

I Never Knew You!

Have you ever wondered how many people in church are not Christians? Jesus' next statement makes it clear there are some who are not Christians. Some of them simply come to church and leave. Others are helping with organizational activities, evangelism, the women's ministry, teaching, and some are even preaching. It is not uncommon at Bible institutes, Bible colleges and seminaries to discover men and women putting their faith in Jesus for the first time in their lives. These men and women were active in their churches. They helped others find Jesus as their Savior, but never really understood the meaning of "believe in Jesus." They were considered by others to be very spiritual or they would not have gone to a Christian Bible institute, college or seminary. Yet, they did not know Jesus! Just imagine how many will be surprised they ended up in hell.

Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.' (NASB) Matthew 7:21-23

LORD, LORD! Some years ago I noticed a passage in 1 Corinthians that describes the mark of a true Christian. Now when I listen to a person's testimony, I wait to hear him/her say that Jesus is Lord of his/her life or he/she desires to submit to or obey Jesus. Here is the verse,

Therefore I make known to you, that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. (NASB) 1 Corinthians 12:3

This makes sense because the Holy Spirit only lives inside true Christians. When the Holy Spirit starts living in us, He starts leading us (Galatians 5:25), teaching us (1 Corin-

thians 2:13), and helping us to pray (Romans 8:26). Scripture also says He gives us spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:7-11) and fills us when we submit to Him (Eph. 5:18). In short, He

lives inside us if we are real Christians.

However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. (NASB) Romans 8:9

Only true Christians can say, "Lord, Lord!" and mean it with all their hearts. They can mean it because the Holy Spirit is living in them.

This is not possible for non-Christians since the Holy

Spirit does not live within them. They can sing the Christian songs, read the Bible, pray, even teach the Word of God, but Jesus will never be Lord in their lives. That requires the Holy Spirit.

Entrance into the kingdom of heaven is only for Christians who mean the words, "Jesus is my Lord." How can we know if "Jesus is my Lord?" Jesus answers this question with,

Five Wills of God	Passage
... Be sexually pure	1 Thess. 4:3-8
... Be filled with the Holy Spirit	Eph. 5:17-18
... Accept suffering	1 Pet. 4:19
... Give thanks always	1 Thess. 5:18
... Submit to your government	1 Pet. 2:13-15

“he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.”

WILL OF THE FATHER. Since Jesus says that only those who do the will of “My Father” will enter heaven, we need to know His will. The New Testament tells us what the will of God is in five passages; but before we look at them, we need to start with 1 John 3:23,

And this is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as He commanded us. (NASB) 1 John 3:23

His will is that everyone believe in Jesus Christ. God does not want us to just believe that Jesus existed in time past, that He was a good teacher, a miracle worker or a spiritual guru. The Greek word for believe means that we give up on ourselves and trust God to rescue us. We need to be rescued from the penalty of our sins. We need our sins forgiven.

In five New Testament passages, we are told “this is the will of God . . .”, “the will of God is . . .”, “this is God’s will,” and “according to the will of God.” We do not need to wonder or hope. His will is revealed in scripture. God wills that we suffer, give thanks, be sexually holy, be filled with the Holy Spirit, and submit to the government. Who can do His will? The answer is - only Christians.

WE DID MIRACLES, JESUS! Jesus tells us that on the day of judgment, non-Christians will apparently be able and be bold enough to plead their case and God will listen. Some will say they witnessed for Him and some even did miracles. Why did He say to this? Jesus tells us the sons of the spiritual leaders of Israel did miracles.

And if I by Beelzebul cast out demons, by whom do your sons cast them out? (NASB) Matthew 12:27

Do you know of anyone today who claims to do miracles, witness for Jesus, teach for Jesus, preach for Jesus or serve Jesus, but whose life has bad fruit (see the last study)? Jesus says that these “good efforts” are not proof of someone belonging to Him. Listen to this passage,

For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great

signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect. (NASB) Matt. 24:24

Now that is impressive. Not only are there false teachers, false preachers, and false evangelists who will look real, but there will be false Christians. Jesus is not their Lord. They are not trusting God to forgive their sins. The five wills of God are not part of their lives. They may even be leaders in the church, but they are not real.

CONCLUSION. On the day of judgment, there will be some who claim to be Christians who will be turned away from God’s kingdom. They will be like counterfeit money when it reaches the bank. Suppose you are given a counterfeit bill in change at a store. Thinking it is genuine, you use it to pay for some gas. The gas station owner uses it to pay one of his employees, who uses it to buy food. From there it goes to the bank where the teller says, “I’m sorry, but this bill is counterfeit.”

The bill may have been used to do a lot of good while it was in use, but when it arrived at the bank, it was exposed for what it really was and destroyed. A counterfeit Christian may do many good things, but he/she is still counterfeit and will be rejected at the gates of heaven.

If you are not sure you a real Christian, follow the advice of the apostle Paul and Silas,

Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household. (NASB) Acts 16:30-31

And Philip adds,

If you believe with all your heart . . . (NASB) Acts 8:37