

GENUINE SAVING FAITH

The biggest crisis in the church today and in a person's spiritual life is whether or not they are truly saved. Christians have been arguing for over 2000 years whether they can or cannot lose their salvation. I tell you this is not the main issue. The real issue is, "Are you saved in the first place?" People need to ask themselves, "Am I really a Christian? Am I really saved?"

Many people who think they are going to heaven are not.
 Many people who go to church think they will see Paradise, when in fact, they will see Hell.

"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'" *Matthew 7:21-23*

Jesus never knew you means you were never saved in the first place, i.e. you never had a close relationship with Jesus whereby He knew you. Jesus in this passage is talking about people who were denied access to heaven. These people thought they were saved. They thought they were Christians, but in fact were not. They did not have salvation and consequently, they were not accepted into the Kingdom.

The above Bible passage, Matthew 7:21-23, is one of the most serious verses in Scripture. It is what I call a "reality check".

Are you a true Christian or a false Christian?

True Christian—person thinks they are a Christian, and in reality they are a Christian.
 They → Heaven.

False Christian—person thinks they are a Christian, but in reality they are not a Christian.
 They → Hell.

True Christian	False Christian
True saving faith	Non-saving faith
Saved people	Not saved people
People → Heaven	People → Hell

Hell is real- so much so that Jesus spoke about Hell twice as much as He did about Heaven. Hell is described all throughout Scripture. Heaven and Hell are real. To enter Heaven you must have Genuine Saving Faith: 1) You love Jesus 2) You know Jesus 3) Jesus knows you.

I ask you, "Does Jesus know you? Do you have a close personal relationship with Jesus Christ?" You must be able to say yes to these two questions.

For a person to have True Saving Faith, there must be a change in his or her life— a transformation.

- 1) acts that demonstrate love for Jesus
- 2) acts that demonstrate love for one's neighbor
- 3) acts that demonstrate Repentance from sin
- 4) see fruit of the Holy Spirit. No fruit = not saved and never saved.

“they should repent, turn to God, and **do works befitting repentance.**” Acts 26:20

For as the body without the spirit is dead, so **faith without works is dead** also.
James 2:26

Works are the outward manifestation of your inner faith in Jesus.

↑ Increasing good works and ↓ decreasing bad works will show your love for Jesus and your love for your neighbor. Turning away from sin will show your Repentance from sin.

For example, If you love Jesus, you will have an active prayer life. You will talk to Jesus in prayer. When you love someone and have a close personal relationship with them, you talk to them. You tell them, “I love you”. Tell Jesus you love Him and mean it from your heart. Plain and simple, if you do not talk (pray) to Jesus you do not have a relationship with Him.

If you truly love Jesus you will tell other people you are a Christian- you will also witness to other people about Jesus. When you fall in love, don't you suddenly tell people you found someone that you are in love with? When I personally chose and confessed Jesus as my Lord and Savior, I simply did so because I love Him. I didn't even know at the time the good news that this confession of faith gave me salvation. I just knew I needed Jesus in my life.

A warning sign of a false Christian is someone who does not tell people he is a Christian. Someone who intentionally “dodges” this issue has a serious problem.

“But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.” Matthew 10:33

If you love your neighbor, you will do works that show your love. You will help your neighbor and forgive your brother. Believing, loving and obeying are the major evidences of true salvation.

If someone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that **he who loves God must love his brother also.** 1 John: 4:20-21

“For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” Matthew 6:14-15

Telling people you are a Christian and witnessing to them about Jesus is an act of love for your neighbor. You actually sincerely care whether their soul goes to heaven or hell.

Then He said to them, “Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, **and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.** And you are witnesses of these things.” Luke 24:46-48

You praise and worship Jesus. True Christians will praise Jesus in word and in song. You worship Jesus by placing Him in your heart as your Lord and God.

And Thomas answered and said to Him, **“My Lord and my God!”** John 20:28

You worship God and all Three Persons of the Trinity.

“the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for **the Father is seeking such to worship Him.**” *John 4:23*

“God is Spirit, and those who worship Him **must worship in spirit and truth.**” *John 4:24*

Whether bowing on your knees or standing with arms lifted high in the air, worship is absolutely necessary in your relationship with Christ. A Christian during tribulation (tough times) in their life will get closer to Jesus. They will turn to Him for comfort and help.

Repentance from sin must be part of a true Christian’s life. Turning away from sin is a powerful sign of saving faith. All Christians undergo sanctification where the Holy Spirit transforms the believer to sin less over time. Within Scripture, the obvious single most important rule regarding sin is that we are not to practice sin. It is true we are all sinners and we battle with sin every day of our lives. However, sin is not to rule us. Sin is not our Master. Jesus is our Lord, not sin.

knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that **we should no longer be slaves of sin.** For he who has died has been freed from sin. *Romans 6:6-7*

Therefore **do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.** And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. **For sin shall not have dominion over you,** for you are not under law but under grace. *Romans 6:12-14*

“To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, **in turning away ever one of you from your iniquities.**” *Acts 3:26*

Jesus answered them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, **whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.** And a slave does not abide in the house forever, but a son abides forever.”
John 8:34-35

**Keep back Your servant also from presumptuous sins;
Let them not have dominion over me.**

Then I shall be blameless,
And I shall be innocent of great transgression. *Psalms 19:13*

“And if you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, **sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it.**” *Genesis 4:7*

**Direct my steps by Your word,
And let no iniquity have dominion over me.** *Psalms 119:133*

True Christians will not practice sin. False Christians often have sin as their Lord, but they refuse to admit it to themselves.

Whoever or whatever you put first in your life is your Lord. Whoever or whatever you worship daily is your Lord. It could be money, sex, power, etc. However, a true Christian always puts Jesus first in his or her life and follows Him.

Jesus the Christ—	Christian
Lord—	Believer that obeys Christ
Master—	Servant that serves Christ
Shepherd—	Sheep that follows Christ

Jesus is your only Lord, He is your new Boss. If you continually disobey Him, you are not putting Him as Lord of your life.

“But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?” *Luke 6:46*

Then one said to Him, “Lord, are there few who are saved?” And He said to them, “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know you, where you are from,’ ”

Luke 13:23-25

“then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’ But He will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.’ There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.” *Luke 13:26-28*

Do not be a worker of iniquity (sin). Do not practice unrighteousness. Do not make sin a continual willful habitual pattern in your life.

The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. *Matthew 13:38-42*

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revellies, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. *Galatians 5:19-21*

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. *1 Corinthians 6:9-11*

Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,

undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them. *Romans 1:24-32*

Therefore you are inexcusable, O man, whoever you are who judge, for in whatever you judge another you condemn yourself; for you who judge practice the same things. But we know that the judgment of God is according to truth against those who practice such things. And do you think this, O man, you who judge those practicing such things, and doing the same, that you will escape the judgment of God? *Romans 2:1-3*

But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. **For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.** Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them. *Ephesians 5:3-7*

Faith in Jesus gives you salvation and salvation is a free gift from God. However, your life over time must have works that show your faith. Cause (Faith) → Effect (Works)

Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. **I will show you my faith by my works.** *James 2:17-18*

The Bible tells you to take your salvation (being saved) very seriously.

work out your own salvation with fear and trembling *Philippians 2:12*

My final plea to you is this: Be a True Christian with Genuine Saving Faith. Make sure there is Repentance in your life. Please do not be a False Christian who thinks they are going up to heaven, but instead they are doomed to Hell. Having True Saving Faith is the #1 issue in your life today. Make sure Jesus knows you!

Signs of True Saving Faith

- Turning away from sin
- Conviction of sin. i.e. Knowing when you sin
- Does not practice sin. Does not practice lawlessness. Not a worker of iniquity.
- See fruit of the Holy Spirit. No fruit = Not saved and never saved.
- Repentance
- Remorse (feeling sorry) for committing sin
- Active prayer life
- Submission and surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ
- Witnessing to family, friends, coworkers and strangers
- ↑ Increasing good works and ↓ decreasing bad works

- Belief in the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus Christ
- Jesus knows you
- Having close personal relationship with Jesus
- As your faith gets stronger, you sin less and less
- Confession of faith— accepting and receiving Jesus as your Lord and Savior (*Romans 10:8-13*)
- Turns to the Lord with all his heart
- Love for Jesus
- Love for your neighbor
- Forgiveness of your brother
- Being merciful to people
- During tribulation (tough times) you get closer to Jesus
- You praise Jesus in word and in song
- You worship Jesus by placing Him in your heart as your Lord and God
- Getting Water Baptized— Water Baptism is an outward public act showing your inward personal faith. A true Christian will almost always get baptized at sometime in his or her life.
- Does not habitually sin willfully, intentionally, presumptuously and boldly
- Sanctification is observed in person's life. i.e. Becomes more holy over time
- Obedience to Christ
- Person is not characterized as a fornicator or adulterer. (Person who practices fornication or adultery continually in their life without repentance.)
- Not hating your neighbor or brother
- Not falling away from Jesus during tribulation, persecution or temptation
- Person bears fruit
- Person puts Jesus first, then family and friends
- Person puts Jesus first, ahead of cares, riches, pleasures of the world