

Sunday, December 13, 2020 am

TEACHINGS OF Jesus (30)
Sermon On the Mount (29)
“Not everyone who says Lord”
Matthew 7:21-23

As we approach the conclusion of our study of the sermon on the mount, we continue to address choices. Two lessons ago, we examined the two paths. In our last lesson we noted two fruits. Today, we notice another choice – to obey or not to obey. As with the others, there is no middle ground – you are either obeying God or you are not.

This is an important text as it warns us that many will be deceived. They think they are acceptable to God, but they are not. One source noted that in our last lesson we addressed false prophets (and teachers), but in this lesson we address false professors (as in one who professes belief). Let us examine what Jesus taught in this text.

I. Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord’

- a. There is a need to confess Him – it is a public confession – Matthew 10:32-33, Romans 10:9-10, 1 Timothy 6:12, 1 John 4:15, etc.
- b. Concerning this “confession” as ‘Lord, Lord’ – this was an acknowledgment of authority AND divinity. It would have been respectful and likely enthusiastic. This was not one who was a secret disciple (cf. John 3:1-2, 12:42-43), but openly would profess belief in Him. NOTE also Jesus said, “Not everyone who says to **Me**, ‘Lord, Lord’ – Jesus was, at the very least, subtly declaring His deity.
- c. But merely confessing Him is not enough! Understand that many today will say they believe in Him and think that is all they have to do. Much of the religious world advocates “faith only” which is nothing more than saying, “All you have to do is believe and call on His name to be saved.”
- d. We have correctly emphasized that while faith is crucial and foundational, it MUST be accompanied by obedience. This verse teaches that very clearly.
- And so does James 2:17-19 which notes faith without works is dead and then emphasizes that “even the demons believe and tremble”. Also vs. 24 – “not by faith only”.
- e. **Shall enter the kingdom of heaven** – just as Jesus has described destruction and hell as the destiny of the wicked, He has described the kingdom of heaven as the place of the saved.

II. But he who does the will of My Father...

- a. There is a need for obedience – Hebrews 5:9.
And God defines this obedience – not us! cf. Luke 6:46, “Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord’ and do not do the things that I say.”
Also John 14:15 & 15:10 which ties our love to keeping His commandments.
- b. The scribes and Pharisee thought they were obeying God – but they made up their own definitions of what obedience is. When convenient, they would manipulate God’s law to accept what they WANTED to do instead of what He commanded. Romans 10:2 noted the Jews had a “zeal for God, but not according to knowledge”.

- c. **What is obedience?** It is doing what you are told the way you are told to do it.
 - Remember our illustration of the farmer who gave his son a set of instructions. He did most of it exactly as told, but he changed one thing. His father asked him, "Why did you not obey me?" The only reason he did the other things as told was because he agreed with them. TRUE obedience will obey even when we don't agree, like or understand something. James 1:22-25 – be doers and not hearers only
- d. To whom does this apply?
- i. We often associate this verse with false doctrine – and rightfully so. One can profess to believe in Jesus and teach and practice error.
 And it is NOT ok! 2 John 9 warns that whoever does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. Furthermore, we are to NOT receive such a one. Philippians 3:18 warns of many are enemies of the cross of Christ.
 2 Timothy 4:2-4 – Paul warned Timothy that the time would come when some would no longer endure sound doctrine and heap up for themselves teachers. So certainly, one who is teaching or following false doctrine – plan of salvation, fellowship, way of worship, etc. is NOT obeying the gospel.
 - ii. But what about Christians who know the truth but only do those parts they like or agree with? Could this be me? Am I really putting God first in our lives? How many things do I have to refuse to do to be wrong? James 2:10 notes that if you keep the whole law and yet stumble in one point, you are guilty.
 Again, consider the rich, young ruler of Luke 18:22 – He lacked "one thing". The point Jesus is making here is, He MUST be first!
 And just saying you love the Lord is inadequate if you do not obey!
 Cf. 1 Samuel 15:22-23, *So Samuel said: "Has the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, And to heed than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, And stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry..."*

III. Many will say... "Lord, Lord"

- a. Note they were doing good works. Even miracles being performed (could one perform miracles and prophecy and still have a bad heart and motives? Consider Balaam, consider Judas Iscariot and even the Corinthians who with their numerous spiritual gifts were jealous and competing with one another).
- b. Notice they were judging themselves by what they were doing. And that is the problem. How many tell themselves about how good and godly they are and then begin to list all their spiritual accomplishments and strengths? But they ignore the things they have dismissed or changed. Be reminded of the rich, young ruler and all the good he had done. He was religious, but he lacked "one thing" – and it was enough to keep him out of heaven. Consider the Pharisee praying in the temple – Luke 18:11-12 – who bragged to himself about how wonderful he was. God was not impressed.
- c. Whatever they had, it was NOT a complete surrender. That is the point!

IV. Then I will declare, "I never knew you, depart from Me..."

- a. Jesus said He would declare, "I never knew you" – in my understanding this is not addressing whether or not one previously was a faithful disciple and fell away – the Bible clearly teaches the possibility of that – Hebrews 6:4-6, 2 Peter 2:20-22.

The point is that He will not acknowledge those who are rebellious and disobedient – He never has and never will. It is as if He has never known you.

In a parallel passage in Luke 13:24-27 we find Jesus answering the question if only few will be saved. He spoke of the narrow gate of which many will not be able to enter and then He spoke of a Master who when He has shut the door, those outside began to knock and plead to come in and He will answer, *“I do not know you, where you are from.”* They will then plead that they were with Him day in and day out (as in our vs. 23), but He will declare, *“I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.”* The point again, He DOES NOT recognize (know) those who refuse to follow Him. You turn your back on Him, you are no longer of Him or in Him!

- b. Again, we have the judgment scene of condemnation – **“depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness”** That is, they are without law where His is concerned – NOT obeying the law.

THE point of this teaching is for us is to realize, we MUST remain faithful and obey Him as He wills. It is not enough to say, “I am a Christian.” We need to act like it, and not in some or most areas, but in EVERYTHING we do. What about you? Are you in Him? What will He say to you when you face Him in judgment? If you are not ready, let me encourage you to make that change right now. When you say on that day, “Lord, Lord”, how will He respond to you? Think about it!