

CHAPTER V

AUTHENTIC NARROW DISCIPLESHIP AND PROFESSIONS

According To Jesus And His Doctrines of Grace

²¹*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

²²*Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?*

²³*And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

Matthew 7:21-23

True Profession: “Jesus Christ is My King.”

These verses are the words of the King of the Kingdom of Heaven addressing His disciples, or potential disciples. This Sermon is His public declaration of the motives and intentions of His Government, and its requirements for all adherents. He is in the midst of His Sermon’s final summons for its hearers to become His faithful subjects. In order to become an acceptable and authentic devotee in His Kingdom each person desiring ingress must profess faithfulness to Him and to His laws. Multitudes desire a part in the benefits of this Kingdom, but King Jesus warns all would-be subjects, who would seek His Kingdom, against making false claims about their own allegiance to Him.

All monarchs demand professions of faithfulness. They require men who would be participants in the pleasures of their rule to stand up and say aloud before others, “I am a submissive member of this kingdom, and do indeed believe in the king and his rights to rule over me. I will be faithful to his laws and to his decrees as sovereign.” That is what every Christian has done when they professed faith in Jesus Christ as Lord, Savior, and personal King. Through their profession of personal faith, Christ’s authentic

disciples claim allegiance to King Jesus and to His correct and good rule over the Providential Government of the universe and over every particular area of each disciple's own personal life. To profess faith in King Jesus Christ is to claim Him as absolute Sovereign over one's life and future. A profession of faith in Jesus Christ will be followed by submission to His requirements for baptism. It is the initial act of obedience to His Kingly posture over the newly won subject of God's Kingdom. The newly installed follower of King Jesus desires above all else to display obedience to his new King. Genuine baptism is a profession that is the result of a possession.

A False Profession?

What is a false profession? Is it some sinister plot to deceive and to perhaps undermine King Jesus? No, it usually is simply a failure to understand what really is involved in an actual and authentic salvation experience with a King—The King. A false profession may start out just as a mistaken one. It could be the result of honest and sincere attempts, but because of erroneous ideas about Christ and the gospel, and ignorance concerning the specifications of the *strait-gate* entrance and the *narrow-way* life (which ignorance is routinely the effect of *false prophets*), the would-be convert is just mistaken about what has, or really has not, happened in his own heart and life. Often false professions are failures of man's sinful nature to submit to the divine and autocratic rule of King Jesus in one's life. For whatever reason, a profession of faith in Jesus is brought about, but it is a false one that owns no real allegiance to the King or to the Kingdom's laws. Thus, no authentic discipleship exists.

Conviction or Conversion?

Oftentimes the conviction of the Holy Spirit is mistaken for the conversion of the Holy Spirit. The Devil delights in stepping in somewhere between conviction of sin and the actual release of that guilt through faith in Jesus. He then produces a false sensation of his brand of artificial joy in the supposed convert, thereby causing the professor to stop short of the full yielding of everything over to Christ. The result is a false or mistaken

profession of faith, where the supposed new convert is then mistakenly baptized and begins what he and everyone else think is a new Christian life. But there is no real possession of the King or of His Spirit within. Thus, a false profession has been made because of the mistaken concept of “easy-believism” which is void of repentance and any real change of life. His false profession has been nothing more than a new route onto the same old Broad Way on which he was born which leads to *destruction*. Henceforth, he looks back to that “experience” and to his wide-gate Jesus as the guarantor of a newly found mistaken security system called “The Plan of Salvation.”

The Context: What Professors?

The immediately preceding verses in Christ’s Sermon obligate a close relation between these warnings about false profession of Him as Savior and the *fruits* of the false prophets.⁴³ Since these verses of our text are a vital part of Jesus’ appeal to respond at the close of His Sermon, and since there seems to be an emphasis upon an expectation within the professors to receive reward for the imagined good done in His name, we would naturally expect these verses to refer to the multitude of false disciples who profess faith in the permissive Christ presented by the false prophets just warned against by Jesus in *verses 15-20*. The disappointment and distress of a sudden reversal of such profound and gigantic proportions, as in this text, is the uncovering of the *ravens wolves* (v.15). Suddenly the *sheep’s clothing* is no longer cloaking their ferocious nature and their mistaken doctrine of “easy-believism.” The *ravens* denotes their greedy search for prey who are savagely harmed by their work as reputed *prophets*. This great disappointment of having one’s expectations smashed and even reversed reveals these prophets for just what they are, *false prophets* with hearts and ministries of *ravens wolves*.

⁴³ The strict “Biblicist” interpretation of these verses apply them to a false profession of Christ by all believers of a wide-gate Jesus, preachers as well as their followers. But they are to be applied to all manner of mistaken professors of Jesus Christ as Savior.

The Many

These *many*, who say to Jesus, *Lord, Lord*, (v. 22) are repeating their false profession of faith which was based upon the testimony of the *false prophets*. These *many* are the *many evil fruits* of the *false prophets* (vs.16-20). Therefore, they are the same *many* who enter into a false profession of a wide-gate Jesus which did not exist (v.13). They are the same *many* who lived on the Great Broad Way by entering a wide gate, professing an “easy believism” (v.13). They are the same *many thorns and thistles* who were the only produce of the *corrupt trees* (v.16). These pseudo-disciples, these *fruits* from the architects of a wide-gate Jesus, like their master builders, have themselves claimed Jesus as their security system, and have had a part in their designer-progenitors’ ministries through their own support of the false gospel of a wide-gate Jesus and the broad lifestyle promoted by them. Therefore, they—the false disciples—as well as their preacher-progenitors, the *false prophets*—are there before the King, and must answer for their *many* imitation professions, their *many* imitation prophecies, their *many* imitation demon exorcisings, their *many* imitation wonderful works, but particularly, they must answer for their *many* imitations of authentic discipleship.

Jesus’ words equally emphasize the *false prophets’* culpability and their disciples’ intolerable shock and resulting anguish. Accordingly, these *many* of *verse 22* include the same *false prophets* of whom Jesus warned to *beware* in *verse 15*. Because the master-prophets of the pseudo disciples presumed to speak in His *name*, and, as His prophets, had assumed His approval, they together—prophet and hearer, teacher and student—quite expectantly stand before him *in that day*. They claim His *name* (authority) for their message of “easy believism” They claim His *name* (authority) for their imagined power over demons. They claim His *name* (authority) for their *many wonderful accomplishments*. All these claims were by persons who were

still living on the Great Broad Way. The pseudo disciples and their progenitors—the *false prophets*—claim falsely that Jesus is their *Lord* and assume Him as Savior. But for *false prophet* and follower alike, their claims to have known Jesus is as false as was their perverted message of the gospel—“easy believism.” Their claims of prophecy, overcoming demons, and good works are as false as their “pseudo-disciple” *fruits*, as false as their sham message of “Peace, peace,” when there is no peace for the wicked, which false message enchanted them and fascinated their followers in the first place.

Entrance into the *narrow way*, which opens up from the *strait gate*, comes through a true profession of Jesus Christ as Lord over the entire life, as well as Savior from all sin. Entrance into the *broad way* through a *wide gate* was through a false profession of faith in a permissive Savior. Their supposed savior needed not be surrendered to, needed not be believed to be **One** Lord and Savior, needed not to have been known in one’s vital areas of life and soul, needed not to have been known in His Lordy scrutiny, needed not to have been obeyed. Their version of Jesus needed not to have fashioned His disciples to be able and mighty, and to be possessed with a penchant and bent, to *do the will of My Father in heaven*. Thus these false professors who say *Lord, Lord*, are none other than the broad-wayers and their false preachers, who possess nothing of the Lord they profess to own. They, even to the end—in *that day* of final judgement—, will still be claiming a wide-gate Jesus, an “easy believism,” and a permissive God and His Christ. They envision a tender Savior Who will accept them into His heavenly Kingdom without genuine holiness. Even to the end, they will together be claiming “The Plan of Salvation” as their security system and expecting Him to certify them to have been His disciples and to be their Savior, but who never really *knew* Him as Lord, and therefore never really knew Him as Savior, and therefore never really knew Him at all. As their supposed salvation experience and lives were divorced from His Lordship, so the ultimate exercise of His Lordship for them will dissociate them from that Lordship forever. Jesus has the last word in this

controversy of “Lordship salvation” versus “Savior-only profession” when He will *profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*⁴⁴

No Real Possession

Jesus means for all the listeners of His Sermon to take note of the dangers of any profession or mistaken claim concerning Him which leads to false security, else they too be unexpectedly turned away from heaven by Him *in that day* with a *I never knew you*. A profession of Christ assures nothing in and of itself. Therefore, there is an inherent danger in professing Christ and not possessing His power and presence in the heart and life. This failure at possession is caused sometimes by being too young, when no real understanding is gained because of too easy and too quick expectations of eager but sincere workers, which result in a false profession and no real possession of Christ. There is the danger of being too old, when the heart has become hardened beyond human remedy so that no real consideration of a change takes place; because no proper foundation is laid, there is no possession, but only profession. There is also the possibility of being too quick at making a profession of faith in Christ, when no real decision was thought through as to its real meaning and consequences; therefore it is again a false or mistaken profession with no real possession of Christ’s saving power. And there is the problem of being too slow at professing Christ as Lord and Savior. A day of opportunity by the Holy Spirit’s needed work of convicting and enlightening was grieved away by delay; consequently when one finally does “make a decision” about Christ there is no real spiritual power involved at all. But Jesus’ main interest in this warning was the ministry of the

⁴⁴ This section of Christ’s Sermon, as well as much of His other teachings, especially emphasize the distinction between acknowledging Him as Lord and Savior, or merely accepting Him as Savior only, i.e. Lordship salvation vs. Savior-only profession. The former is true and eternal, while the latter is false and temporal; the one is Biblical and Christ accommodating, while the other is unscriptural and flesh accommodating; the truth of Lordship regeneration is of the Spirit of God, while the error of Savior-only profession is of the spirit of the Adversary.

false prophets, who cause many to believe in a *wide gate* and a *broad way* into safety, but instead that lead only into *destruction*. In all these possibilities, it is just a case of a fleshly mind making a fleshly “decision for Christ.” These experiences are common occurrences in the preaching by prophets—both true and false—and make professions of faith in Jesus Christ crucial and critical moments.

The Great Danger

Any kind of a mistaken profession of faith in Christ is dangerous, because it can cause false notions of security when there is no safety whatever. Oh! How the Devil delights when lost men falsely profess faith in Jesus! And all the more, if they are baptized, and added to the church. He likely has an eternal fellow who fits in right well with his great scheme of deception and lies. He has a mouthpiece to proclaim his perverted gospel of “easy-believism” and “Savior-only profession.” He has secured a fellow inhabitant for the eternal torments of hell. The feelings of security, which even a false profession of faith in Jesus Christ brings, will allay and quench the power of the true gospel and the conviction of the Holy Spirit from ever reaching the heart. A false profession is nearly a “security voucher for hell,” endorsed by Satan himself, and indemnified by the flames of its torments. This poor and somewhat fooled professor of religion will in this life always look back on his supposed salvation experience with a wide-gate Jesus, as his security system against hell and guarantee for heaven, while it is nothing more than a warranty bond for Gehenna and a pledge against heaven. Those kinds of scenarios make professions of faith in Jesus Christ dangerous things. One needs to be sure that it is real when faith is professed.

Profession of Faith: The Great Necessity

But do not misunderstand that confession of Jesus Christ as one’s personal King and Savior is not an important and necessary event. While profession of allegiance to Jesus is absolutely valueless if alone, it is nevertheless very important. It is even essential if one would be eternally saved, according to Jesus,

³²*Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.*

³³*But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.*

Matthew 10:32-33

Paul's word was clearly put also, but he added some details as of what real confession of Christ consists, and thus indicated to us just why it is essential to salvation,

⁹*That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

¹⁰*For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

Romans 10:9-10

Two essentials are involved in professing Christ unto salvation according to Paul. **First**, there must be a confession of and heart-rending submission to Him as Lord. *Confession unto salvation* is to *confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus*. This confession of the *mouth* is as Jesus elsewhere taught, that *out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh*; and that, therefore, *by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned* (Matt. 12:34, 37). Accordingly, a heart can be measured by the mouth. This true confession or profession is from the heart, and reveals the condition of, and in this case, the sincerity of the *heart*. This true profession of Jesus as Lord means that one's life now has a new Master—Jesus—Who commands and receives obedience and devotion. Only that confession is *unto salvation*. This new Master leads the possessor of Christ onto a *narrow way*, a life of self-restriction, denial and commitment to Him and His ways. To confess Christ as Lord is to claim that He is now the One Force and Director of one's life. The life that is given over to His Lordship is one where *old things are passed away, and behold all things are become new* (II Cor. 5:17).

Second, it is essential in professing Christ that the professor believes *in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead*. That means more than bare acceptance of facts concerning certain events of the gospel history. This confession refers to a heart-felt grasp of the truth of a personal payment for the professor's sin, which was fully accepted by God as sufficient for one's own guilt and vileness before Him, that acceptance being verified by His raising Christ from the dead. This profession shows insight into one's wickedness, its being so great that God put His own innocent and guiltless Son to a cruel and awful death to effect payment for its judgement. This confession is of a faith that appropriates the full impact of one's own guilt and penalty as being substitutionarily placed upon Christ on the cross, which is proven to have been the full payment for one's sin because God raised Him from the dead. Only that kind of accurate understanding and self-condemning confession really is a true *confession made unto salvation*.

Those two essentials of real salvation: submission to Jesus' Lordship (*confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus*), and acknowledgement of His Saviorhood (*believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead*) are involved in a real profession *unto salvation*. It is only with that kind of profession that *thou shalt be saved*. The outward acknowledgement of one's faith is absolutely necessary. Without that public profession there is not real salvation, because the heart must express its true belief and condition through the mouth (*Matt. 12:31-37*). The outward confession of Christ is a work of the Spirit which must be and will be performed by Him in every true believer (See *I Cor. 12:3*, as well as the Word of Jesus given above.).

Analysis of the Text

These text verses (*vs. 21-23*) are also closely allied with the concluding verses of Christ's Sermon (*vs. 24-27*). *Verses 21-27* constitute one final section, consisting of two paragraphs, which contrasts the true with the false, the "doer" with the "sayer." In *verse 21* Christ classifies these two concluding paragraphs of His

Sermon by dividing all men into two groups: *sayers* versus *doers*, or “professors” versus “possessors.” The *sayers* are saying *Lord, Lord*, and are dealt with in detail in *verses 22 and 23*. The *doers* are cited as they who *doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven*, and are dealt with in detail in *verses 24-27*, where both the positive *doers* (vs. 24-25) as well as the negative *hearers only* (vs. 26-27) are presented. Therefore, *verse 21* is the introduction and profile of the remainder and conclusion of His Sermon. In it Christ introduces the *sayers* with *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven*; while He introduces the *doers* with *he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven*. *Verses 22-23*, then, are detailing the false professions of the *sayers* who are identical with the parabolic *foolish man which built his house upon sand* (vs.26-27), and with the *many* who enter the Great Broad Way at the *wide gate* (vs. 13-14).

In accord with this analysis of Christ’s concluding paragraph, *verses 21-23* describe the nature and focus of false professions, which are void of any real possession of Christ. The theme of this teaching from King Jesus is the contrast between profession of Him and possession of Him. The one or the other is declared *in that day* of judgement by what one’s life contained. Did one’s life possess the reality of *the will of my Father which is in heaven*, or did it only profess *Lord, Lord* as an assumption of such a relationship to Christ. Such a false profession knows nothing of any reality that *heareth these sayings of Mine, and doeth them* (v.24). The factual possessor will withstand the “storms” of God’s final judgements (vs. 24-25), while the mistaken professor will fall under the *rains* and *floods* and *winds* of God’s stormy tempests and discriminatory verdicts *in that day* (vs. 26-27). *And great was the fall of it, even into destruction and departure* from Christ, because they were *workers of iniquity*, because Christ, the final Judge, *never knew them*.

A Negative Emphasis

Therefore, in keeping with this analysis, we would divide this exposition in accord with Christ’s main focus, namely, the characteristics and claims of false professions. What do false

professions lack? Or what is missing from a false profession of faith in Jesus that is vital to the true profession that is *unto salvation*? This is precisely the emphasis of King Jesus in *verses 21-23*. The positive qualities issuing from possessing true faith and authentic discipleship is implied from the deficiency and resulting failure of the professors in the text. What was missing in their lives is exactly what King Jesus requires. Accordingly, Christ explains of what false profession consists by exposing what is missing in false professors, who enter in at the *wide-gate* Jesus, walk the Great Broad Way, and espouse the “easy-believism” of a Savior-only profession.

We shall notice in *verse 21* that what constitutes *the will of my Father which is in heaven* will be the missing element in false professions, which missing element will then prohibit access into the Kingdom of heaven. Then in *verse 22*, we will discover that what constitutes the real authority of Jesus is never secured by professions. Finally, we will decide the matter of false professions just as Jesus demonstrated it for us in *verse 23*; namely, that a failure to establish an acquaintance with Jesus is critical in all professions.

Following these analyses, our exposition will deal with the three verses of our text, thusly:

- I Solitary Professions Fail To Guarantee Access Into The Kingdom Of Heaven, *Verse 21*
- II Solitary Professions Fail To Gain The Required Authority From The King Of Heaven, *Verse 22*
- III Solitary Professions Fail To Gain Acquaintance With The King Of Heaven, *Verse 23*

I. SOLITARY PROFESSIONS FAIL TO GUARANTEE ACCESS INTO THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. *Matthew 7:21*

Jesus here draws a contrast between saying and doing. The saying is easily done, but the doing is another matter. However, it is obvious that Jesus would have all would-be disciples and aspirants for His Father's heaven to know that in the final end it will not be what has been said but what has been done that will determine one's access to Him and to His glories. That may at first sound like salvation by works, but as we examine this truth more closely, it will become evident that the Lord is suggesting no such thing.

False Claims of Lordship

What is it to claim, or profess, to Jesus, *Lord, Lord*? Considering Jesus' contrast (the *but*) in this verse, saying *Lord, Lord* is opposite to doing *the will of His Father which is in heaven*. On the one hand, the false professors fail to access the heavenly Kingdom even though they say, *Lord, Lord*. While on the other hand, Christ contrasts what will not access heaven when in effect He adds, but *he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven* shall indeed enter in. Consequently, the claim of Christ's Lordship is not what is required to enter heaven. This is similar to James' reference to the faith of demons, who *also believe* [in His absolute Power and Godhead] *and tremble* (*Jms. 2:19*). Whatever else may or may not be involved in believing or even zealously professing that Jesus is *Lord*, acceptance into heaven assuredly is not! Acknowledgement of Jesus as "God of very God" in and of itself gains nothing for its acknowledgement. While belief in that Lordship is indeed essential to access into the kingdom, its mere profession is contrasted to doing the will of Jesus' Father in heaven, which "doing" will positively achieve heaven's consent.

This profound **contrast** places extreme emphasis upon what exactly constitutes entrance into, and gaining a share in, the blessednesses of His Kingdom. As Christ is finishing His Sermon on His Kingdom's designs and intents, He knows the vast hordes of wicked mankind, and their predisposition to get into His Kingdom by a cheapened version of His prescribed avenue of faith. Also, He knows the likelihood of those same multitudes to confuse real saving faith with head knowledge about Himself, about His rank and even His work as the God-Man. Consequently, Jesus Himself **contrasts** the profession of a head knowledge of His Lordship over against doing the will of God, as expressed in the word, *but*. It necessarily follows, then, that whatever constitutes *doing the will of my Father which is in heaven* is not only what is missing in the false professors, but it is vitally required for access into Christ's heavenly Kingdom.

Entering the Kingdom

A reoccurring word and one outstanding theme are together vitally related to and connected with the preceding verses, and have an indirect link with the concluding verses of Christ's Sermon. This repeated word is *enter*. This one prominent theme is salvation or deliverance from *destruction*, and the gaining of the *Life Eternal*, which is so intricately associated with and infinitely integrated into man's share in the Kingdom of God. Because man is guilty before God, his share in the good Kingdom of Christ is in question. Most men have in their minds to get into the Kingdom; consequently gaining "entrance" into the Kingdom is the reoccurring focus of Christ's invitation begun in *verse 13*, and continued in *verses 21-23*.

The entrance is *narrow*; therefore *in that day* many seeking access will say unto Christ, *Lord, Lord*, but Jesus warns *Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven*. Then He emphasizes **works**, by adding, *but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven*. This phrase is amplified with the words, *doers of these sayings of mine* in *verses 24-27*. In the very beginning of His Sermon's invitation (*vs. 13-14*), He

referred to the *strait gate*, meaning a repentant kind, a conforming kind, and a loss-of-self kind of entrance into authentic Kingdom discipleship. The subsequent discipleship is a *narrow way*, which is a confining, restraining, disciplined life, in other words, works. Again, in *verses 24-27*, it is the one who *doeth* Jesus' *sayings* who is delivered from the *destruction* in the last day of judgement. This, and not profession alone, is a reoccurring theme of Christ's invitation, as it is also the Apostle's,

Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

II Corinthians 13:5

⁶*Who [God, the righteous Judge] will render to every man according to his deeds:*

⁷*To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, [He grants] eternal life:*

⁸*But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, [He grants] indignation and wrath,*

⁹*Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil; of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile;*

¹⁰*But glory and honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:*

¹¹*For there is no respect of persons with God.*

Romans 2:6-11

Jesus Christ and His favored Apostle both agree that in the final analysis, one's life is the determining factor in appraising one's profession of faith in Jesus as one's Savior. One cannot possess Jesus Christ as Savior apart from His Lordship, and that Lordship will produce a bent and propensity to follow Him and His teachings in this life. This inclination is irresistibly earnest. The qualification or validity of one's word of profession is doing the Word of possession (*Jms. 1:21-25*). That is the basic message in His Sermon's concluding verses.

The Will of My Father

Jesus said, *but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven...shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.* It would be, therefore, imperative upon us to understand just what it is to be *doing the will of the Father.* This *will* can be separated into two distinct precepts, and both are associated with Christ. The one has to do with *verse 23*, and is the key to the entire teaching; the other is found in *verse 22.* Just of what this “will of my Father” consists is included in these two precepts that are related to the Person of Christ.

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Verse 23 : The First Precept concerning the will of the Father becomes clearer when *verses 21* and *23* are closely compared. According to *verse 21* the *Father which is in heaven* determines who shall enter heaven by measuring all in accord with their having or not having done His *will.* Yet in *verse 23*, Jesus decides entrance into the Kingdom of heaven on the basis of knowing Him and not having been a *worker of iniquity.* If doing the *will* of the Father as well as *knowing* Jesus Christ are prerequisites for access into heaven, might they not be very nearly the same, but with differing emphases? That works are indeed meant is clear from the context (q.v. above). Jesus has already said that the *gate* is narrow (*vs. 13-14*). In fact, He said on many occasions that He was the only way to gain access into heaven (Q.v. *Jn. 14:6; 10:9; 6:47; 12:32; 6:37; et al.*). This would lead us to believe that doing *the will of my Father* is synonymous with *knowing* Jesus, which acquaintance involves and even affects *holiness* [good works], *without which no man shall see the Lord* (*Heb. 12:14*). The Father sent the Son just for that purpose,

¹⁶*For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

¹⁷*For God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved.*

John 3:16-17

Furthermore, God's will is that all who believe on the Son *should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent him (Jn. 5:23)*. Consequently, we should first consider the Father's will to be that men believe on the Son, trust the Son, and glorify the Son. That is the primary precept of God's will for all men. *He that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven is first and foremost an authentic disciple doing the holy work of believing on Jesus Christ*. But believing on Jesus is just the beginning of this precept of God's will. This kind of *doing God's will*—which is really the continuous exercise of faith in Jesus—appropriates Christ into one's heart and life as the possession of authentic discipleship. The Holy Spirit takes up a personal residence within this “doer” of God's will, and that Possession is Christ Himself. *Christ in you, the hope of glory (Col. 1:27)*. To possess Christ in the inner man is to have everything one needs for access into the Kingdom of heaven. As Paul put it,

*I have been placed in a state of permanent co-crucifixion with Christ, and [at the same time] I am living. Yet not I myself, but Christ actually lives within me; but what I am living now within [a body of] flesh I am living with faith, the faith [which is indicative] of [and from] the Son of God, the One having loved me [particularly] and having particularly handed Himself over in my behalf.*⁴⁵ Galatians 2:20

*Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? **Verse 22: The Second Precept** of God's will is closely related to and is the rational outcome of the first. This precept is the natural, or rather supernatural, outgrowth of the abiding Holy Spirit (Christ) within one's heart and life. It is keyed to *verse 22*, in which the *many* to whom Jesus referred did not have authority from God to do good, because they *never knew* Christ. Their *works* were not the result of the abiding presence of Christ, but were done by themselves, using*

⁴⁵ Author's Distinctive Translation.

only His *name*, not His Presence and Power. They did not possess Christ; therefore their works lacked the authority of Christ. They were not His *works*; they did not have His life and love and light, which is the hallmark of His authority. These qualities of Christ's origin alone give significance to the *works* of men so that they can be classified as "good," and as *the will of my Father which is in heaven*. Nevertheless, these qualities become realities for the possessor of the Indwelling Christ, and henceforth they are counted as doing that *will* of God. Christ living within brings Christ's *love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance*.⁴⁶ That *fruit* is the superb *will* of the Father,

¹*I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.*

⁴*Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.*

Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain; that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.

John 15:1, 4, 16

This abiding Presence of Christ will assure access into the Kingdom of heaven. Not the disciple but Christ is working, living, loving inwardly and outwardly through the life of authentic disciples—the possessors and professors of Christ as Lord and Savior. Possession is everything and profession is nothing in comparison. Only the possessors will enter into the Kingdom of heaven, not on the merit of even these good Spirit-produced *works*, but on the merit of the once crucified Christ. When profession is real and a product of the Indwelling Christ, He will also make possible the complete doing of the Father's *will* to the glory of God.

⁴⁶ *Gal. 5:22-23*

II. SOLITARY PROFESSIONS FAIL TO GAIN ANY REQUIRED AUTHORITY FROM THE KING OF HEAVEN

Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

Matthew 7:22

Christ's name connotes authority. The phrase *in thy name*, three times repeated by these mistaken professors of Jesus, was a claim to Christ's authority, and hence to His security. They believe, and rightfully so, that there is security in Jesus' name (e.g. *Acts 4:12*). When using the name of another, one claims to be operating in behalf of the person holding that name. So also did these claim to have been working in behalf of Jesus. Some seem to think that Christ gives His authority to anyone who merely uses His *name*. Some religious groups think that calling out "in Jesus' name" will in some way give what they are doing some mystic power for and from Christ. This is a presumption upon Jesus' reputation, and shows both their ignorance of Christ and of His Father's *will*. Just using Jesus' name gives authority to no one (Q.v. *Acts 19:13-16* for an example.). What does indeed provide authority is to do God's *will*, which is to receive Christ as Lord over one's life. That will result in Christ's possession of that submitted life. Thus, security in Christ comes as one becomes possessed by the authority of Christ. That is the only way one obtains any security from the authority of Christ. The security comes as a result, and only as a result, of submission to His authority.

There will be false claims of possessing Christ's authority even until and during *that day*, which is the great day of judgement. This is surprising that they insist upon the security of Christ's *name*, even though they never submitted to the authority of that *name*. Their claim to His authority is their main ground of hope. They claim His approval because they seemed to have done what Jesus did. But they failed to gain any security from Jesus' authority because they never did Jesus' real work as exhibited in the cross,

which work is the ultimate aim and experience of every real possessor of Christ. They failed to submit to God's *will* for the death-to-self life of utter abandonment of their own "selves" in favor of the *will* of God. Their inner souls were never placed under that authority which they purported to have worked with. They submitted certain self-chosen portions of their lives to His authority to their own pleasing and for their own glory, but failed to surrender themselves. They never gave up their own minds, emotions, and wills in favor of His authority substituted in their places. They never submitted to His authority; therefore they never really had any authority. And without the authority of Christ's *name*, one is without the security of that *name*; therefore He will *profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

These mistaken professors claim to have had authority in three essential areas, under which one must place himself if he is to know anything of the security of Christ's authority. Those three areas of trust are: first, in His prophecy; second, in His power over evil; and third, in His wonderful works already completed.

They claim prophecy in His *name*, but never trusted in the authority of His prophecy. Jesus' whole life was one of prophecy. By prophecy is meant the proclaiming of eternal truths from God about God and man. The entire thrust of Christ's prophecy was to teach man of his need for God's mercy, grace, and love. The fundamental tenet of Christ's prophetic Word was that God could not be pleased with man's efforts at divine merit. He taught that man's only hope was to appeal to God through Himself and by His work in the cross. Every Apostle whom Jesus left on earth wrote the same basic message. It was repeated over and over. Without question, all of Christ's authority as a prophet was behind the truth of a necessary death and resurrection in order that man may enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Actually, the crucifixion itself was a prophecy to that same end; it proclaims that sin must be dealt with severely and directly by the authority of the Divine, and only a sacrifice of such Deity will suffice for the guilt of man. But these

false professors never heard⁴⁷ that basic message, yet claim to have exercised the spiritual gift of prophecy that revealed and centered upon that basic truth. These mistaken *sayers* denied the authority which they claimed to have possessed in their own prophesying, because if they had received Christ's authority as a Prophet, they would have listened to His message of salvation by grace through faith. They would not have insisted upon their works *in that day*, but would have insisted upon His.

They also claim authority over evil, but never trusted His authority to cast the evil out of themselves. They failed to rely upon his power to rid themselves of demonic influences. Christ will accordingly say to them, *Depart from me, ye that work iniquity*. All false doctrine is iniquity, and is the work of the Devil and his emissaries. These claim to have *cast out demons in thy name*, and all the while believed the evil, Devil-inspired doctrine of salvation through human merit. They were *in that day* claiming their works of prophecy, of overcoming evil, and many wonderful works, as their authority to access heaven. The activity referred to in their claims of good works was the product of the very demons that they also claimed to have cast out. What hypocrites!

Finally, they claim to have done many wonderful *works* in the authority of Christ, but they failed to trust in the authority of the supreme work of Christ—the cross. Their original mistaken profession of faith was, no doubt, followed in this life by many, many wonderful deeds of supposed goodness and benevolence for other sinners. But when was their trust in Christ's work of redemption through his blood mentioned by them? By claiming these wonderful works as the basis for entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven, they reveal their failure to submit to and rely on Jesus' final and finished work of the cross. The claim made before the Lord Jesus by genuine possessors of Christ will be, *Not by works of*

⁴⁷ They did not *hear* in the sense of a spiritual understanding, which is the meaning of the Biblical concept of hearing. Q.v. *Prov. 20:12*, and cp. the following: *He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God. Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. John 8:47, 43*

III. SOLITARY PROFESSIONS FAIL TO GAIN ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE KING OF HEAVEN

And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Matthew 7:23

The mistaken profession of mistaken professors will bring a counter profession from Jesus. Jesus used the word *profess* to denote that His own profession will match theirs. The Greek word means “to speak in accordance, adopt the same terms of language.” When they make their protestation of *verse 22*, Jesus will make the counter-protestation of *verse 23*. It is as if Jesus is saying, *I ought to know men who can say so much for themselves, but I do not.*⁴⁹ *I will have to answer back to you, I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

This verse contains the “key” that unlocks access into the Kingdom of Heaven. That “Key” is really the King of the Kingdom of Heaven, Jesus Christ. Acquaintance with Him, knowing Him, is the *doing the Father’s will*, which knowledge includes all His accompanying and developing disciplines. Knowing Him is an authorization from the Kingdom of Heaven that assures one’s final access into its blessings. Knowing Him is the *casting out of demons* (i.e. sharing in the victory over evil⁵⁰), and knowing Him is the doing of *many wonderful works*. Knowing Him is the possession that gives validity to profession.

Jesus is the essential for entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven, and one’s acquaintance with Christ, or one’s failure to know Christ and to be known by Him, will lead to two other prohibitive protestations from Him, which will intensify one’s restriction from the Kingdom of Heaven. This verse contains these three protestations from Christ, each one being vitally related and

⁴⁹ Alexander Balmain Bruce, The Synoptic Gospels, Vol. I, The Expositor’s Greek Testament (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), p.134.

⁵⁰ Q.v. *Luke 10:17-20*.

connected to the others, and each somehow being the catalyst for the others. They are all interrelated, one with the other. Notice: that access into heaven depends upon intimacy with Christ, as revealed in the words, *I never knew you*. Which failure at intimacy with the King leads to greater separation from Christ, as signified in the declaration, *depart from me*. Which separation was caused by their variance with Christ, as denoted in their title given by Jesus, *ye workers of iniquity*.

No Intimacy with Christ

I never knew you.

Unfamiliarity with Jesus is the great defect of false professors. They never get acquainted with Him. He is a stranger to them, and His ways are not to their liking. One might say that they are insensitive to His likes and dislikes. Their perception of His warmth and love and affection and tenderness and kindness and all of the thousands of His finest of virtues is voided by their *iniquity*. They care not for His Church, His Word, His morals, His teachings, His commandments, or His Father. In keeping with their “profession” they may come to church, but usually irregularly, unless they be one of the Devil’s *false prophets*. They never put Christ’s priorities—His loves, His sentiments—ahead of their own programs. While not necessarily always guilty of flagrant immorality, they are foreign to the heart of God. They never have a real love for or a grasp of the spiritual truth of Scripture. Some of them try to teach the Bible, but with no acquaintance with the Author, it is unreal. To them a sermon or lesson is nothing more than a talk about historical facts of Bible interests. Many of them prefer jokes in sermons, reasoning that God has “a great sense of humor”; therefore, they would rather not have such seriousness about all these religious things. These kinds of attitudes come from no acquaintance with Jesus. They are the *I never knew you* kind of disciples. Jesus said,

*At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father,
and you in me, and I in you.*

*He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it
is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my
father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*

John 14:20-21

That day in John 14:20 is a very different reference from *that day* in verse 22 of our text. This *that day* refers to the time of the coming of the Holy Spirit to the church at Pentecost to indwell every genuine disciple. He, the Holy Spirit, is the Indwelling Christ, Who initiates an intimate relationship with every possessor. This relationship is the personal test for every professor of Christ. Ask yourself this question, “Do I really know Jesus as the Indwelling Christ intimately?”

This personal knowledge of Jesus is not merely a bare knowledge about Him, or the doctrines of His Person or Book, but this is a real, alive, and experiential knowledge of His personal acquaintance. As He promised in view of the coming of Himself in the Person of the Holy Spirit, *I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.* He is as real as any other acquaintance with any other person, except this Person is Spirit and is within oneself. This familiarity with Him is particular, individual, personal; it is the understanding of His feelings of grief at sin, of joy at righteousness, of pleasure at expressed love, of delight at the glorifying of God. It is the inner mixture of one’s own feelings with those of the Indwelling Christ until His desires are my delight, and His feelings are my most sensitive yearnings so that it really is experienced, this *You in me, and I in you.* This is the close, familiar, and friendly relationship of an actual Person within one’s own body, mind, soul, and life; Who intuitively speaks and blesses with His presence recognized. It is that kind of “knowing” to which Jesus refers when He says to mere “Savior-only professors,” *I never knew you.*

The very intimacy which their profession falsely claimed for themselves is the very intimacy refuted by Christ Himself. While they had claimed *Lord, Lord, in thy name,* suggesting a close relation to Jesus in the prosecution of what they had thought to be *many wonderful works* for Him, He announces to them that *I never knew you.* Not for one moment in their marvelous careers did they ever *know* Jesus. Not, “I once knew you and you fell away,” but *I never knew you.* “What they claimed—intimacy with Christ—is

just what He repudiates, and with a certain scornful dignity. ‘Our acquaintance was not broken off—there never was any.’⁵¹

Separation from Christ
Depart from Me!

Failure to know Christ personally and intimately is to continue the natural separation from Him which is the universal condition of all men from birth (*Ps* 58:3). In the judgement, that failure to have intimacy with Christ will lead to greater separation from Christ. Jesus will tell all mistaken professors to take even further leave of Him; He will say, *Depart from Me*. This seems to be a sharp contrast to the longsuffering and meek-spirited Jesus of the Gospels; however the time and place must be remembered. Jesus is the Judge, and as such is determining the just and fair outcome of each person’s life as relates to His Kingdom. For the mistaken professor, it is fitting that departure from Christ is his final destiny, because that was what marked his entire life. At no time during his life did he include Christ in his affairs. Oh, he claimed to allow Jesus a place in his life; he claimed to know Jesus. He professed Jesus as Savior; he was baptized in Jesus’ name. But he never admitted Christ into his activities. Every event was inwardly spent apart from Christ. Christ was never in attendance with affairs of importance to him. How equitable for Christ in the end to exclude this kind of lying hypocrite from His Presence eternally! Now for all eternity, he shall be *departed* from Christ even more completely than was exhibited in his life. He will be forever separated from His Light, His Life, and His Love; from God, from good, from heaven’s delights and pleasures, because his life had professed intimacy with Christ, but had not possessed intimacy with Christ.

Variance with Christ
Ye that work iniquity

Just as no sinful man can escape and overcome the power of iniquity in this life without intimacy with the Indwelling Christ, so no one can escape the eternal power of iniquity in the next life without having had intimacy with Christ during this life. Christ and

⁵¹ David Brown, Matthew-John, Vol. V, A Commentary on the Old and New Testaments (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967, p.50.

escape from the eternal grip of iniquity are joint necessities for access into the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, this final and fixed separation from Christ is the proper place for all false professors, because they were and ever will be at variance with Christ.

Jesus describes them accurately in His label, *Ye that work iniquity*. A present participle rendered in the Authorized Version, *ye that work* would be better understood as “the ones constantly working.” *Iniquity* is the Greek word νομιον, “law,” with the alpha privative, α, or “no,” prefixed; literally, “no law,” or “lawlessness.” Jesus distinguishes these false professors with His own personal identification tag, “The ones constantly working lawlessness.” This is fitting because of their persistent refusal to *do the will of my Father which is in heaven*.

This refusal is continually acted out in all false professions, especially in false preachers’ ministries, as they over and over deny the essentiality of the Lordship of Jesus (both the *narrow gate* entrance and the *narrow way* life) in the Christian experience. Jesus labels that denial of His practical Lordship as “constantly working lawlessness.” The life which does not do, nor does it recognize the necessity for, the active and continuous *doing the will of my Father which is in heaven*” is the life which is moving farther and farther from Him and the ways of His Son; it is itself “lawlessness.” That is the tone, temper, and disposition of the lives of the false professors, as well as the ministries of the false preachers; and is the considerable problem with the false professor. Because his profession is short of actual possession, he is not fit for heaven. The mouth breathed our noble sounds, *Lord, Lord*, but his heart was full of corruption still, even not affirming the Lord His rightful place as Lord in the lives of His own children. Like the Pharisees of Jesus’ day, false professors are,

...whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men’s bones, and of all uncleanness.

Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Matthew 23:27-28

That uncleanness and hypocrisy and iniquity is what disqualifies false professors from happiness in the Kingdom of Heaven. They would be completely out of place. They are at extreme variance with Christ, the King, Who, as God, is Holy. Heaven has no place for unholy liars. Heaven could not be Christ's home if anyone who lied about Him and continued in such a condition throughout life were to be there. He would cease to be both just and holy. Christ surely included false prophets and their evil disciples of "easy believism" when He revealed to John,

But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

[added emph.]

Revelation 21:8

The greatest lie of all time might be said to have been the life of Judas Iscariot. His whole life was a continuous falsehood. He claimed to be a part of the Lord's Church, but he was a liar. He was a false professor and false prophet, and manifested himself in the end as such. Even while being sent out with authority to cast out demons in the name of Jesus (*Luke 9:1-6*), he was really just a liar who in the end betrayed Jesus with a kiss. If he had been asked about the necessity of Lordship in the matter of salvation, he would have affirmed the Savior-only profession, answering something like this, "Why, no one needs Jesus as Lord to be saved, just look at me." All mistaken professors are like that. They betray Christ by not really doing *the will of my Father which is in heaven*, and by denying that necessity. Every false professor betrays Christ by not allowing the authority of Christ to rule over his life. Thus, he betrays Christ by not becoming personally acquainted with Him; and though without any real knowledge of Him, he judges Him unworthy of obedience, unworthy of serving, unworthy of ever really knowing as Lord.

That failure to know Jesus and to be known by Him marks all false discipleship, and seals its fate in the *destruction* which awaits all entrants into the wide-gate Jesus, and travelers of the Great

Broad Way. All works, even when done using Jesus' name, are nothing but iniquity when they are without the personal Presence of an intimate relationship with an Indwelling Christ. The greatest *will of my Father which is in heaven* is not the performance of any great feats for Him or in the *name* of Jesus. But it is the simple honoring of His Son through a personal and humble acknowledgement of His Person as Lord and His work on the cross. It is not what we profess with our mouths, but what Jesus professes with His about our relationship with Him that determines final destiny. In the end of all things, having never recognized and entered and known the Strait Gate, false disciples will be turned from the Life Eternal. However, there will indeed be some that say, *Lord, Lord, in thy name we enter into Your Kingdom*. They will have access into its pleasures, because they know intimately and obey attentively the King of the place. Amen.

*Test your own profession of faith in Me by examining your own works, in order to verify your entrance into the Kingdom and the gaining of Eternal Life. Only the disciple who knows Me intimately, and through that familiarity appropriates My virtue and holiness will escape destruction in that last day of judgement; survey your life in the light of My sayings, lest your own false profession fool you. Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*⁵²

—Jesus Christ, 35 A.D.

⁵² Matt. 7:13-27; Luke 6:47