

Is the Believer Safe? - Part 1

Matthew 7:21-23, *“Not everyone that says unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of My Father which is in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name? And in Thy name have cast out devils? And in your name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, you that work iniquity.”*

So, can a believer ever lose his salvation? As already mentioned, many people take these verses in Matthew 7 to prove that they can. However, these verses show us nothing of the sort.

Do you remember how Jesus speaks of His own in John 10:27-30? He says, *“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish. Notice what He says about the sheep: He says, “I know them.” Of these others, in Matthew 7 He says, “I never knew you.” This must mean, therefore, that these unknown ones were never sheep!*

WHY NOT?

It's because His sheep, according to John 10:27, are known and cannot be lost (see also verses 28-29). Furthermore, Jesus made it very clear that He didn't lose sheep. He said in John 17:12, *“While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gave me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled.”*

Although the people in Matthew 7 looked like sheep, talked like sheep and passed for sheep, Christ never knew them. They weren't sheep! The word 'never' which Christ uses in Matthew 7:23 is very strong. It means, "Never at any time." So Jesus declares, "I never at any time knew you." Matthew 7 is not a case of people losing their salvation. It is a matter of people professing to have had salvation, but not actually having had it at all.

Someone asks; "Suppose a man joins the church, professes to be saved, becomes very active in Christian work, perhaps even becomes an elder or maybe even a preacher, but after some years he turns his back on it all, utterly repudiates Christianity and now denies and despises the gospel he once professed. How does that line up with the doctrine of the eternal safety of the believer?"

It doesn't. The above-mentioned case has nothing to do with eternal security! This poor soul may have been saved but even a saved person can go off the rails. We don't know why it happens, but it can and sometimes does. We just don't know. However, the apostle John gives a more common scenario. He says in 1 John 2:19, *“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.”*

It is possible to do all manner of good things and yet never be regenerated. It is quite possible to join a church, to make a Christian profession; observe the Christian ordinances, to teach and to preach, and yet never be born again. If an unsaved man teaches and preaches the gospel, it will produce good results and will help people whether the teacher or the preacher is sincere

(Philippians 1:15-16) for the gospel of Christ, not the preacher, is still the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16).

We are safe!