

WHO WILL ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN?

Matt 7:21-23

INTRODUCTION

- A. Most people believe they will go to heaven when they die. Their hope is fostered by the comforting words of many preachers, priests, and rabbis. Their hope is based upon the idea that heaven is for all believers, or for those whose good works outweigh the bad
- B. But are such hopes well-founded? Will most people go to heaven when they die? Is salvation based on good works? Is it based on faith only?
- C. In His sermon, Jesus gave some ominous warnings. Few, not many, would be saved Matt 7:13-14. Many religious people, including some believers in Jesus, will learn that they too will be lost! Matt 7:21-23
- D. **(TITLE)** From Matt 7:21-23 just "Who will enter the kingdom of heaven?"

DISCUSSION:

I. WHAT IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN?

- A. The term "kingdom of heaven"
 - 1. Synonymous with "kingdom of God" Matt 4:17; Mk 1:14-15
 - 2. Refers to God's kingship, or rule, from heaven - The kingdom of heaven is focused in the Person of Jesus Christ, and is manifested where He rules in the hearts of men Lk 17:20-21
- B. "Kingdom of heaven" is spiritual in nature Jhn 18:36; Rom 14:17
 - 1. It began when all authority (rule) was given to Jesus Matt 28:18; Acts 2:36; Eph 1:20-23
 - 2. Today, it includes the Lord's church on earth (those who submit to the Will of Christ are added to the kingdom) Col 1:13; Rev 1:9
 - 3. In the future, it will involve the "new heavens and new earth," where we will be with God and Jesus for eternity Matt 13:40-43; 2Pet 3:10-13; Rev 21:1-22:5
 - 4. The kingdom of heaven was "inaugurated" on the day of Pentecost, and will be "culminated" when Jesus returns to deliver it back to God 1Cor 15:23-28
- C. The kingdom of heaven in our text appears to have the future aspect of the kingdom in view
 - 1. Note that Jesus says "in that day" Matt 7:22
 - 2. An apparent reference to day of judgment 2Tim 1:12,18; 4:8
 - 3. Jesus is talking about who will enter the kingdom in its future aspect Matt 25:31-34; 2Pet 1:10-11
 - 4. What a wonderful blessing, to have an abundant entrance into "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"!

II. WHO WILL ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN?

- A. Not everyone who professes Jesus
 - 1. There are some who teach that as long as one believes in Jesus, they will be saved

- 2. They say salvation is by "faith only", even though the only time "faith only" is found in Scripture, it says: not by faith only Jas 2:24
- 3. But there is such a thing as "an unsaved believer" Jas 2:19; Jhn 12:42,43
- 4. Jesus described a true disciple as one who not only believes in Him, but does what He says Jhn 8:30-32
- B. Not everyone who does many good works Matt 7:22
 - 1. Here were people who not only believed in Jesus, but believed they had: Prophesied in His name! Cast out demons in His Name! Done many wonders in His Name!
 - 2. Such good works certainly did not earn their way to heaven Tit 3:3-7; Acts 10:1-5; 11:14
 - 3. Sometimes what we may think is a good work is without any authority Matt 7:23 - not that they did something condemned by Jesus, but did things for which they had no authority!
- C. Only those who do the father's will, will be saved Matt 7:21; Jas 1:22-25
 - 1. Is this legalism? No! Legalism is salvation by perfect law-keeping, believing that one earns salvation by the merit of what they have done
 - a. Salvation by grace does not preclude the necessity of obedience
 - b. We need to recognize obedience does not earn salvation
 - c. When all is said and done, we are still unworthy Lk 17:10
 - 2. The Father's will, while it offers salvation by grace, does require obedience! Rom 6:17-18; Heb 5:9; 2Thess 1:7-9

CONCLUSION

- A. Who will enter the kingdom of heaven?
 - 1. Not those who profess to believe, but do not obey
 - 2. Not those who think they are doing many religious things, but without authority - only those who do the Father's will!
- B. This is why we must take an earlier statement in Jesus' sermon so seriously Matt 6:33
- C. We must make the finding of God's will and rule the number one priority in our life!
- D. What is the Father's will? It begins with
 - 1. Repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ Acts 20:21; Jhn 8:24; Lk 13:3
 - 2. Confessing Jesus as Lord Rom 10:10
 - 3. Being baptized into Christ for the remission of sins Acts 2:38
 - 4. Followed by a life of faithful service to Christ, confessing our sins along the way Rev 2:10; 1Jhn 1:9
- E. Are you doing the Father's will?