

SELF DECEPTION #1

Matt. 7 ²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘**Lord, Lord,**’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘**I never knew you.** Away from me, **you evildoers!**’ NIV

2Co. 13 ⁵ Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not realize that Christ Jesus is in you—unless, of course, you fail the test? NIV

Jesus is speaking specifically to people who are devotedly religious-but who are deluded in thinking they are on the road to heaven when they are really on the broad road to hell. They are not unlike those in the last days who Paul says will hold a form of godliness but will deny its power (2 Tim. 3:5).

Jesus is confronting the Pharisees with self-deception. They claimed such religious tradition yet were far from the Kingdom. How can this happen?

Let’s observe how self deception affects a person.

1. Self deception leads one to believe in a false assurance for salvation.

Matt. 7 ²¹ “Lord, Lord”...

A. They experienced conviction without conversion.

ILL. Rich young ruler asked the right question. Thought he was righteous because he claimed to have kept the commandments. Yet when Jesus told him to sell what

he had and give to the poor it became obvious that he had not kept the first commandment- Thou shalt have no others gods before me. He was convicted but went away sorrowfully.

B. They were sorrowful but not repentant.

2Co. 7¹⁰ For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death. NLT

C. God's own Holy Spirit will witness His reality to those who truly belong to Him.

Rom. 8¹³ For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live,¹⁴ because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.

¹⁶The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. NIV

2. Self-deception is a result of pride.

"Look what we did in your name..."

Jer. 49 16 states that the pride of our heart deceives us.

Pride distorts truth with self justification.

We excuse our sin and compromise the justice and holiness of God by assuming that the love of God overlooks our sin.

Through a faulty and presumptuous view of God's grace, some professed believers carelessly go through life oblivious to and unconcerned about their sins.

We think to ourselves that God understands. He doesn't.

We assert our carnal rational above the purity of his Word and stated truth.

Pro. 30:12 There is a kind who is pure in his own eyes, yet is not washed from his filthiness.

Pro. 14 ² There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof *are* the ways of death. KJV

1Co. 6 ⁹ Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? **Do not be deceived:** Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders ¹⁰ nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. NIV

Eph. 5 ⁵⁻⁶ For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. **Let no one deceive you with empty words**, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient.

The person who professes to be a Christian but habitually and unrepentantly continues in known sin makes God to be a liar.

God's Word expressly states these will not inherit the kingdom of God. Please turn with me to this passage...

1John 3 ⁶ No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him.

⁷ Dear children, do not let anyone lead you astray. He who does what is right is righteous, just as he is righteous. ⁸ He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God

appeared was to destroy the devil's work. ⁹ No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God. ¹⁰ This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother. NIV

Pride minimizes sin.

Pride excuses sin.

Pride puts my judgment above God's judgment.

Pride places my will over God's will.

Pride makes sin acceptable when God is repulsed by it.

Pride mocks the holiness of God.

Gal. 6 ⁷ **Do not be deceived:** God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸ **The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction;** the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. NIV

3. Self-deception leads to practicing religion without relationship.

“...did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?”

“Apart from outright hypocrites and the blatantly disobedient, **there are two other common kinds of deceived people who believe they are Christians when they are not.**

One is **the superficial person**, the one who has **had little or no instruction in the gospel** and who thinks that his attending Sunday school as a child, having been baptized, being a church member, or other such things put him in good

standing with God.” (*Studies in the Sermon on the Mount* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977], 2:285

There is a danger to being raised in church. We are exposed to a church a life style instead of a relationship. We have been raised to know how to be Christian. If we don't have relationship with Jesus, it is just a way of life.

We can be guilty of praying over our meals, paying tithes, singing worship choruses to a god we don't know. Church attendance does not save us.

People will say that you witness to, “I was raised in church”, with a mentality of “I know all about it”.

The real question to be answered is, “Do you know him and have a relationship with him?”

The second type of person is much more knowledgeable about the Bible and the gospel, and is often heavily involved in church activities of various sorts. But he lives in a constant state of sinfulness, with no thought of confessing and forsaking his sin or of seeking after righteousness. He looks to feelings, experiences, healings, angels, earthly material blessings, promises, and a host of other external things for proof of his salvation.

He is not concerned about decreasing sin or increasing righteousness. He is not concerned about God's commands, God's standards, or God's glory, but only what he can get out of God for himself. As Martyn Lloyd-Jones suggests, he is more concerned about the by-products of the faith than the fruit itself (*Studies in the Sermon on the Mount* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977], 2:285).

4. Self deception leads to missing heaven.

Mat.7 ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, **'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'** NIV

Jesus uses these same words in the **parable of the 5 wise and 5 foolish virgins** that was waiting for the bridegroom.

Matt. 25 ¹⁰ And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. ¹¹ Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. ¹² But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not. KJV

It is not the one who simply claims the Lord, but the one **who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.**

The words of an engraving from the cathedral of Lubeck, Germany, beautifully reflect our Lord's teaching here:

“Thus speaketh Christ our Lord to us, You call Me master and obey Me not, you call Me light and see Me not, you call Me the way and walk Me not, you call Me life and live Me not, you call Me wise and follow Me not, you call Me fair and love Me not, you call Me rich and ask Me not, you call Me eternal and seek Me not, if I condemn thee, blame Me not.”

In your heart of hearts does the Lord “know” you?
If so rejoice, if not repent and seek him earnestly.
He promised “He that comes to me I will in wise cast out”.
Salvation is a decision to follow Jesus and allow him to be Lord over our life.