

A Shocking Contrast

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[0 : 00] Well, that's enough notices. Let's turn to the Word of God. And reading this morning in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 7, as we draw towards the end, not quite, but near the end of our study on the Sermon on the Mount.

It's page 812, if you have one of our visitor's Bibles. And we're going to read Matthew, Chapter 7. Looking particular this morning at the little paragraph, verses 21 to 23, but let me read from verse 13, where Jesus concludes the main bulk of his teaching on the Sermon on the Mount in verse 12, and then turns to fix his listeners in the eye and to issue this challenge.

Enter by the narrow gate, for the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter it are many.

For the gate is narrow, and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few. Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

You'll recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thorn bushes or figs from thistles?

So every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit.

[1 : 23] A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

Thus you'll recognize them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

On that day many will say to me, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and cast out demons in your name and do many mighty works in your name? Then I will declare to them, I never knew you.

Depart from me, you workers of lawlessness. Amen. May God bless to us his word. Please turn with me to Matthew chapter 7.

We're nearing the end of our studies together on the Sermon on the Mount, and we've been listening to Jesus teaching the crowds of his day with an authority absolutely unique in the history of the world.

[2 : 44] They recognize that, of course, if you look at verses 28 and 29. They were astonished at his teaching. And, of course, the world has been ever since, hasn't it? Wherever his teaching has been examined and taken seriously, of course, even by many who would not call themselves Christians.

It can't help recognize something about the uniqueness of Jesus Christ. Even people like Gandhi and many, many others have recognized that.

They're recognizing what the people here are saying in verse 29, that Jesus taught as one with authority in himself, not like their scribes, not like their clergy, who had to assert their own authority. No, Jesus commanded authority just by the sheer wonder of his words, by his teaching. But we also saw last time that Jesus not only teaches with authority, he makes authoritative demands on his hearers.

And so, in fact, you're not taking Jesus nearly seriously enough if you just admire him as a teacher. Now, his words demand that you bow to him as master, as Lord, because he is God incarnate.

[3 : 58] He is God in the flesh. And he both reveals God's truth, who he is, with ultimate authority, but he also calls to respond with ultimate authority.

And it's a revelation given to the whole world, and therefore a command given to the whole world to respond. He summons people to make a true response to his kingdom.

And that summons, we saw last time, is a choice, a stark choice. We saw it in verses 13 to 20.

According to Jesus, the Son of God, there are two ways and only two ways, and there are two destinations and only two, and they are utterly opposite.

Do you see verse 14? There is life, everlasting life in the kingdom of God. Or, verse 13, there is the broad and easy and popular natural path, but it ends in utter destruction and ruin.

And therefore the call of the kingdom and the call of the Christian gospel is to choose life and come away from that path to destruction, to enter by the narrow gate, the only gate, which is the reality of a personal response to Jesus Christ, to his personal call upon our lives.

[5 : 20] Now, of course, many people reject those stark categories, even within the professing church today. Many people see that as extremism, fanaticism. They think that will only put people off the church and scare them away, and so we don't want to talk like that.

We want to blunt the message. We want to soften it. We want to pretend it doesn't have to be a stark choice like that of those two ways. We don't want to use words like exclusive. We want to use words like inclusive.

We affirm everybody on the broad road. But that is why, if you look at verses 15 to 20, you will see Jesus goes immediately on to warn us about just such false prophets.

Because that is what he calls those who say things like that. They're not the soft, cuddly, harmless sheep that they say they are and may seem to be at times to us. Notice this, Jesus.

They're, in fact, ravenous wolves, and they will destroy the church and destroy people's lives eternally. Don't be fooled by their message.

[6 : 28] And don't be failing to understand the dire danger, not only that they put themselves in, but also are capable of leading many others into. Verse 19, every tree that does not bear good fruit and therefore proves to be a bad tree, it is cut down and thrown into the fire.

And that is the condemnation to destruction that Jesus speaks plainly about in verse 13. So we need to beware. We need to believe and understand that the true gospel does call for a stark choice.

And we must choose life. We must enter into the narrow gate. We must make a true kingdom response to the message of the Lord Jesus Christ. Not just acquiesce in the broad and easy and accommodative way that we are so naturally inclined to in life.

That's what we want. That's what we'll do by default. Well, what is the mark then of a true kingdom response? The right response to Jesus' words. The right response to the gospel that Jesus is talking about.

And how do we know if we have responded truly? And are still responding truly in our lives? And not in fact deceiving ourselves and deceiving even other people.

[7 : 43] That's a vital question. In fact, it's the vital question, isn't it, for everybody who claims the name of Jesus, who claims the way of Christian faith. Because according to Jesus, self-deception and deception of others, but especially self-deception, is possible.

And that's the issue we have to confront this morning in verses 21 to 23, where Jesus shows us this really shocking contrast between those who are true and those who are proved false in their response to Jesus on that day, as he calls it.

The day which the Apostle Paul says will be the day that God judges the secrets of men's hearts by Christ Jesus. Now, these verses speak of a surprising simplicity of the true relationship with God through Jesus Christ over against the expressive and extravagant and even spectacular nature of religion and spiritual profession that is ultimately proved to be quite false and wrong and disastrous and therefore, and this is pretty shocking in Jesus' mind, therefore, damnable.

And Jesus is clear. If we're to take heed whom we hear, that is, the preachers of his narrow way, the true preachers, not the false prophets of the broad church, then we've also got to take heed how we hear.

Because if it's easy to be deceived by others teaching a wrong way, it's also easy, indeed easier, to deceive ourselves. And it's not just the false teachers who are in danger. Look at verse 21.

[9 : 22] It's everyone he's speaking to. Everyone. Who hears these words. And not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven.

So let's pay clear attention to what Jesus is saying here as he shows us the contrast between true and false hearing and points up the characteristics of true discipleship and then shows us what is the core of true living faith that will not be ashamed on that day.

So first, let's get clear, and this is really important, about the contrast between true and false hearing of Christ's word. Verse 21. Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

It's a contrast, isn't it, between a hearing that leads to mere saying, mere profession, and a hearing that leads to what Jesus calls doing. A real confession of faith that alone is what Jesus seeks. And alone is the thing that Jesus will honor in the coming judgment. There is, he says, a hearing that just leads to saying, to profession, Lord, Lord. But in fact, according to Jesus, it is merely the profession of dead and deadly religion.

[10:46] And it will lead to destruction because, look at verse 23, it's just a veneer of pious words that cloaks nothing but disobedience to God at its heart.

Lawlessness. And 1 John 3, verse 4, tells us, doesn't it, that sin is lawlessness. Lawlessness is the essence of sin. But by total contrast, Jesus says, there's a hearing that leads to doing, to doing the will of the Father in heaven.

That is obedience. to the commands of God, which is the mark, he says, of real discipleship and real submission to God as the Lord and Master of your life. And only that kind of hearing exhibits the true obedience of faith that bears fruit in everlasting life.

As opposed to the disobedience of unbelief that leads to the terrible judgment of verse 23. I never knew you at all, says Jesus. So depart from me, you who at heart, despite your profession, have always been workers of lawlessness.

I want to back up for a little here because this is something we really need to get very clear in our minds, this whole matter of faith and obedience. Many Christians, I think, are deeply confused by this whole area.

[12:05] We tend to think, don't we, in terms of the contrast between faith and works. we're saved by faith and not by works. And that's absolutely true and clear and that is taught all the way through the Bible, no mistake.

But that is not at all the same thing as to contrast faith and obedience. Or even to put faith against God's laws.

Though somehow by having Christian faith, it means we never have to have any regard for the commands of God's law. Absolutely not. Look at verse 23. It's clear. It is lawlessness, according to Jesus, that keeps you out of God's kingdom of heaven.

Depart from me, you workers of lawlessness. Now the contrast the Bible makes and the contrast that Jesus makes here is the contrast between real faith and unbelief.

And that is the same contrast between obedience to God and disobedience to God. In other words, rebellion against his commands upon our lives.

[13:07] That's why Paul in his great letter to the Romans all about the scope of the gospel. He makes absolutely explicit, doesn't he, that the whole gospel of the worldwide mission that he's involved in has one goal in view.

It is, he says in Romans 1, verse 5, to bring about the obedience of faith among all the nations. That's how he begins his letter. That's the goal of apostolic mission. And he ends his letter exactly the same way at the end of chapter 16.

He says, this is what God is bringing about through the preaching of the gospel of Christ. He says, it's the command of the eternal God to bring about the obedience of faith among all the nations through Jesus Christ.

You see, the obedience of faith is what it's aiming at as opposed to the disobedience of unbelief. This is so important to grasp.

I want to show you that it is a consistent reality right through the whole Bible from beginning to end. We don't need to go all the way back to Genesis 3, but you know, don't you? You know very well that the unbelief that banished man from God's sight in the garden was the disobedience and rebellion of man.

[14:21] And God said to Adam, effectively, exactly the same words Jesus says here, depart from me, you workers of lawlessness. But I do want you to turn with me back to the Old Testament to Numbers chapter 14.

If you have one of our church Bibles, I think it's page 122. Numbers 14 is the event at Kadesh Barnea, which ever afterwards in the history of Israel was called the rebellion when Israel refused, remember, to go up and enter the promised land at the command of God.

And in Numbers 14 in verse 11, we read about why God judged that whole generation. He says, how long will this people not believe in me?

Second half of verse 11. Unbelief in God's promise. That was the reason for their judgment. But notice what this unbelief consisted in.

Look at the first half of verse 11. It was despising God himself. And that manifested itself, if you look up the paragraph to verse 2, in muttering against God and grumbling against Moses, God's servant. [15:31] In verse 4, in mutiny, when the people said, let's choose our own leader and go back to Egypt. In verse 9, frank rebellion against the Lord.

In verse 10, the attempted murder of Moses, God's spokesman. Do you see? Disobedient, defiant, lawless rebellion against God's command.

And that is what, in verse 11, God calls unbelief. And later on, you can read later in Deuteronomy chapter 1, when Moses repeats all this to the next generation on the brink of the land.

He says this, you would not go up but rebelled against the command of your Lord. In spite of his word, you did not believe the Lord your God.

You see? That's what unbelief is. Disobedience to God's command. And that's what disobedience displays. It displays always an unbelieving, faithless heart.

[16:30] That's the great rebellion. Now, turn forward with me. One more reference to Hebrews chapter 3 in the New Testament. That's page 1002 if you have a church Bible. Here's near the end of the New Testament, the apostle writing to the professing Christian church and he quotes to them Psalm 95 in verse 7 of Hebrews chapter 3 which in turn refers back, doesn't it, to that great day at Kadesh Barnea, that rebellion.

And he says to these Christians, today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, that day of testing in the wilderness. Verse 12, take care that there be in you or lest there be in you an evil, unbelieving heart leading you to fall away from the living God.

Verse 13, don't let yourselves be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. Listen to verses 16 to 19. For who were those who heard and yet rebelled?

Was it not all those who left Egypt led by Moses? And with whom was he provoked for 40 years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? And to whom did he swear that they would not enter his rest, but to those who were disobedient?

Rebellion, sin, disobedience. So we see, verse 19, that they were unable to enter because of their unbelief. We got it clear.

[17:58] I think we have now, haven't we? Real faith means obedience to the revealed truth of God. And unbelief is the opposite.

Unbelief is disobedience. It is refusal to do all that God has commanded as the will of the Father in heaven for man. That's why in Romans chapter 10, in the middle of his whole discussion about Israel's rejection of Christ, Paul says, Israel might look very like the chosen people of God, very like his special people, but he says in Romans 10, verse 16, they have not all obeyed the gospel.

For Isaiah says, Lord, Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us? No, says Paul, for the most part, Israel has proven to be a contrary, a disobedient people.

Though they think they possess all the truth of God, their hearts tell us that they are unbelievers. They say, Lord, Lord, they say, Yahweh, Yahweh. But they didn't do what God said.

They didn't obey him or really know him. That's why Paul says they refused to submit to his righteousness in Christ the Messiah when at last he came.

[19:15] And they stumbled over the rock of offense, the Lord Jesus Christ. They refused the real relationship of obedient faith and heart devotion to God that alone can lead to life.

because that alone is what it means to truly know God and to be known by him. Very opposite, isn't it, of Matthew 7 verse 23.

I never knew you. To know him truly and to be known by him is the only thing that matters on that day, says Jesus.

But why do you do, why do you call me Lord, Lord and not do what I tell you, he says in Luke chapter 6. How can you be my people if you merely say you're my people and think you're my people, but you ignore me?

No. That's why Jesus said my mother and my brothers and sisters are those who hear the word of God and do it. And if you read the New Testament, if you read the Gospels and the epistles, you will find that it is absolutely consistent.

[20:25] real faith always exhibits the obedience of true faith, not the disobedient lawlessness that is the hallmark of unbelief.

But the problem is, you see, that the way of religion can be very impressive, and that's why it can be very deceptive. If you look here back at Matthew 7, verse 22, Jesus says you can be in church every Sunday singing Jesus' name with all the appearance of piety, Lord, Lord, but in fact, you can be firmly walking on the broad road to destruction.

And that's very shocking that we can be so easily self-deceived. But that's what Hebrews 3 is all about. We just read it, isn't it? Warning us because of the deceitfulness of sin in our hearts because we can be so easily deceived.

I know that some of you are golfers, and you'll understand this. There's all the difference in the world, isn't there? Being able to hit a golf ball long and hard and far, and actually being able to play a really good round of golf.

And one of the great deceivers to make you think otherwise is a thing called the golf driving range. Isn't that so? I hit peak golf when I was 17. I still remember the halcyon days of a lovely June, May and June, just like this when I was on study leave for my hires, and I spent every single day on the golf course.

[22 : 00] And I got my handicap to the finest that it's ever been. It's all been downhill since then, and I play only sporadically. But occasionally I can go to a golf driving range and get a bucket of 100 balls and hit them.

And do you know what? I feel like Jack Nicklaus. I can hit that ball hard and far, and because it can go out in any direction you like, just makes you feel you could go out there and win the open.

Until you go out on the course. And I'm in the rough, and I'm in the trees, and I'm in the water, and I'm out of bounds. And never mind counting the score. If I can get to the end of the round without having lost all my golf balls, I'm really thinking it's been a success.

See, hitting a ball in the golf driving range is one thing, but playing a course, that is totally, totally different, and you can be very, very self-deceived. And that is really the difference between the outward profession Jesus speaks of here, Lord, Lord, and real performance on the course of life, doing the will of the Father.

That's the contrast he gives us between true and false hearing. It's a vast gulf. And Jesus says you can deceive yourself and you can deceive others into thinking that faith is real and genuine.

[23 : 21] And many do that, which is what he says in verse 22. On that day, many will say to me, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and cast out demons in your name and do many mighty works in your name?

But then I will declare to them, I never knew you. So secondly, you see, Jesus lays out first, doesn't he, in this verse, some of the characteristics of spirit's discipleship.

First, he says there may be impressive words, Lord, Lord. Clearly, they claim to be Christian.

There's a profession with all the right language. It's very public. It's very visible.

And yet, Jesus can say, I don't know you. No, that it involves all kinds of professions of theological orthodoxy and correctness.

But you see, friends, it's clear just from reading the Gospels alone that that is no guarantee of the true heart. In fact, if you're reading the very next chapter in Matthew 8, verse 29, you find that the people in the whole chapter and indeed in the whole Gospel with the best theology are who?

[24 : 29] The demons. They know who Jesus is. Oh, Son of God, they say. Just as the devil knew back in chapter 4. There's no one else in all the Gospels so theologically correct, you know, as the demons and the devil.

Isn't that frightening? That you can articulate all the truth with absolute theological precision and yet be enthralled to the devil and the demons.

I find that very frightening. Impressive words, says Jesus, do not guarantee real heart faith. Nor, secondly, does impressive and even extravagant worship and spiritual experience, prophesying, casting out demons in Christ's name.

Some people would agree with us on the first point, say yes, all that theology is not really important, but what's really important is manifestations of spiritual power. Surely, that's much more real and significant than right theology.

Jesus says, well, no, that's just as wrong. because those also can be a substitute for real heart obedience to God and real heart knowledge of God through Jesus Christ.

[25 : 43] Again, just go right back to Moses and you'll find exactly the same thing right at the beginning in Deuteronomy chapter 13. He says, if a prophet comes and claims to be from God and does amazing signs and wonders in God's name before you, that is not how you are to judge them,

he says.

if what they teach is rebellion against the Lord who redeemed you from Egypt and to make you depart from the way that God has commanded you to walk.

You see, that is what matters to God. Not impressive displays of so-called worship and signs and wonders in anything. Hard obedience to God's command.

A third characteristic he gives there in verse 22 are impressive works in Jesus' name. Lord, did we not do many mighty works in your name? That's what they'll say. And you see, it is easy, isn't it, to mistake apparent success in our Christian life, in our witness.

To mistake that for real godliness and genuine spirituality. It's easy to start believing our own propaganda. We start to think of the results that we can see as being much more important than the real penitence and faith that God commands of us.

[26 : 58] And that's especially so if you're part of a growing church, let me say. If you're seeing fruit, especially if you have a significant part perhaps in one of these ministries.

Many people are being converted to Christ. People are being trained for ministry. New congregations are being planted. We've done all these things, Lord, in your name. Real things, things you can see.

And yet, look at verse 23. Jesus can say to people who have that CV, I never knew you. That's shocking, isn't it?

I guess that explains, doesn't it, why even someone as mighty as the Apostle Paul says, I discipline my body and I keep it under control, lest having preached to others, I myself might be disqualified. many people, this is the truth, many people devote their lives to the cause of the church, to helping the sick, to helping the poor, to helping the disadvantaged, even to preaching and teaching.

[28 : 05] And Jesus says they can still be deceiving themselves. Clearly, all of these in verse 22 expected a warm welcome into the kingdom of heaven, didn't they? And yet, they're totally wrong.

How can that be? Well, because, of course, as we've seen repeatedly in this Sermon on the Mount, the true faith that saves is not religion, but it's relationship with God, simply knowing Jesus.

There's no greater thing than that, and being known by him. And it's possible, you see, to have all these things and do all these things without ever really having known him at all. And it may shock us, but it's unmistakable that is what Jesus is saying.

Despite all the apparent Christianity, he calls these people workers of lawlessness, in total contrast to those who will enter the kingdom of heaven on that day. Who are they? Verse 21.

Those who don't just hear God's word and say, professing Christ, but those who hear his word and do. Do the will of the Father.

[29 : 21] That's what it means, according to Jesus, to really confess Christ as Lord. The contrast is between just saying, a superficial profession and doing, in terms of a wholehearted submission to Christ.

But in a sense, it's even deeper than that, isn't it? Because after all, many are rejected, according to Jesus, who do do things. We did. We did do all these things in your name. And he says, I still don't know you.

So what is the core of this real living faith that saves? Well, that's the third thing. The core of real living faith is all about what you do, but it's even more about for whom you're really doing it and why you're really doing it.

Because from the outside, it might just look the same to the casual observer. All that you do in the name of Jesus Christ. Just as in the last paragraph about the two houses, no doubt from outside, these two houses looked exactly the same.

But what Jesus says differs greatly is what lies underneath. It's the foundation. One is rock and the other is sand. We'll see that next week. But the real disciple, the one who has a real relationship with the Father in heaven through Jesus, who does the Father's will and obeys Jesus' word, does it out of glad submission and joy to have this God as Savior and Master and Lord.

[30 : 53] His obedience is a joyful obedience, gladly yielded just because God asks us to do it. Love makes obedience sweet to His command because He is the lover of our souls.

And we obey Him not to earn His favor but to express our heart, love and gratitude and devotion. That's a total contrast, isn't it, with religion.

That's verse 22. It's saying, look what we've done for you, Jesus. Look what we've done for your church. And that is shown up for what it truly is on the last day, according to Jesus, just

self-justification.

It's the opposite of real penitent faith. It's thinking that God is in your debt for all that you've done for Him and for His church, instead of understanding that you are inestably in the debt of God, who has done everything for you.

See, the voice of real relationship with our Heavenly Father says, Jesus, my Savior, is the only way, the only truth, the only life. I can do nothing of myself.

[31 : 59] I can build nothing on my own. I throw everything on the rock of His grace towards me, a sinner. There's a vast, vast difference between these two, isn't there?

First, I suppose, it's like a man who's trying to win the woman that he wants or trying to win back or enhance a loveless marriage that he's trapped in by trying to impress her with all kinds of extravagant presents and flowers and gestures and great expense and all sorts of things, just trying to buy her favor.

It's all just false. It's all folly. But the other is quite different, isn't it? It's like a man trying to show their wife who is the love of their life, to show her that he loves her by giving, by doing for what she wants and what he knows she wants and what will help her, what will make her happy, like emptying the dishwasher, other romantic things like that.

doing the ironing. No, that's too far. But, you know, things like that. But you see, the one is really saying, I'm doing this for me.

I'm wanting to get something from you because of what I'm doing. The other is saying, no, I'm doing this for you just because I love you and I want to give this to you because of your great love for me and my love for you.

[33 : 23] That's the core, isn't it, of the contrast between empty religion and real relationship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. It's all about doing his words, yes, but it's all about doing it for him just because they are his words and because we love him as our Savior and our God.

And so the real relationship with Jesus that leads to that eternal life is just so simple, isn't it? And that one word sums it up, obedience. To repent, to follow Jesus, to have real faith as the Bible means us to understand faith is simply to obey him.

It's to bow down before him. It's to rejoice in his commandments because we love him. And so his words are like light to us.

And notice, by the way, if you look at the parallel in verse 21 and 24, it's clear, isn't it, that Jesus' words are the words that convey perfectly the will of the Father in heaven.

And that's why his words and his will are our delight. That's what the whole Sermon on the Mount has all been about. Not Jesus abolishing God's law, but fulfilling it as he teaches the perfect will of the Heavenly Father in his own words with ultimate authority here on earth and ultimate clarity.

[34 : 49] This is the way of heaven. Walk in it and follow me. And to know that and to embrace that gladly, that's what real faith is.

That's real kingdom righteousness. No one is saved by obedience. Of course not. We're saved only by the sheer grace of God in Christ.

We know that. But it is equally true to say that no one is ever saved without obedience. Because real faith according to Jesus can be seen.

It's visible. It's visible in obedient faith that flows out of a heart that loves to be led by the Spirit of God through the Word of God.

That's what James says, isn't it? In James chapter 2, real faith works. That's what Paul says in Galatians chapter 5 verse 6. Real faith works through love. It's what Jesus says constantly.

[35 : 47] In John 14, if you love me, you'll keep my commandments. Just a few verses later on, he says, whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father.

That's the fruit bearing faith that proves true discipleship, says Jesus. But by total contrast, the Apostle John says, in 1 John 2, whoever says he knows Christ but does not keep his commands is a liar and the truth is not in him.

He may profess faith, might be loud, impressive, orthodox in word, fervent in expression, but according to Jesus, ultimately absolutely empty.

because as Peter says in 1 Peter 1, we're saved by obedience to the truth that is in Jesus. That is how we're born again for eternal life.

That's real confession of faith and that faith alone is what Jesus will recognize and will result in him confessing his faith in us on that day and not casting us away as strangers.

[37 : 07] Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. So you see, if you think that adultery or dishonesty or slander or malice or greed or any such thing is consistent with professing the Christian faith, you're being deceived and you're deceiving yourself.

If you're a Christian preacher or teacher and you teach that, you teach that sexual infidelity or homosexual practice is compatible with the gospel of Jesus, you're deceived and deceiving others. If you teach that there are other roads to salvation, but Christ alone, you're deceived and deceiving others. If you teach that scripture doesn't need to be heeded in all its entirety, you're deceived and you're deceiving others.

And all of that might look like real Christianity just now to the world. It might seem very genuine, very official, very impressive, very recognized by our culture.

But friends, Jesus says a truly shocking revelation is coming on that day, on that day. The revelation of the shocking contrast between the true gospel response of real faith and that which is just sham and empty.

[38 : 37] Maybe impressive words, impressive worship, all kinds of impressive works in Jesus' name. But just as from the outside, two marriages can look the same to the casual observer, but one is actually utterly falling apart while the other is strong, two houses can look the same.

One is about to collapse and the other will stand. So it can be, says Jesus, the profession of Christian faith. And that's why Jesus is so shocking in these verses, my friends.

He wants us to realize that even in the professing church, we could be deceiving ourselves. Jesus. And he wants us to know that before it's too late, before that day.

Next week we're going to look at the very last paragraph where Jesus gives us such a solemn warning. But for today, let's just take these solemn words away with us and meditate on them.

Every day this week, verse 21, not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven. But the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.

[39 : 56] Let's pray. Almighty and everlasting God, give unto us, we pray, the increase of faith, hope, and love. And that we may obtain that which thou dost promise.

Make us to love that which thou dost command. command. Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.