

## **THE RIGHT KIND OF FAITH (Professors Versus Possessors)**

### **Matthew 7:21–23 (NKJV)**

**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!’

Matthew 7:21-23 has been called the SCARIEST text in the Bible. These people actually think they are saved when they are not. They openly profess Christ and claim to serve Him. But alas in the end their faith is shown to be COUNTERFEIT. Nothing could be more tragic than this! The warning directly from Christ is striking!

### ***CLARIFICATIONS:***

1. Counterfeit faith in fact is no faith at all in the saving sense of the word. In the saving sense of the word, one either has saving FAITH or they don't. Everything short of saving faith in reality is UNBELIEF. In the Bible, there are ultimately believers and there are unbelievers, and in the end, everyone will be found to be in one of these two categories (cf. 1 Jn. 5:12-13).
2. Counterfeit faith may in fact contain some semblance (or at least appear to) of saving faith, but in truth, it falls short of true Bible saving faith. For example, counterfeit faith may include the element of “intellectual assent”, as does saving faith, but true saving faith goes further, involving the will and personal appropriation (cf. Rom. 10:9-10). Even the demons have a faith of sorts as they believe (intellectually) and emotionally they tremble (Ja. 2:19). But they have no true heart allegiance to Christ. They simply have an intellectual and emotional kind of faith – but that is not saving faith – which is James point.
3. Counterfeit faith may appear to be so real (for a time at least) that it may be difficult if not impossible to distinguish it from genuine saving faith from a human, objective, external, perspective (cf. Matt. 13:24-30; 26:20-22; 1Tim. 5:24-25; 1 Jn. 2:19). The wheat and the tares grow together.

4. The difference between counterfeit faith and saving faith is found in the heart and its response toward the PERSON and WORK of the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Sam. 16:7; Prov. 4:23; 23:7; Jer. 17:5-10; Matt. 15:8-9; Rom. 10:9-10). The HEART of the matter involves the HEART!

5. Satan is a master at deception and actually deceives many people into believing that they have saving faith thus giving them a false assurance. Conversely, he relentlessly tries to rob the true believer of their assurance. He majors on giving false assurance and also a lack of assurance (cf. Prov. 16:2, 25; Matt. 3:9; Jn. 8; 2 Cor. 11:14; 1 Pet. 5:8-9; 1 Jn. 5:13).

6. Generally, those presented in Scripture as having a counterfeit faith are unconcerned or unmoved about their spiritual status. They may even be very insistent that they know the Lord. However, the unveiling of hearts on judgment day will reveal that they really were workers of iniquity (whether inwardly or outwardly manifested, whether repressed or openly expressed) and not true servants of the Lord (cf. Prov. 30:12; Mt. 7; 12; 19; Jn. 8; 1 Jn; Rev. 20).

7. Unbelief by its very nature is a denial of truth. This fundamental concept of denial often involves the unbeliever's refusal to see themselves for who and what they truly are (SINNERS), as well as Jesus for who and what He is (LORD & SAVIOR). They go together. This concept is at the heart of counterfeit faith, as one may appear to embrace salvific truth, but in reality, have a heart full of denial. NOTE: Personal recognition and admission of the truth involved in salvation is a very humbling experience. PRIDE will keep a lot of people out of heaven (cf. Prov. 14:12; Matt. 7:21-23; 18:3-4; Luke 18:9-15; Jn. 8; Gal. 6:14; 2 Tim. 3:5).

#### **Habakkuk 2:4 (NKJV)**

**4** "Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.

8. The believer's struggle with sin should not take away from his or her assurance. (There is a difference between struggling with sin and having it habitually control you.) In fact, the struggle that involves a genuine desire to please the Lord and not to sin may serve as an evidence of salvation (cf. Rom. 7:13-15; 2 Tim. 4:7; Heb. 11:6). The believer's spiritual makeup is altered in salvation affecting the attitude and desires of the heart. Of

course, the outworking of practical sanctification is a life-long, uncompleted process in this life. Also, note the unbeliever is without the SPIRIT, and being spiritually dead they do not have the capacity to lead a true spiritually upright life (cf. Rom. 6-8; 2 Cor. 5:17; Phil. 1:6).

**NOTE:** SALVATION INDICATES DIRECTION BUT NOT PERFECTION IN THE LIFE OF A BELIEVER IN THE HERE AND NOW!

9. By its very nature many in the category of "COUNTERFEIT FAITH" are involved in an ecclesiastical setting or have such a tie or background (cf. 1 Sam. 2:12; 1 Kg. 18; Isa. 1; Mt. 7; 15; 23; Cor. 6:1-2; 2 Tim. 3; Heb. 12:15; Ja. 2; 2 Pet 2; Jude; Rev. 2-3).

**NOTE:** THERE ARE PROFESSORS (counterfeiters) AND THERE ARE TRUE POSSESSORS!

**1 John 2:3–4 (NKJV)**

**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.

**1 John 2:19 (NKJV)**

**19** They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.