession of faith is necessary and, in fact, a profession of faith is evidence of the presence of the Holy Spirit in our life. If we are professing saving faith, 1 Corinthians 12:3, Paul says, "Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit." So there is a work of the Spirit that will produce a profession of faith but understand it is not that profession of faith that saves us. It's not saying the right words. It's meaning the right words and, in fact, here's the reality: a profession of faith will not save you, Jesus saves you, and then you profess that he has. This is the first act of obedience for us, isn't it, the command to make disciples and baptize them, and that baptism is your first act of obedience as a profession of faith, that I am professing that I have died to my old way of life, I have been raised to a new way of life, I have been crucified with Christ and now he lives in me.

But it's not the profession that saves, it's not just saying the right words, it's not that you can just give people a formula and if they just follow the formula it works. In fact, this is a false evidence of salvation. Jesus says, "Not everyone who says these words to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father." To look at these false evidences of salvation, there are several that are actually summed up in this profession, "Lord, Lord." First, a false evidence of salvation is that if you have

correct belief, that means that you're saved. If you have head knowledge and can explain the gospel, then that means you're saved. Head knowledge is not evidence of conversion. How do we know this? We know this from the testimony of multiple pastors in the ministry preaching the word of God who were saved. My favorite is a preacher who was preaching and said in the middle of a sermon and he'd been a pastor for 15 years, and in the middle of his sermon preaching the gospel, he believed it and he stopped and he said, "Oh my, I've never repented and trusted Christ to save me." And in that moment experienced new life and the joy of the Holy Spirit. Can you imagine?

But it's not just about correct belief. I know we like to argue about correct belief and we like to try to elaborate correct belief and we like to convince people to believe the truth and nothing wrong with believing the truth, but correct belief by itself is not evidence of conversion because a lost man can have correct belief mentally about who Christ is but not possess that as true saving faith in his heart. Proverbs 30:12 says, "There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, Yet is not washed from its filthiness." Can you imagine the doom of being able to state a correct belief but not actually believing it? We talked about it in Sunday school this morning that the reality is what you believe affects how you behave. Faith that is saving faith is faith that works, and if you claim something and you claim to believe it but it doesn't affect the way you act, you don't really believe it.

The illustration from Spurgeon, somebody knocks on your door in the middle of the night and you come down there hollering and screaming at you from the door and you come down, turn on the light, get out of bed, go open the door, and they scream at you that your house is on fire, your roof is on fire and you need to get your family out. And you thank them for telling you and then close the door, turn out the light, walk back down the hall and get back in bed, you don't believe your roof is on fire. You might say, "Well, I know they warned me and I know I smelled smoke and I believe it could be so." But no, you don't really believe it. If you really believe that your house is on fire, you're grabbing your family and you're getting out of the house.

Belief promotes action. It promotes behavior. So we look at correct belief to see if it produces correct behavior. The terms are orthodoxy and orthopraxy. Are you believing what is right and that is affecting you then to do what is right. If there is a belief but not an affect, you don't really believe it. You may mentally agree with it but you don't really believe it because when you really believe it, faith works. You're not saved by faith and works but you're saved by faith that does work. That's the evidence of saving faith, is that work follows your faith, that's James 2.

We also have to beware, though, that passionate belief is not enough. Lloyd-Jones makes the point and so did Spurgeon that the people who are saying this are saying, "Lord, Lord," there's an emphasis, there's a passion, there's a fervor behind this, that Jesus is not just Lord, he is Lord Lord. Well, it's not just a matter of correct belief and it's not just a matter of passionate belief. In fact, the warning given to us in the parable of the sower in Matthew 13, "he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but only endures for a

while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, he immediately stumbles." Here is the one who receives the gospel, receives it passionately, receives it joyously but there is no root. There's no depth. It's only superficial. It's only emotional.

This is the danger, by the way, I think in so much of the worship that we see taking place today, is that it is so emotional. And I love it that Lloyd-Jones said in the 1950s he said, "You look at the worship, at the atmosphere of worship in a church, and the more fervor they have to work up, the less fervor they actually possess." And this is why you can come and feel the presence of God and then leave and wonder what happened. Well, first, it wasn't probably the presence of God and, secondly, the presence of God is with you wherever you are. He'll never leave you or forsake you. So if you're waiting on a feeling to be sure that he's with you, your focus is in the wrong place. Trust what he tells you and know that whether you feel it or not, think about the Psalm, in the 23rd Psalm what does David say? "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death." Where would you feel more alone than in the vale of deep sorrows, the valley cast by the shadow of death? But what does he say? "Thou art with me." He is there with you in the midst of that.

So correct belief is not enough because that might just be head knowledge. Passionate belief is not enough because you can stir people up into passionate belief and never see action produced, never see actual repentance or faith. People like that can become some of the most passionate people you will ever meet and it comes to the point that if they're not bouncing off the walls, they don't think they're walking with God and it becomes chaos. It wears you out to try to keep up with them. Somebody said an emphasis of the Holy Spirit and his ministry should tell us that an evidence of the Holy Spirit at work in a church is not people jumping pews and barking like dogs, it's people being holy and desiring the word of God and wanting fellowship and spiritual growth.

So we see correct belief is not enough, passionate belief is not enough, and a profession of faith is not enough and here's why, because too often today I think we trust our faith rather than trusting Christ. This, I think, is really a symptom of the word faith movement. It's all about your power to speak something into being, to say something and to believe it. I'm not going to name names. I'm not. I heard a guy, heard a guy preaching and he said, "You need to state the truth, state it out there so you can believe your own words. And then when you believe your own words, trust your faith to get you through." First off, faith is a gift. Second off, faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God. Third, it's not faith in your faith, it's faith, the object of your faith matters. It's not just faith in what you profess, it's faith in Jesus. If you're not trusting him, you're going to be manipulated and you're going to be misled into this foolishness, name it, claim it, blab it and grab it, whatever you want to call it, you know, see my bow tie, see my bow tie, she got a key to a Honda. We can all do this all day long and it'll stir people up and it'll get people excited and they actually then begin to think that their words have such force that they command God to do things. Don't command God. Don't make demands of him. Just don't. Said this morning in Sunday school, we have to remember he's the potter and that means, at best, we're just cracked pots. That's it. Who are we to talk back to him, to make demands of him? He's the Creator. He makes the demands.

So we understand a profession of faith does not save us, Jesus saves us. It's not about our faith, it's about the object of our faith, are we trusting Jesus. And in fact, a profession without practice, Spurgeon says, means that we're lying. If you make a profession of faith but without a practice of walking in holiness, you're just lying to yourself and everyone else. It's a deception. The true evidence that he gives us here, "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." The true evidence is doing God's will. It's walking in obedience to the word of God. Spurgeon said, "Nothing will prove us to be true Christians but a sincere doing of the Father's will." If you want to know if you belong to Jesus Christ and know him, then ask yourself this question: are you being obedient to his word? Do you desire to be obedient to his word? Are you driven to be obedient to his word? The problem, Paul Washer says, is that so often when we are converted, our attitude and our relationship to sin changes but how it changes is once we loved it and pursued it, now we're repulsed by it, and even when we're tempted by it for a moment, we're still repulsed even in that temptation. Have you come to that point in sanctification where you wonder sometimes how it is that sin seems so appealing? We know the truth, we've been set free by the truth, why are we still then tempted? Because the body is groaning for final redemption, for glorification, and like MacArthur said, what's the greatest glory of heaven beside Jesus face-to-face? It's not wanting to sin anymore, being free from all the frailties of living in a fallen body.

So we have to remember we may profess that Jesus is Lord, Lord but that does not guarantee an entrance into heaven. The proof of conversion is obedience. In fact, that's the proof of love, isn't it? "If you love Me, keep My commandments." This is disciple-making, to make disciples, to baptize them and to teach them all things that I have commanded. Yes, we are under grace not under law but please understand that does not mean that grace frees us from obedience. Grace empowers us to obedience so that we might walk in holiness. The evidence there is that we are being obedient.

Jesus asked the question in Luke 6:46, "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?" Let me put this in modern vernacular. This would be like you showing up to work tomorrow and your boss telling you to do something, and you saying, "Yes, boss," and not doing it. Who's the Boss of bosses? Who's the Lord of lords? Who's the King of kings? It's Jesus. If you call him Lord, Lord, why, why would you not do what he says? Because if you're professing that he is Lord then that means he is Master and that means we are to be obedient, "Why would you call Me 'Lord, Lord' and not do the things which I say?" And that question from Christ stings, doesn't it, because there are way too many times in our daily life that we call him Lord and don't do what he says.

But with conviction and with discipline comes the evidence that we're his children. Are you grateful for God's discipline in your life, to know that he's not just going to let you do what you want to do, but proof that you are adopted into his family is that he will discipline you and not let you get away with it. Hallelujah, he loves us enough to correct us.

So words, the words that come out of our mouth can really be a false evidence of salvation and conversion. Secondly, in the first part of verse 22 we see that works can be a false evidence. "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name?'" Look at these works and if you see works and you see that the verses just before Jesus was warning about false prophets and said, "A good tree bears good fruit. A bad tree bears bad fruit. Therefore you'll know them by their fruits." And we look at the fruit. Now you would think that if you're looking at fruit and you see people preaching and casting out demons, that's pretty impressive fruit, isn't it? I mean, you would think, "Hey, these works tend to give an evidence that there's some power at work here. So if they're doing these things in Jesus' name, then who are we to doubt their profession of faith?" Well, I love it that the person doubting the profession of faith in our text this morning is Jesus. It's not us, it's him and he says you might think that these works are the fruit that is necessary to prove the confession but that's not necessarily so.

I love that Lloyd-Jones tells us right away, he says we have to understand this is not pitting faith against works. This is not saying that words and works work against each other. What is required for us to walk with God? Hebrews 12:14 says, "Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord." What's required to walk with him and to know him is that we be holy. Holiness will be evidenced in good works but let me ask this: can we do a good thing for the wrong reason? Absolutely we can, can't we? The Bible calls that iniquity, a sin of the self-will. Even doing something good and right but doing it for the wrong reason, the wrong motive, what does that mean, then? Whatever is not of faith is sin. If it's not an act of belief and obedience in love to Christ, it's sinful no matter what it is. No matter how beneficial it is, it's sinful. Why? Because God's that holy and because the motives of our heart matter.

So this text doesn't pit faith against works. Saving faith is faith that works, that's James 2. Faith that's by itself if it does not have works is dead as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead. So we need works but just the presence of works by themselves does not prove that it's saving faith. Here is the danger of self-delusion, more false evidence of conversion. First, can we be misled by false teachers? That was the very warning he gave us in the verses just before this, "Beware of false prophets who will come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You'll know them by their fruits."

So we know that we can be misled by false prophets, we also know that we can be misled by false assurance. Can you believe a lie? Happens all the time. We believe we can do things we can't do all the time. That's the whole motivational ministry model is to convince people that they can do things that they don't think they can do, and if you just convince them that they think they can do it, then they can do it. If you can believe it, you can achieve it. Have you heard these things? You might believe it and still not be able to achieve it. Don't believe me? Believe you can fly and jump off the building. It's a short flight. It's a short flight, right? You can believe it and still not achieve it. Why? Because your achievement is not based on your ability to believe in the first place. Your

achievement of anything is a gift from God and his grace. He enables us to do what we do.

We can be misled by false teachers, we can be misled by false assurance, we can mislead ourselves. Do you understand if you want to know who lies to you the most, and I said who lies to you the most and I know family members just popped in your head. They did, I know it. Who lies to you the most? You do. Your flesh. Your mind. Your will. Your emotions. They tell you things that are not true every day. I mean, again, follow your heart. What does Jeremiah say? Don't you dare. The heart is deceptive. You say, "Well, what if it's regenerated?" You're still fallen. You're not glorified yet. You need to be discerning. You need to be renewed in the spirit of your mind. You need to be transformed by the renewing of your mind. There's work to be done as we grow in grace and we need to be careful that we've not been misled by false assurance. How damaging would it be, can you imagine, and we see it in the Scriptures, we see the shock of those who are standing before Christ and they say, "But, but, but look at all we did for You!" And he says, "Depart from Me. I don't know you. You're a worker, a practitioner of lawlessness."

The danger of false assurance. False assurance, by the way, is most often evidenced in our lives when we think we can sin and get away with it, when we justify it, when we see how close to sin we can get without sinning. Have you ever played that game? How close to sin can I get without actually sinning instead of how holy can I be. We like to place at the fence, don't we, digging under it.

My favorite story about a fence and I'll tell you this just because the spiritual application is phenomenal. Fourth of July picnic at a friend's house out in west Texas and they had horses and cows and sheep and goats and dogs and little kids running around all over the place. And they had an electric fence and all the family knew where the electric fences were and so did the dogs who lived there, and you knew this because when the dogs would run under the electric fence, they would drop their tail. Well, there were two dogs that were not from there that had come with family members and they would run and that tail would hit that fence and you'd hear it, "Yip!" Suddenly they were aware the fence was there and they needed to stay away.

One of the little boys, as little boys will do, decided to see what it felt like to touch an electric fence. He's probably, this was 30 years ago, he's probably an electronic engineer by now. He got it in his mind that if he could lure one of the dogs who didn't know any better over to him and grab the dog by the nose and the fence with his other hand, that he wouldn't be shocked but he could watch the dog and when he saw the dog get shocked he thought that would be funny and here's what happened. We started, you know, adults, we're watching this and nobody is intervening to stop it. This is a life lesson. And he bends down and he calls the dog over and he grabs the dog and he grabs the fence, and he yells and the dog yelps.

So then he thinks, "Maybe I shouldn't have involved the dog." No, no, it's a fence, it's an electric fence, it's going to shock you every time, and what do we do? It shocks us and

what do we do? "Well, let me see if I can get a partner in crime, see if I can spread it out, share the love." No, this is how we think about sin and about God's boundaries. How close can we get and then it shocks us and we're shocked. How did that happen? And we try it again and are shocked with the same result again and again. How many of you I'm explaining your lives and your battle with sin? Why do we keep trying it over and over and over thinking it's going to be different? Because we've been misled by false assurance and we think that we can get away with sin. In reality, our love for God should persuade us to shun sin, to embrace holiness, to strive to do what is right not to earn anything from him but to be pleasing to him.

So that leads us to the question, the first question we asked this morning: what are you actually trusting? What are you relying on for your salvation? If it's anything other than Jesus Christ and his finished work, then you need to repent and place your faith in Jesus this morning. It's not enough to trust your profession, it's not enough to trust correct belief or passionate belief, it's not enough to trust works. And look at the works that he lists here. The works that he lists, "Have we not prophesied," and this is the word preaching, "to proclaim the truth in Your name? Have we not prophesied in Your name and cast out demons in Your name?"

Now can preachers preach the truth and not be saved? We know they can. If you want two biblical examples, one is a prophet, look at Balaam. Balaam absolutely said the truth and prophesied the truth but was a false prophet, was rebuked by his donkey because God was just about to smack him because he was pursuing evil. He knew. King Saul. There are times that King Saul absolutely prophesied truth and yet he was tormented by demons to the point that at one point he would be loving David and inviting him to dinner, and the very next moment would be so convinced that David was jealous of him and was trying to overthrow him that he tried to nail him to the wall with a spear, tried to kill him, in 1 Samuel 18.

That false belief that takes hold means that even someone who is captive to sin can, at times, preach the truth. Think about Paul's warning. Paul warned himself. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 9:27, "But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection," literally the phrase is, "I beat my body down," his flesh, not his physical like beating himself to hit himself but pushing down, disciplining his body, his flesh, "and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified." 1 Corinthians 13, he tells us right there at the beginning of the greatest chapter on love, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels," he said if I could preach like an angel from heaven, "but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing." What is the whole purpose of the law? It's summed up in two commandments: love the Lord your God with all that you are, and love your neighbor as yourself. If you're not at the minimum doing that, you need to check for spiritual life.

Philippians 1:15, he addressed he said, "Some even preach Christ from envy and from strife and some from goodwill." And he goes on to say, "I'm glad Christ is being preached but you can preach Christ rightly for the wrong reasons, to gain the prestige of men." Listen, it's not just non-Reformed people who have itching ears, you understand that. There's such a thing to have an itching ear for the truth because the truth boasts your pride because the more you know and the more knowledge you have, the more puffed up you are, and so people want to know it all. And they might know truth and be pursuing truth but if you're pursuing it for selfish reasons and for prideful reasons, then it's just going to puff you up, it's going to lead to destruction. You see, God knows the heart. God knows the heart. He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God."

When we look at this preaching and casting out demons, you understand that what's happening here even though it's being done in the name of Jesus is carnal. It's fleshly. It's a natural ability and that's deceptive. There if there's any danger in the pulpit, it's a natural ability because you can be eloquent and you can be persuasive but, again we read, what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God. The things that we think are important are not important to God. The things that are wisdom to him are foolishness to us. That is why, by the way, that church growth and success is judged by faithfulness, not numbers, right? Spurgeon said there's too many preachers who are focusing on all the empty seats. Listen, if God wants you here, you're going to be here. My job is to feed the sheep that show up, others who can watch later who can't be here, who watch the live stream, praise God for technology, but if you're here and you're listening, it's because you were meant to be. And if God didn't want you here, it doesn't matter how hard you try, you're not going to come. Now can we be disobedient and forsake the assembling and all those things? Yeah, absolutely.

We do that often enough but the reality is God knows the hearts and what we think is important is really not. It's not numbers. It's not bodies. It's not a budget. It's faithfulness. Church growth is about faithfulness, faithfulness to one another in the word of God. Church growth is not numbers, church growth is maturity. It's bearing fruit. It's being obedient because what matters to the world is an abomination in the sight of God.

Spurgeon said if preaching all the preaching in the world will not save the preacher if he does not practice it. And when it comes to casting out demons, Spurgeon said without personal holiness, the caster-out of devils will be cast out himself in the end. What if you can cast out demons? The theological term is whoopee-do. Judas cast out demons. Do you realize that? Judas went with the disciples that were sent with the 12 and the 70 sent by Jesus to go and to cast out demons and to heal the sick and when they returned, "the seventy returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name.'" They didn't come back and say, "God, we all did it except, you know, Judas." He was out there. He was a successful disciple. They trusted him enough he kept the money bag. He was the financier. We all know who you trust in the church, who's got the money, right? Here he is. Here's Judas casting out demons and himself the son of perdition.

Think about the sons of Sceva, and this, I think, is probably my second or third favorite story in the Bible in Acts 19. The sons of Sceva. There were "some itinerant Jewish exorcists," how would you like that on your business card? "I am an itinerant Jewish exorcist. They "took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits," and this is what they would say, "'We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.' Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so." They did this, they pulled this stunt one time and they said to a demon-possessed person, "'We exercise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.' And the evil spirit answered and said, 'Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?'" Oops. Something just went dreadfully wrong because then the story goes, "the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them," this one man beat seven men, stripped them naked and sent them running through the streets home wounded." Jesus I know, Paul I know; who are you?" Not the formulation of the words, not even doing it in the name of Jesus because they were doing it without faith. They were doing it without the power of the Holy Spirit.

Now we also have a description of the power of Beelzebub, of the devil himself. When Jesus was casting out demons, "when the Pharisees heard it they said, 'This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.'" This is the unpardonable sin, by the way. They blasphemed the Spirit and attribute to Satan the work of Jesus. Casting out demons by Beelzebub, the ruler of demons. "Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: 'Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself.'" Let me ask you something: will Satan cast out Satan to make a point? Absolutely he will. He's an angel of light. He appears to deceive. The question is, "'How then will his kingdom stand?'" Well, we know it won't because Jesus is victorious. "And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out?" The demons were being cast out, this was nothing new. "Therefore they shall be your judges. But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad." You can preach and you can even cast out demons and that gives no evidence of salvation. We can't rely on that to know that we're saved.

The last of verse 22 talks about wonders, he takes it up another step. You've prophesied, you've cast out demons, and done many wonders in your name. These are miracles, works of power. They are works of actual spiritual power done in Jesus' name. People are being healed. Things are happening that are unexplainable. Does that mean then that they were saved and doing this in the power of Christ? We know that there can be counterfeits. We know this. Two counterfeiters are mentioned in 2 Timothy 3, "Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith." Who were Jannes and Jambres? Pharaoh's magicians. Moses came and as instructed by the Lord threw his staff down and it became a serpent, and what did they do? Jannes and Jambres threw their staffs down and they

became serpents. You think the devil doesn't have spiritual power to work miracles? He is the deceiver of deceivers, the liar of liars. Then Moses' ate theirs and turned back into... I just, you know Moses had faith when he picked that snake up, right? And you wonder about Jannes and Jambres, again, like the sons of Sceva, "Oops, that didn't work like we thought it would." No, it was deception. It was a counterfeit.

In 2 Corinthians 11:14, we read, "And no wonder! Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light." The devil is a deceiver. We're even warned about the end times, aren't we? That there are going to be those working miracles and given power, if possible, even to deceive the elect. And so what did Jesus say? "You're going to hear that there's Christ there and there's Christ there and there's Christ there. Don't believe it." We'll know when he comes back. When he comes back he's going to shoot like lightning across the sky. There's going to be a trumpet blast. I'm just going to come out and say it: there is nothing secret about the Second Coming. When Jesus comes back, the whole world hears that trumpet blast. He's coming and everybody will know he has come. We can know the signs and the seasons, we can know the times, and we can trust that he is coming but everybody is talking about Jesus here and Jesus there and another Christ there and another gospel there. No, no, it's not, it's not the Christ of the Bible. It's a counterfeit.

There's deception. In Matthew 24 again false Christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, the elect. And 2 Thessalonians 2:8, "then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming." But the promise here, the warning here is that he's going to be revealed, but before he is revealed, many will be deceived. They will fall under a delusion to believe that he is the Messiah instead of Christ.

I like it that Jesus actually counters this doing wonders and casting out demons in Luke 10:20 he says, "Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven." Rejoice in the work Christ has come and finished on your behalf, not the work you're doing for him. Now should we rejoice that we are being obedient? Yes, but don't find your ultimate joy in that. Don't find your ultimate evidence of conversion in that, evidence of your conversion, growth in grace, sanctification, obedience, doing the will of God. Here's the point: some of the most holy, sanctified, humble believers out there none of us even know who they are. They're not the ones that are front of everybody. They're not the ones who are being praised and glorified for their skill and their eloquence. No. No, it's those who know how to pray and wrestle. It's those who know how to walk in obscurity. It's those who know how to be faithful with a little and know that even if God doesn't give you a lot, you already have more than you should. He is faithful. It's about his finished work. The real reason to rejoice is that your name is written in heaven.

This leads us to the woe, to the judgment. "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'" To say "I never knew you." And understand, by the time this is being stated, it's too late. There's no going back repenting and believing. This is standing at the judgment. In Matthew 25 we read about the coming

of Christ, about the parable of the 10 virgins. "Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming."

What is the warning there? Be ready because he's coming. Watch because he's coming. You let your guard down and you don't worry about it and you don't think about it, you're going to be taken off guard. I really do believe that this is an evidence of conversion, an evidence of salvation and sanctification is a desire for Jesus to come back. Should not our heart's cry every morning be maranatha? Even so, come Lord Jesus.

Further in Matthew 25 we read, "When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'" And I love this, "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink?'" You see, they were simply walking in obedience not thinking anything of it, not saying, "Look what I did for You." And so when he counts what they've done, "When did we do that?" You were just walking in humble obedience not calling attention to yourself even in doing it.

But then the king said to those on the left, "Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.' Then they also will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?'" Their question is not, "When did we do this," their question is, "Wait, we did that. We did a lot of that. That's all we did. When did we ever see You and we didn't do what we were supposed to do?" But what's the attitude there? "Jesus, look what we did for You." When we see Christ, I promise you we're not going to raise our arms to him and say, "Look what we

did for You." We're going to say, "Thank You for what You did for us." The praise goes to him.

The works will be evident, the works will reveal the truth but it's not just the works by themselves that prove salvation because the accusation is that these are those who practice lawlessness. To be against the law. To be sinful. Listen to what 1 John says, 1 John 1:6 says, "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth." 1 John 2:9-11, "He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes." Here is the truth: we're supposed to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength and love our neighbor as ourselves. If we do not love our neighbor, we are not loving God, and if we aren't loving God, we can't love our neighbor. It's not one or the other. It's not even both/and. It's all together. You're loving God, you're loving others. No discrimination because if you say that you're in the light but you hate your brother, you're blind, you're in the darkness.

1 John 3, he goes on, "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness." This is to be lawless, and the committing of sin there is not a one-time sin. You will sin as a follower of Christ. What this tells us, the tense here is that this is practicing over and over and over, bondage to sin. This is lawlessness. You can't break free from the bondage. "And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. Whoever abides in Him does not sin," like that continually. "Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God." Here is the reality: if you know Jesus Christ, you've been set free from sin and you will, at some point in that process of sin and temptation, fight it and confess it and repent from it. But if it has ahold of you to the point that you can never walk in victory, then you need to repent and trust Jesus Christ to save you. If there is not victory over consistent sin in your life, you don't have the Holy Spirit. You're deceiving yourself to think that you know him. If you died right now this moment in that state, he would say to you, "Depart from Me, I never knew you." The lawlessness is the proof.

So how can we know that we know him? Is there a test we can take? How do we know? Back to 1 John 2:3-6, "by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked."

1 John 2:29, "If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him."

1 John 3:24, "Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us by the Spirit whom He has given us."

And in 1 John 5:1-5, "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?"

Do you believe? That belief leads to the production of fruit. That fruit is not wonderful marvelous things, that fruit is bearing the fruit of the Spirit under the harshest conditions of living in a fallen world with your fallen self. That's the fruit. There's nothing glorious about this fruit. This fruit is not something that we'll go, "Wow, look at this!" World's biggest pumpkin. "Hey, look what we did!" No. No, it's those times when you're expressing joy in the midst of depression and grief. It's those times when you have hope when there seems to be none. It's that time when you're enabled by the Spirit to suffer long. The Greek term in the fruit of the Spirit, *macrothumia*, much heat. You're in the middle of the fire. Guess who's walking in it with you? This is the fruit of the Spirit. What we think is fruit and what we think are good works, it's really just ourselves trying to say, "Look at what we did!" No, look at what he did and look what he enabled you to do. He enables you to live in this fallen world and deal with your sinful flesh and sinful people around you and walk in a peace that surpasses all understanding. When your world absolutely falls apart but you know Jesus has you, God has him and there's no wiggling out. He's got you.

This is fruit, the test of knowing him. The bearing of this fruit is proven in our love for him. It's proven in answer to this question: do you know Jesus? Not do you know about Jesus. Don't recite to me the facts about who he is. Do you know him? Do you walk with him? Do you talk with him? Do you spend time with him? Do you love him and can't imagine a moment in a day without his presence in your life whether you feel it or not? If you feel it and you think he moved, he didn't go anywhere. Your emotions are lying to you. He's right there with you in the midst of it.

While we've got this most dreadful statement, "I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness." This drives us not to look at our profession and it drives us not even to look at our works, it drives us to look at Christ and when we see him and want him and will take nothing less than him, that is our assurance. It's his finished work. We wouldn't want to have anything to do with him if it wasn't for him coming after us, seeking and saving, drawing by the Spirit, convicting and convincing and bringing us to life so that we now can bear the fruits of regeneration. This is what he's enabled us to do by his Spirit so that we can overcome the world, so that we can overcome ourselves, so that we can walk in victory on a daily basis.

When you stand before him, you will hear one of two things, it will either be, "I never knew you. Depart from Me." Or it will be, "Well done, good and faithful servant." I have to trust that when the Father looks at us and says, "Well done, good and faithful servant," he's probably winking at his Son because he was the good and faithful servant. He was the one with whom the Father was well pleased and all that he has accomplished has been imputed to us by faith when we repent and embrace Christ alone.

Yes, these are dreadful words but it's a warning that Jesus is giving. In reality it's a warning here at the end of this Sermon to say look back at what he's preached and you can just start at the beginning just look at the Beatitudes. Is that what your daily life looks like? If so, rejoice. The only reason your life could look like that is because Christ is at work in your life. Make it about him. Focus the attention on him. Never about what we do for him. It's what he's done for us that enables us to be pleasing to him, to walk in righteousness and holiness, to encourage and edify one another, to minister with these gifts that he's given us not for any self-aggrandizement. What is it that we're supposed to boast in? This really, I think, is the proof. What is it that we're to boast in? If you boast in your profession and you boast in your works and you boast in your correct doctrine and your passionate faith, you're focusing in the wrong direction. The Bible tells us there's only two things in which we're supposed to boast: the cross of Christ and our infirmities, because our infirmities prove how much we need the cross of Christ.

So we preach Christ crucified. The world will hate him. There are many they say who want to go to heaven, they don't want Jesus to be there when they get there. Then they don't want heaven. If you want heaven, you want heaven for Jesus, to see him, to be with him, to worship him. If you want assurance, if you need assurance this morning, don't look at yourself. Don't. You can deceive yourself. Look to Christ. Look at his finished work. Look at his promises. Take God at his word and know that he says whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Let's pray together.

Father, how we do thank You for these dreadful words, for Christ to give a warning at the end of this Sermon to preach about all that we've been able to do by grace, to be a new creation, to bear fruit that's acceptable to You, and to come with nothing to boast of. Father, this morning we thank You that according to Your word salvation is by grace, "For by grace we have been saved through faith and that not of works, it's the gift of God." There's nothing for us to boast of. It's your finished work. Father, we thank You for the assurance that we do have from the word by Your Spirit when Your word tells us that these things have been written so that we might know that we know. Protect us from deception, from counterfeits, from lies, false beliefs, false assurance. Remind us the victory we've been given in Christ so that we might walk in it giving Him all of the glory while we do. Father, help us to make it all about Him because it is, He is all in all, to Him, from Him, through Him and in Him. He is our all in all so we thank You this morning for Jesus in whose name we pray. Amen.

Providence Reformed Baptist Church – Sunday, January 9, 2022
Sermon Series: The Gospel of the Kingdom – Matthew
Message 56. I Never Knew You – Matthew 7:21-23
Pastor Phillip M Way

Introduction: From false prophets (7:15-20) to false professors (7:21-23), Jesus warns that many will claim to follow Him but have no relationship with Him. This devastating text drives home the questions, “What are you actually trusting (relying on) for salvation? How can we know that we know Jesus?”

- I. Words – vs. 21
 - A. Lord, Lord
 - 1. Everyone should/will profess Jesus is Lord – Phil. 2:5-11
 - 2. A profession of faith does not save – James 2:19
 - 3. A profession of faith is necessary - 1 Cor. 12:3
 - 4. It is not saying the right words, but meaning them that matters
 - B. False Evidences of Salvation
 - 1. Correct Belief - head knowledge is not an evidence of conversion – Prov. 30:12
 - 2. Passionate Belief – “LORD, LORD!” – Matt. 13:20-21
 - 3. A Profession of Faith
 - a. Trusting your faith rather than trusting Christ
 - b. Profession without Practice means we are lying
 - c. A profession of faith does not save us – Jesus saves us!
 - C. True Evidence – Doing God’s Will – Obedience – CHS Quote #1 – Luke 6:46
- II. Works – vs. 22
 - A. Words vs. Works? – Heb. 12:14
 - 1. This text does not pit faith against works
 - 2. Saving faith is faith that works – James 2:17, 26
 - 3. The danger is self-delusion
 - a. Being misled by false teachers – Matt. 7:15-20
 - b. Being misled by false assurance – Matt. 7:21-23
 - 4. What are you actually trusting (relying on) for salvation?
 - B. Preaching – CHS Quote #2
 - 1. See Balaam and King Saul
 - 2. Paul’s warning – 1 Cor. 9:27; 13:1-3; Phil. 1:15
 - 3. God knows the heart – Luke 16:15
 - 4. Carnal, fleshly, natural ability is deceptive
 - C. Casting Out Demons – CHS Quote #3
 - 1. Judas cast out demons – Luke 10:17
 - 2. Sons of Sceva – Acts 19:13-16
 - 3. The power of Beelzebub – Matt. 12:24-30
- III. Wonders – vs. 22
 - A. Counterfeits – 2 Tim. 3:8; 2 Cor. 11:14
 - B. Deception – Matt. 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:8
 - C. The Real Reason to Rejoice – Luke 10:20
- IV. Woe! – vs. 23
 - A. “I Never Knew You, Depart from Me” – Matt. 25:1-13, 31-46
 - B. “You Who Practice Lawlessness” – 1 John 1:6; 2:9-11; 3:4-9
 - C. The Test of Knowing Him – 1 John 2:3-6, 29; 3:24; 5:1-5

Quotes – Charles H. Spurgeon

#1 – “Nothing will prove us to be true Christians but a sincere doing of the Father’s will.”

#2 – “All the preaching in the world will not save the preacher if he does not practice it!”

#3 – “Without personal holiness, the caster-out of devils will be cast out himself.”

Cross References

Philippians 2:5-11

5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. 9 Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

James 2:19

19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!

1 Corinthians 12:3

3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

Proverbs 30:12

12 There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes, Yet is not washed from its filthiness.

Matthew 13:20-21

20 But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

Luke 6:46

46 “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?”

Hebrews 12:14

14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

James 2:17

17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

James 2:26

26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

1 Corinthians 9:27

27 But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

13 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

Philippians 1:15

15 Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill:

Luke 16:15

15 And He said to them, "You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

Luke 10:17

17 Then the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name."

Acts 19:13-16

13 Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists took it upon themselves to call the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "We exorcise you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." 14 Also there were seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, who did so. 15 And the evil spirit answered and said, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?" 16 Then the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, overpowered them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

Matthew 12:24-30

24 Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, "This fellow does not cast out demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons." 25 But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. 26 If Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself. How then will his kingdom stand? 27 And if I cast out demons by Beelzebub, by whom do your sons cast them out? Therefore they shall be your judges. 28 But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29 Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house. 30 He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

2 Timothy 3:8

8 Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith;

2 Corinthians 11:14

14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.

Matthew 24:24

24 For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.

2 Thessalonians 2:8

8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

Luke 10:20

20 Nevertheless do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven.”

Matthew 25:1-13

25 “Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. 6 “And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’ 7 Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ 9 But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’ 10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11 “Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ 12 But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’ 13 “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.

Matthew 25:31-46

31 “When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. 33 And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. 34 Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: 35 for I was hungry and you gave Me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; 36 I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.’

37 “Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? 38 When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?’ 40 And the King will answer and say to them, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.’ 41 “Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: 42 for I was hungry and you gave Me no food; I was thirsty and you gave Me no drink; 43 I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, naked and you did not clothe Me, sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.’ 44 “Then they also will answer Him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?’ 45 Then He will answer them, saying, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did not

do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.' 46 And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

1 John 1:6

6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

1 John 2:9-11

9 He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. 10 He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. 11 But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes.

1 John 3:4-9

4 Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. 5 And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. 6 Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. 7 Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. 8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.

1 John 2:3-6

3 Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

1 John 2:29

29 If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone who practices righteousness is born of Him.

1 John 3:24

24 Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.

1 John 5:1-5

5 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. 3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. 4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. 5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?