



What Are You Counting on to Save You?

Guest Speaker: Bay Forrest

Kick Start:

How did God speak to you through this message?

Main Point:

Many will come to Christ on the Last Day and be surprised that they were not His. In the end, there is only one basis of salvation. It isn't mere verbal confession or spiritual works, but knowing Jesus and being known by Him.

Introduction:

We think that because we believe in God, we're OK; we have salvation. Jesus says not everyone who calls out to Him "Lord, Lord" will enter the kingdom of heaven. This is one of the most frightening verses in Scripture and it should make us ask the question, "Where do I stand with my relationship with God?"

Message Outline:

I. Intellectualism is Insufficient

Jesus shows the insufficiency of intellectualism — of the one who would say, "I know and, thus, I am saved." Jesus is warning religious people—churchgoers, ministry workers, even miracle performers—that outward confession of Jesus with the appropriate term, "Lord" (Greek *kyrios*), the characteristic title for God in the Old Testament — is not sufficient for eternal life. Actions and words mean nothing to God if not done in accordance to His will.

Matthew 7:21-23

Talk About It:

1. Jesus begins by saying that not everyone who calls Him Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven, but it is also important to remember that no one will enter who does not call Jesus Lord (Romans 10:9). Why is the Lordship of Christ so significant?
2. What is the difference between knowing about Jesus versus *knowing* Him?
3. Why does Jesus put a defining emphasis on "doing the will of My Father" to enter the kingdom?
4. What does "does the will of My Father" mean in practical terms?
5. Sometimes God's will for us may not be so obvious. How do we discern God's will as followers?

6. Think of ways you have served the church and others and plug them into verse 22. How are these works similar and how do these works differ?
7. Review the different soils (Matthew 13) and their impediments (birds, weeds, sun), and what these “conversion experiences” look like in today’s society. If someone you know claims that a person can be a Christian while spending his or her entire life fruitless, how would you respond? What Scriptures might support your answer.
8. Why do you think Jesus ended the Sermon on the Mount with the story about building your house on the rock? (Matthew 7:24-27)
9. These verses reveal that many who have hope of entering the kingdom of heaven will one day learn that their hope was false. How does that make you feel?
10. The severity of this passage might cause us to question the reality of our salvation. How can we know that we are saved? How does this passage drive you to pursue assurance in your salvation?

Conclusion:

If you’re not sure or remember giving your life to Jesus and receiving the gift of salvation, don’t put it off. Will you receive Jesus Christ and begin a relationship with Him right now?

- Admit your need. (I am a sinner.)
- Be willing to turn from your sins (repent) and ask for God's forgiveness.
- Believe that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross and rose from the grave.
- Through prayer, invite Jesus Christ to come in and control your life through the Holy Spirit.
(Receive Jesus as Lord and Savior)

Pray something like this:

Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I want to turn from my sins, and I ask for Your forgiveness. I believe that Jesus Christ is Your Son. I believe He died for my sins and that You raised Him to life. I want Him to come into my heart and to take control of my life. I want to trust Jesus as my Savior and follow Him as my Lord from this day forward. In Jesus’ Name, amen.

Make It Practical:

Doing the Will of the Father

God’s will isn’t a secret roadmap; it’s a relationship. As we trust Him, obey His Word, and seek wisdom through prayer and the Spirit, He faithfully leads us into His good and perfect plan. Obedience to His will is the test of true faith in Christ. The test is not words, not saying, “Lord, Lord,” and not obeying His commands. How easy it is to learn a religious vocabulary, and even memorize Bible verses and religious songs, and yet not obey God’s will. When a person is truly born again, he has the Spirit of God living within, and the Spirit enables him to know and do the Father’s will. God’s love in his heart motivates him to obey God and serve others.

Practical Heart Checks

Use the verse as a mirror to evaluate personal faith:

- Motivation: Am I serving Jesus to exalt His name or to build my own reputation? (Colossians 3:23-24)
- Dependence: Do I rely on the Holy Spirit or on human talent and charisma? (Zechariah 4:6)
- Consistency: Does my private life match my public ministry? (Psalm 101:2)
- Obedience: Am I doing the Father's will revealed in Scripture, or crafting my own version? (James 1:22)

Marks of Genuine Obedience

- Ongoing repentance and faith (Acts 3:19)
- Love for Christ expressed through keeping His commands (John 14:15)
- Evident fruit of the Spirit—character before charisma (Galatians 5:22-23)
- Humble service that points others to Jesus, not to self (1 Peter 4:10-11)
- Perseverance in truth, avoiding doctrinal compromise (2 Timothy 4:2-3)

Guardrails for Daily Living

- Saturate your mind with Scripture; let it judge thoughts and intentions (Hebrews 4:12).
- Invite trusted believers to speak into your life; accountability curbs blind spots (Proverbs 27:17).
- Regularly examine motives in prayer, asking the Lord to search the heart (Psalm 139:23-24).
- Practice unseen acts of obedience; secrecy purifies intentions (Matthew 6:4).
- Measure success by faithfulness, not visible results (1 Corinthians 4:2).

Encouragement for Perseverance

- Genuine believers may stumble, yet the Lord “knows those who are His” (2 Timothy 2:19).
- Assurance grows as we walk in the light and confess sin quickly (1 John 1:7-9).
- The same Judge who warns in Matthew 7:22 also promises, “Whoever comes to Me I will never drive away” (John 6:37).
- Press on, keeping your eyes fixed on Jesus; He is both the righteous Judge and the gracious Savior who empowers loyal obedience (Hebrews 12:1-2).

Prayer Points:

- Praise God for the forgiveness and grace offered through Jesus Christ.
- We ask for the Holy Spirit's guidance to walk in the light of Christ daily.
- We ask for help to serve with right motivations and not for public acclaim.
- We pray for a deeper hunger and commitment to studying and living out God's will.
- Help us to worship and acknowledge Jesus as the eternal and divine Son of God, seeking to honor Him in all areas of our life.
- Pray for the needs of the group.