

SAYING IT'S SO DOESN'T MAKE IT SO

In Matthew 7 Christ addresses the issue of a FALSE PROFESSION. False prophets and false professions go together. The one builds on the other.

Matthew 7:21 (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.

Don't be naive. Not all who INTENSELY profess Christ as Lord are saved. These people are emphatic about it. They call Jesus “**Lord, Lord**”. It is repeated for emphasis! They are really into it. Emotionally, they come off as the most sold out! They got their hands up in supposed worship, they are screaming and shouting, they carry on with passion, emphasizing Jesus is their Lord!

Just one problem. It's all a SHOW! They say the right thing, but it is not real in their hearts! They say the right thing, but Jesus is not really their Lord! It's not enough to profess Jesus is Lord; it must be real in the heart. The difference is made in the heart.

The oldest creed in the Christian Church is “**Jesus is Lord!**” It's a matter of true faith. We recognize Jesus as Lord God Almighty! He is our Lord and Savior! And it must be personal!

1 Corinthians 12:3 (NKJV)

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.**

Anyone can say it with their lips, and as Jesus points out in Matthew 7:21 many will say it emphatically on judgment day, only to have Jesus tell them it's all BOGUS – He was never their Lord. They were merely professors who said the right thing.

Saying Jesus is Lord by the Holy Spirit (and that is key) is to mean it! This is different than an empty profession of faith.

Romans 10:9–10 (NKJV)

9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For with the **heart one believes unto righteousness**, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

It is with the HEART that one truly believes, and then the mouth tells on the heart. What is in the heart comes out of the mouth (cf. Mt. 12:34).

Romans 10:13 (NKJV)

13 For “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

To call on the name of the Lord is different than merely calling Jesus Lord. Calling on His name is recognition of Who He is as Lord. Merely mouthing the words means nothing. Anyone can do that! Truly calling on Him (recognizing Him) as Lord is a matter of the heart, as Paul has just emphasized in verses 9-10.

We call John’s gospel the gospel of belief. John emphasizes believing on Christ some 90 times in the book. The most famous verse in the world is found there in John 3:16.

John 3:16 (NKJV)

16 For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

But throughout the book, John qualifies what he means by believing. It’s not merely enough to believe ABOUT Jesus, it’s not enough to merely profess to believe. It must be personal. As the book builds to the climax of Christ’s death and resurrection, we have the account of doubting Thomas coming to a full New Testament faith.

Thomas had said he would not believe in the risen Christ unless he personally saw Him for himself. Well, a few days later, the risen Christ appeared to Thomas, and here is what happened.

John 20:28–29 (NKJV)

28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, “**My Lord and my God!**”

29 Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because **you have seen Me, you have believed**. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

This is what it means to believe on Jesus. It personally recognizes Him as Lord/God. As Thomas said, “***My Lord and my God!***” This is what it means to truly believe on Christ. We believe in Him as our Savior Who died for all our sins; we believe in Him as our Lord/God, as proven in the resurrection.

Faith in Christ as Savior and Lord defines all true believers who are part of God’s forever family called the Church.

1 Corinthians 1:2 (NKJV)

2 To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

All true Christians recognize Jesus as Lord – their personal Lord and Savior. But not all who call Jesus Lord mean it. Not all professors are truly saved. Some are playing a deadly serious game.

Not everyone who says “**Lord, Lord**” to Jesus will enter the kingdom of heaven. Sometimes the gospels say “*kingdom of God*” and sometimes “*kingdom of heaven*”. These two phrases are used interchangeably and ultimately refer to the coming Messianic kingdom.

The idea of “**the kingdom of heaven**” is the rule of heaven, which is to say the rule of God. But this kingdom rule will be through the Messiah when Jesus sets up His kingdom on earth for 1000 years (what we call the millennial kingdom), which will then transition into the eternal phase of the kingdom.

So if mere professors aren't going in – who is? Well, Christ says not everyone who says “Lord, Lord” will enter the kingdom, but rather “**he who does the will of My Father in heaven.**”

Now we know that the NT clearly teaches we are not saved by works.

Ephesians 2:8–9 (NKJV)

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

So if we are saved by FAITH and not by works, what is Christ saying when He says those who enter the kingdom will be those who do the will of the Father?

Christ is emphasizing the FRUIT of true repentance and faith. He is emphasizing that a good tree brings forth good fruit. We are not saved by the fruit, but if we are saved, we will bear good fruit.

“To escape the error of salvation by works; we have fallen into the opposite error of salvation without obedience.” – A.W. Tozer

The root is FAITH – the FRUIT is the works. As the Reformers said, ***“We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves does not remain alone.”***

True repentance is expected to show in the life. That is Christ’s point. What is the will of the Father in this context? Well, the will of the Father is that people accept the Son – that they BELIEVE on the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ will go on to say in verse 24, *“Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man...”*.

In John 18:36 Jesus said He came to bear witness to the truth and then said, *“Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”*

Doing the will of the Father starts with believing on the Son! It all starts there. And frankly, this believing is itself an act of obedience called ***“the obedience of faith”***. Obeying the Father starts with obeying the command to believe on the Son (cf. 1 Jn. 5:9-13).

Romans 1:5 (NKJV)

5 Through Him we have received grace and apostleship **for obedience to the faith** among all nations for His name,

Romans 16:26 (NKJV)

26 [the gospel]...now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, **for obedience to the faith**—

The gospel is the message of both the Person of Christ and the Work of Christ – WHO He is and WHAT He has done to save us. He is Lord/God and He is Savior. This gospel message demands a response – an **obedience of faith** response from the heart.

2 Thessalonians 1:8–9 (NKJV)

8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who **do not obey the gospel** of our Lord Jesus Christ.

9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,

One of the KEY problems – one of the MAJOR errors is an “Easy Believism” gospel that says no response of obedience is required. You don’t need to repent. You don’t need to accept Christ as Lord. You supposedly just passively accept Jesus as Savior, get a little fire insurance, and it never has to change your life. In true conversion, a radical change of mind takes place, which is called repentance. We admit our sin problem,

we obediently acknowledge Christ as our personal Savior and personal Lord. That is a life-changing reality!

John wrote the gospel of belief, but he also wrote 1 John, which presents a series of TESTS to distinguish between true faith and bogus faith. And one of the tests is the OBEDIENCE test.

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.

Yes, we are saved by faith ALONE, but if the faith is real, it will show in the life. We will obey Christ. We will certainly desire to obey Him even if we are inconsistent in the process, which we all are.

“Many are comfortable living sinful lives while hiding behind a teaching that is not biblical – comfortable going to hell on a false teaching. It is one thing to acknowledge that Christians have carnal outbreaks. It is another thing altogether to teach that someone whose life is predominantly carnal should be considered a Christian. ... We do not always know who has been born again. Therefore, when speaking of the backslider, two errors must be avoided: (1) insisting that he is not a Christian; (2) insisting that he is a Christian. We do not know, we cannot know. And it is not a sin not to know.”
– **Ernest C. Reisinger**

The point Christ is emphatically making is that those who truly know God will demonstrate that in the life – not perfectly but certainly. This is the same point Christ made in verses 17-18, where he said every good tree brings forth good fruit, and likewise every bad tree brings forth bad fruit.

Faith in Christ changes a person – it changes the whole trajectory of their life. Christ is basically saying, “***If your profession hasn’t changed your life, then you are not saved.***” If Christ is merely “Lord” on the lips but not in the life, then you are not headed for the kingdom.

Some who say, “Lord Lord” will enter the kingdom, but it will be those who truly know Him as Lord, and it shows in their life in doing the will of the Father (cf. Ja. 1:22-25; 2:14-20, 26).

“If the professed convert distinctly and deliberately declares that he knows the Lord’s will, but does not mean to attend to it, you are not to pamper his

presumptions, but it is your duty to assure him that he is not saved.” – Charles Spurgeon

Jesus was very consistent in this emphasis.

Matthew 12:50 (NKJV)

50 For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother.”

“***Does the will of My Father***” is in the present tense, indicating this is a pattern of life. Lifestyle obedience is what characterizes those who truly know God.

Jesus is consistent! We are saved by faith alone, but it must be THE RIGHT KIND of faith. It must be a life-changing faith. This kind of faith bears good fruit in the life and hence will experience the resurrection of life.

“This principle does not mean that salvation in the kingdom is secured by works, but it does teach that works are the fruits, or evidences, which are found in a true disciple.” – ***John Walvoord***

All the way through here, there is a strong emphasis on the GODSHIP of Christ. He is called “***Lord, Lord***”; He refers to God as “***My Father***,” and He has the power to ***judge*** for eternity, as seen in verse 23, which is the prerogative of deity alone. It is this one they dared to name as “Lord, Lord” without any heart reality to it.