

The Scariest Chapter in the Bible (Part 1)

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding. (Proverbs 9:10)

The Christian life begins with “the fear of the LORD.” The word fear in the original Hebrew means *reverence* or *respect*, but it also means *fear* and *terror*. There is that side of God that we all love knowing and dwelling on, and that is His love, grace, goodness, mercy, and the list goes on. But there is also that side of God that should bring us to *fear*, and if we find ourselves living outside the will of God, we should experience not only fear but also *terror*. To those endeavoring to live the Christian life, this is a sobering thought indeed. God is a good father, and being a good father, he insists that things be done a certain way in His family. Jesus lets us know this in John 10:1:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.

There is only one door that gives us entrance into the sheepfold. God is not *the author* of confusion (I Corinthians 14:33). There is only one plan of salvation, and if any man would try to enter another way, he becomes nothing more than a thief and a robber. Notice the warnings in the following verses:

Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die. (Ezekiel 18:4)

Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left *us* of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. (Hebrews 4:1)

He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. (John 12:48)

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book. (Revelation 22:18-19)

For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one *point*, he is guilty of all. (James 2:10)

And if the righteous (*professing Christians*) scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear? (1 Peter 4:18)

And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty

angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9)

And this is the condensed list. The Bible is full of warnings that the endeavoring Christian should take very seriously. God is very serious about His Word, and bottom-line, if we don't do it His way, it won't work. Heaven will not be at the other end. One of the scariest warnings in the Bible is given in one of the scariest chapters in the Bible, and that is the seventh chapter of Matthew, verses 13-29. The reason this chapter is such a dire warning to the endeavoring Christian is that it teaches that very few professing Christians are actually going to Heaven!

Verses 13-29 of Matthew 7 can be divided into four warnings. Let's look at them.

Part 1: Matthew 7, verses 13-14:

13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

The word "strait" means *narrow*. The word "narrow" means *a compressed way*. How often has a true Apostolic preacher been called narrow-minded? Thank God for the narrow-minded! It

is the compressed and narrow path that leads to eternal life. Jesus let us know that the way to destruction is a “wide” and “broad” way and that many would take that easy path. But only a few, Jesus said, would take the narrow and strait way to eternal life. We will find that both the “many” and the “few” in this teaching are professing Christians. Why will only a few professing Christians make it to Heaven? Because of false teachers who “take” from or “add” to the Word of God.

Part 2: Matthew 7, verses 15-20:

15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither *can* a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

A false prophet is simply a false preacher. In Acts 8, when Philip found the Ethiopian reading from the book of Isaiah, he asked him if he understood what he was reading. The Ethiopian responded by asking, “How can I, except some man should guide me?” We all need a teacher, someone to guide us through God’s word. The Bible lets us know in Ephesians 4:12 that the ministry (our teachers) is given for the “perfecting” or

the *completing* of the Christian. Jesus said in reference to false ministers:

**Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.
(Matthew 15:14)**

A blind leader is one who does not teach the true plan of salvation. He cheats the people by not leading them into a life of holiness and separation from the world. He is a teacher who does not have the proper fear and reverence for God and His Word. And it is the false teachers who will bear the guilt of leading the many into the broad way of destruction. Sadly, if we follow a blind leader, we will join him in his ditch. The word ditch is a reference to hell. Later in this lesson, we will discuss how to identify a false teacher.

Part 3: Matthew 7, verses 21-23:

21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven.

22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

This is a picture of a future judgment where “many” will be rejected. Who are the many? They are the ones who said to Jesus, “Lord, Lord.” And who would call Him Lord? They were professing Christians! These are not Atheists, Muslims, or Buddhists being rejected. They are not Satanists, Agnostics, or Hindus, or other groups that deny the one true God. They are professing Christians, who because of false teachers, will be denied the Heaven they have been looking forward to. It is a sobering thought indeed to hear Jesus teach that most people who call Him Lord, are not really Christians at all, and that only a few professing Christians will actually make it to Heaven. He said:

If ye love me, keep my commandments. (John 14:15)

God is very serious about His Word being obeyed. Beware of false prophets!

Part 4: Matthew 7, verses 24 –29:

24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:

29 For he taught them as *one* having authority, and not as the scribes.

Jesus, God made known in flesh, is the greatest of all teachers! What a vivid picture of one who would “hear” and “do” His sayings, and one who would “hear” and “do not” His sayings (the Word of God). So many people today hear the Word of God, yet they are filled with excuses, so they never “do” the Word of God. They say, “Is that really important?” “Is that really for us today?” “Would God really send someone to hell for not (fill in the blank)?” This chapter clearly answers these excuses, as does James 1:22:

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.

When we build our house upon the “rock,” the Word of God, it will stand. If we ignore the Word of God, we are building on sand, and our house will fall, and great will be the fall of it. It has been preached that there is something worse than hell, and that is being in hell, knowing if you had been a doer of the Word, you could have been in Heaven.

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