

11—Religious, But Wrong

Matthew 7:21-23

1. Jesus has just delivered a sermon which would revolutionize the way many people think about their faith, even many religious people. What warnings does He give to these religious seekers near the conclusion of this sermon (Matthew 7:13-14; 21-23)? Is being considered “religious” enough?



2. The term “kingdom” or “kingdom of heaven” in Scriptures is often used in two senses...

- The “kingdom” John and Jesus preached was spoken of as “at hand” and was a “kingdom” where heaven ruled men’s hearts (cf. Matthew 4:17; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 17:20-21).
- The “kingdom of heaven” is also referred to in a future sense as in the eternal kingdom we will receive when this life is over (Matthew 13:40-43; 25:34; 2 Peter 1:10-11).

Does the context of Matthew 7:22 seem to imply the present or future kingdom?

3. Our religious world today often tells people if they “just believe” or “just pray” or “just confess Jesus is Lord” they will be saved. Based on what Jesus says here, are these accurate assurances (7:21-23)?

4. In the following two passages, who is described as “believing” in Jesus (James 2:19; John 12:42-43)? Were these “believers” saved? What is the characteristic of a true disciple of Jesus (John 8:30-32)?

5. What does Titus 3:3-7 say about our own “good works?” Were the “good works” of Cornelius able to save Him (Acts 10:1-5; 11:14)? Yet, do many people assume “good works” will save them?

6. What does Jesus say about some of those who perform “good works?” Is it possible to be a person of “good works” and still be lost (Matthew 7:22-23)?

7. Jesus condemns “lawlessness” (NKJV) in Matthew 7:23. What exactly is “lawlessness” when it comes to religion?

8. What are the common words and concepts in the following verses (James 1:22-25; Romans 6:17-18; Hebrews 5:9; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9)?

9. Does our obedience to God’s will mean we earn our salvation (see Luke 17:10)? How do we balance grace (unmerited favor) with obedience?

10. What does it mean to “know” Jesus or for Jesus to “know” us (Matthew 7:23)? As a personal challenge, consider some area of your life where you are not living according to the law of Christ. What is something you need to change? Now, consider your religious friends. Write down the name of some religious friend you might be able to study with about this important verse and make it a point to reach out to them and start a conversation in the next 48 hours.