

Remember that disciples are those who pray, “*Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.*” (6.10). If that is your prayer, make it your aim to do His will on earth so you can be with Him in heaven. “*The Father’s will is not simply admired, discussed, praised, debated; it is done. It is not theologically analyzed, nor congratulated for its high ethical tones; it is done.*” (D.A. Carson)

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Article taken from *builtbyhim.com*

*“And He said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves in the sight of men, but God knows your hearts; for that which is highly esteemed among men is detestable in the sight of God.”*

*Luke 16:15*



## **Marietta church of Christ**

8150 Driggers St.  
Jacksonville, FL 32220

### **Times of Worship**

Sunday:

9 am - Bible Classes / 10 am - Worship / 5 pm - Worship

Wednesday:

7 pm - Bible Study/Worship

Evangelist: Devin Barber

[www.mariettacoc.com](http://www.mariettacoc.com)



## **The Code of Truth: The Danger of Self-Deception**

Only by following the narrow way can we reach our desired destination: eternal life (Matthew 7.13-14). Thus, it makes sense that after Jesus exhorts us to follow the narrow way, He warns against false prophets who would seek to divert our path (vss. 15-20). But false teachers are not the only danger, so Jesus warns of another danger: ourselves (vss. 21-23). “*It is dangerous enough for a man to take the broad road to destruction on purpose, but it is infinitely more dangerous for him to take it, believing it is the way to life.*” (Earnhart) Self-deception occurs when we judge ourselves by the wrong standard (cf. Luke 16.15; 18.9-17). Only by hearing and following truth can we be sure our path is leading us to the Father.

### **Claiming allegiance is not enough (v. 21)**

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.” (Matthew 7.21)

Some of us have used this verse to explain to others why simply “believing in Jesus with your heart” is not enough. Jesus’ words here certainly refute that doctrine, but we mustn’t think this verse applies only to others. The sermon is addressed to disciples, and we should take it to heart!

During the course of His ministry Jesus had many superficial followers (Luke 14.25-35; John 2.23-24; 6.60-69) and He is warning us of joining their ranks!

Our Lord is not ridiculing or downplaying the necessity of confessing Him. *“Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.”* (Matthew 10:32–33) Confessing Him is a declaration of our allegiance to Him, thus a declaration not only that we believe He is Lord, but that since He is Lord we will follow Him. That confession rings hollow when it is not accompanied by obedience. *“Why do you call Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?”* (Luke 6:46)

#### **Partial loyalty is not enough (v. 22)**

*“Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’”* (Matthew 7.22)

Jesus’ words in vs. 22 must have come as a shock to His audience. Surely casting out demons, prophesying and performing miracles were indicative of a right relationship with God? Those works certainly could benefit the Kingdom, but they were not the ultimate test of discipleship: obedience is. Balaam (Numbers 22.35; 23.16), Judas (Matthew 10.1) and the immature Corinthians (1Corinthians 3.1-3) possessed miraculous abilities, but they were also displeasing to the Lord. By contrast, the apostle Paul could do all of these miraculous works, but He also remembered the necessity of obedience: *“but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified.”* (1 Corinthians 9:27)

Miraculous abilities have ceased, so we can no longer have misplaced confidence in those works. But they have been replaced by other signs of loyalty. Baptism, regular church attendance, belonging to the “right” church, all of these are in keeping with the Lord’s will. But for too many, they are masking partial loyalty; complete obedience to the will of God is still lacking. Too many have deceived themselves.

#### **The absolute necessity of obedience (v. 23)**

*“And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.’”* (Matthew 7.23)

The inescapable conclusion of this passage is that Jesus will only accept whole-hearted devotion to Him and His will. We cannot enter the Kingdom unless we do the will of the Father (vs. 21). To replace obedience with our own chosen signs of loyalty is to engage in “lawlessness” (vs. 23). We will have deceived ourselves into thinking we were on the narrow path, when in fact we were on our way to destruction.

Our Lord will not take pleasure in telling any of us to “depart from Me”. He gives this warning so we can properly examine ourselves, so that we can correct our path if needed. *“There will always be mercy from the Lord for those whose heart is fully set on pleasing Him in all things, for they will always be willing to learn more, seek forgiveness, and do better. But for the man who picks and chooses his way through the divine will, not all the zealous religious activity which can be mounted will suffice to cover the failure.”* (Earnhart)

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