

Who Do You Say That I Am?

Seeing and Delighting in Jesus through an Expository
Journey through the **Gospel of Matthew**

57- The Kingdom of Heaven and Its Citizens- Part 37
The Uniqueness of Christian Prayer- Part 4

Church June 18, 2023

Matthew 7:6-14

6 "Do not give what is holy to dogs, and do not throw your pearls before swine, or they will trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

8 "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

9 "Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone?

10 "Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he?

11 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him!

12 "In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the Law and the Prophets.

13 "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.

14 "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

*To the Glory of God the Father; God the Son;
and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

One of the most common Statements in the English Language is to tell somebody that they need to walk on the "*Strait and Narrow Path*" or to compliment somebody for so doing. And what is meant by saying that is that people need to pay close Attention to the Way they are living their Lives- that they need to *emulate* the high Standard of Morality that is described in these verses.

So, the most common Way that this phrase is usually understood is that a person needs to “*put forth Effort*” or “*Strive*” to be in humble and joyful Obedience to this Sermon. And that would mean that, at a minimum- we normally see Obedience to this Sermon as being hard and difficult and something that will require a whole lot of Diligence and hard Work.

And going back to the original Greek isn’t much help here either because word that was translated into English in both verse 13 & verse 14 as, “**Narrow**” is a Greek word (*stenos*; Strong’s # 4728), that literally means: *to groan*. And the Context here is that a person has to struggle (groan) in order to obey all that Jesus taught here. So, the English word, “**Narrow**” is used to give the illustration of a person groaning- as he struggles to go through a small Gate- as the Gate represents Obedience to all that Jesus taught.

And that is precisely what 1st Century Jews would have understood that Jesus was teaching. The things Jesus talks about here are really Narrow; and very Strait; and they leave no room for Errors or even Mistakes- because Obedience to this Sermon runs counter-intuitive to Human Nature. And so, it is no Wonder that this is also *exactly* what most Christians get when they read this Sermon today. And so, the Libraries of the most prestigious Cathedrals on earth contain Commentary after Commentary that teach exactly that.

Yet that is not at all what Jesus was teaching here. And we know that because of two things:

1. The Logic of the 1st Century Jews about How to Obtain Righteousness
2. What God the Holy Spirit Said Elsewhere

1. The Logic of the 1st Century Jew about How to Obtain Righteousness

What we need to understand is that, contrary to some of the most popular Preachers and Teachers of our Age- God is VERY interested in Righteousness. The God that we worship is wholly Righteous Himself, and if we plan on being with Him throughout all of Eternity- we have to become *as Righteous as He is!* And that is a staggering thought!

Yet Righteousness is hardly even mentioned anymore in the modern Church. And if it were some side Issue, that had little or no bearing on Salvation or Christianity itself- then I might agree with them and leave it out too. But it isn’t a side Issue, at all. It is utterly *crucial* to understanding God and Salvation as well.

And 500 years ago- a *titanic* Struggle was entered into- in part- because the visible Church at that time had lost its Way and had fabricated a totally unbiblical and completely unworkable “religious System” that had deceived the people. And so, the Protestant Reformers went back to the Bible and began to *re-discover* the

Grace of God in Salvation. And as they reaffirmed that ALL Teaching MUST come “*from the Scriptures and from the Scriptures alone*” (Latin: *Sola Scriptura*)- they also *re-discovered* that the Righteousness that allows guilty Sinners to enter into Heaven and remain in God’s Presence throughout all of Eternity- is “*imputed*” or “*credited*” to the unworthy Rebel by the Agency of Faith alone and NOT by partaking of the Sacraments in this Life and going through Purgatory in the next. And they summarized this simple but profound biblical Truth by the Latin phrase,

Sola Fide

... or that being forgiven of ALL Sin and being made Righteous (Justification)- is appropriated to each individual Believer “*by Faith*” and “*by Faith alone!*”

So, unlike Islam; Buddhism; Hinduism; Taoism; and even Judaism- Christianity alone teaches that “*Creatures of the Dust*”- sinful human beings- are Forgiven of ALL Sin (Past, Present, and Future)- and are made perfectly Righteous- INSTANTLY- by BELIEVING correctly about Who Jesus is; and by hoping and trusting in What Jesus alone has done! And biblical Christianity is the ONLY Religion that teaches this; and genuine Christians are the ONLY people who believe it.

So, the single Issue of Righteousness and how we obtain it- illustrates the radical *Uniqueness* of biblical Christianity- as compared with all of the false and Man-made Religions and Human Philosophies that exist on this Planet.

But we need to remember that the Law of Moses taught about Righteousness and how mere mortals could obtain it- in great Detail. And what it taught- is what brought about the NEED for the New Covenant. You see, the Law or the Old Covenant taught that Righteousness was the “By-product”; or the “Result” of the Obedience of God’s people. And so, the Road to Righteousness ran through the Obedience of each individual Person.

Now anytime we talk about the Old Covenant or the Law of Moses- we need to remember that it was given by God; and it is “**Holy; Righteous; and Good**” (**Romans 7:12**). The Law and the Old Covenant were given by God to the Jew- through the Agency of Angels. And for many Centuries- it was the *sole* Way that Worship of the one, true, and living God could take place. Anyone, who wanted to worship God- HAD to worship Him in the Way that was spelled out in the 39 Books of the Old Testament.

But there are several things about the Law and the Old Covenant that we always need to remember including:

1. The Law and the Old Covenant were comprised of three Parts: 1) The Dietary Part; 2) The Ceremonial Part; and 3) the Moral Part. And while the

Moral Part is Eternal and is for ALL of Mankind- both the Dietary and Ceremonial Parts of the Law and the Old Covenant were ONLY given to the Jew at that time.

2. Neither the Law nor the Old Covenant had the Power or the Ability to save a single soul
3. Every Part of the Law and the Old Covenant was to illustrate two main things: 1) the sinfulness of Sin; and 2) the Necessity of Grace and Faith in Salvation- as opposed to human Works

2. What God the Holy Spirit Said Elsewhere

So, as the average Jew read and studied the 39 Books of the Old Testament- what he *usually* came away with was the WRONG Concept that he had to work real hard to *earn* Righteousness by his attempts at obeying the Law. And this is why the God the Holy Spirit “moved” on the Apostle Paul to write this in **Romans 10:1-13**:

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation.

2 For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge.

3 For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

5 For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness.

6 But the righteousness based on faith speaks as follows: "DO NOT SAY IN YOUR HEART, 'WHO WILL ASCEND INTO HEAVEN?' (that is, to bring Christ down),

7 or 'WHO WILL DESCEND INTO THE ABYSS?' (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead)."

8 But what does it say? "THE WORD IS NEAR YOU, IN YOUR MOUTH AND IN YOUR HEART" — that is, the word of faith which we are preaching,

9 that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;

10 for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

11 For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."

**12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him;
13 for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED."**

... so, Paul was promoting a new kind of Righteousness- something that he called, the "**Righteousness of Faith**"; or the "**Righteousness based on Faith**" (v. 6).

And then Paul went on to teach that by BELIEVING- by putting our Faith and Hope and Trust in the Person of Jesus Christ and in What He alone has already done- we would fulfill ALL of the Requirements of the Law and have a spotless, pure Righteousness that would allow us to enter into Heaven.

And to try to reach the unbelieving Jews of the 1st Century with this radical Theology- the Apostle quotes several Old Testament texts in this New Testament Passage. For example, here in verses 6&8- Paul quotes from **Deuteronomy 30:12**. While in verse 11 he quotes from **Isaiah 28:16** and in verse 13 he quotes from **Joel 2:32**.

And the Point that Paul was making by doing this- was to prove that even the Old Covenant taught that Righteousness was obtained by each person by Faith alone and NOT by striving to obey the Law. So, the Truth is the Old Covenant taught the very SAME thing about how sinners obtain Righteousness as the New Covenant did!

And that means that anyone, who lived when the Old Covenant was in force, who thought that a person had to try hard to earn Righteousness through his Obedience to the Law- was *mis-reading* the Old Testament Scriptures and was completely deceived. Look how Paul described their Deception in verses 1-3:

1 Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation.

2 For I testify about them that they have a zeal for God, but not in accordance with knowledge.

3 For not knowing about God's righteousness and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God.

So, by going about to try to "establish their own righteousness" by striving to obey the Law- they, "**did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God**". In other words, by going about trying to earn their own righteousness by striving to obey the Law- they had created their own Man-made religion; and were completely *separated* from the very thing they were seeking for: the Righteousness of God!

And since this radical Doctrine runs *against* every Inclination of human beings- I would suggest to you that THIS is what is hard about Christianity. So, what I'm trying to say this morning is that Christianity is NOT hard because the pathway is Narrow and the Gate is Strait. That is NOT what makes Christianity to be hard and difficult. What is difficult is to keep our minds focused on the Righteousness that comes from Believing- that I become Righteous based on Faith- rather than going right back down into my human "default setting" and living underneath an "Old Covenant mentality" by striving to earn God's Favor by my Actions. Because the Reality is that the Road to become Righteous has ALWAYS run through Faith and NOT Works!

Now the Reason I am bringing all this up in a Sermon about the Strait and Narrow Path in **Matthew 7**- is because of what Paul said in **Galatians 3:1-14**:

1 You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?

2 This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?

3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

4 Did you suffer so many things in vain — if indeed it was in vain?

5 So then, does He who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?

6 Even so Abraham BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

7 Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.

8 The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU."

9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.

10 For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO DOES NOT ABIDE BY ALL THINGS WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF THE LAW, TO PERFORM THEM."

11 Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "THE RIGHTEOUS MAN SHALL LIVE BY FAITH."

12 However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary, "HE WHO PRACTICES THEM SHALL LIVE BY THEM."

13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us — for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE" —

14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Now the Subject that Paul is dealing with here in **Galatians 3**- is HOW people, who have ALREADY believed and are justified- follow Jesus in Obedience and become Righteous. So, the Apostle is NOT talking about how lost souls are saved in the first place here. He is teaching how Believers follow Jesus in Obedience AFTER they have already experienced the Miracle of the New Birth.

And, once again, the Apostle is quoting Old Testament texts to prove to the Believers in the Churches of the Region of Galatia- that the Old Testament taught the SAME THING as the New in regard to HOW we are to obey God and develop our own Righteousness- AFTER we have been saved. And the key verse is verse 3 that says,

Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

... in other words, Paul is teaching the Believers here in Galatia that it is foolish to assume that we can perfect our Faith by abandoning what we started with.

The Apostle teaches here that “you”- meaning the saved people of that Region- **“Having begun by the Spirit”**. In other words, Paul is *reminding* the Believers of that Region that they did NOT begin their Walk with Jesus- their “Salvation experience”- by working hard to obey God’s Law.

So, how did they begin their Walk with the Lord? Paul says, **“by the Spirit”**- which is simply another way of saying, *“By Faith- by Believing”*! So, every Lost person begins their “Journey with Jesus” by Faith and NOT by Works (Obedience).

Please remember what I have taught you. All of the “Doing” in Christianity comes AFTER we have already been born again; AFTER we have already been Justified; and AFTER we have already been adopted into the Family of God. So, what brings a person from Darkness to Light; from Death to Life; From being Lost to being Found- is NOT what we “DO”- it is What we Believe; What we hope in; and What we put our Trust in! So, ALWAYS- in every Issue about Christianity- what comes FIRST is Faith and Belief. What we DO in Christianity is very, very Important- but it NEVER comes first! What we DO- our Works; our Deeds- flows out from what we believe in; what we have faith in; and what we trust in.

And if we *always* keep that in mind- we will have *always* have biblical Christianity. But if we get the Cart before the horse; and we begin to try to DO-BEFORE we BELIEVE- we have lost Christianity and we have become Old Testament Pharisees!

And nowhere is that more- important and nowhere is that more-true than right here in **Matthew 7:13&14** that says:

13 "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.

14 "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

There are literally tens of millions of people, all over the world this morning- who will tell you, with all sincerity, that they are saved. And yet they operate their daily Lives; and they judge their spiritual Walk- based solely on the Basis of what they “do” and NOT on what they “believe”. And to them- Paul says,

... did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith? Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

We must understand that it is just as much a Sin to *believe* wrongly as it is to *do* wrongly. But the Standard as far as Believing is concerned almost always centers around the Sincerity of the person or in how *passionately* he believes something. And look, Sincerity and Passion are wonderful Gifts from God.

But there is a Body of irrefutable and eternal Truths that individual people MUST believe- or they are NOT saved. And at that Point- it really doesn't matter how Sincere or Passionate they may be. If anyone rejects Eternal, Absolute, Essential Truth- they are NOT redeemed. And that means that they are yet in their Sins and headed for Hell.

If it is true that we are born again; Justified and Adopted based on what we believe; and what we trust in; and what we hope in- and NOT in what we do- then what we believe in; and trust in; and hope in- *matters*. And that is why the Apostle wrote this in **Galatians 1:8&9**:

8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed!

9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!

Let me try to say it this Way- EVERYTHING we “DO” in Christianity- MUST flow out from what we believe- or it is NOT of God. Another way of saying this is to say that EVERYTHING we “DO” in Christianity must be “BY” the Grace of God and it MUST be “THROUGH” the Gift of Faith- or it is NOT of God. And

yet another Way of saying this is to say that EVERYTHING we “DO” in Christianity REQUIRES a dead and risen Savior- or it is NOT of God. And this is why the Apostle said this in **2Corinthians 3:18**:

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

This says that our *ongoing* Transformation from one Realm of Glory to another- AFTER WE HAVE BEEN SAVED- is based on what we “see”. So, what we “see”; what we “behold”; what we “comprehend”; what we “understand”; what we “embrace” and “believe” and “trust in”- comes FIRST! Paul says here that what *precipitates* our Growth in God and our Efforts to obey all that Jesus taught- is that we FIRST behold the “*Glory of the Lord*”!

And that is why **2Corinthians 4:4** says that satan goes to so much trouble to blind “**the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.**” Because once God the Holy Spirit, through the Word of God, opens our minds so that we see; or comprehend the “**Knowledge of the Glory of God in the Face (Person) of Jesus Christ**”... we will *love* what we see; and we will be *changed* into what we see! And that MUST be the Basis; or the Catalyst; or the Foundation of all of our “DOING”- including what Jesus said, or it will all be in Vain.

So, it is beholding the Glory of the Lord that requires Effort because satan continually fights against us “Seeing”. So, our Striving; our Labor; our Work- is to see Jesus in His Glory- and the Transformation will *automatically* come!

So, the Reason that people see the Strait and Narrow Gate and the Narrow Path as being hard and difficult and requiring lots of hard Work- is because they have never seen Jesus in His Glory. Because the Bible promises that when we finally “**see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God**”- we WILL be changed...

... into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

So, when Jesus said,

13 "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.

14 "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

... He was talking about what we “behold” (**2Corinthians 3:18-4:6**); what our “eyes are fixed on” (**Matthew 6:22-24**); what we BELIEVE; and what we “ask for; and seek for; and “what we knock to obtain” in Prayer (**Matthew 7:7-11**). Because those are the things that determine whether we have experienced the Miracle of the New Birth or not.

Now there are many well- known Preachers and Teachers in the modern Church, who say that the Statements by Jesus here in Chapter 7 are NOT connected. They say that these are simply disjointed Statements – that are true- but which have no Connection to any other Statement. But I reject that- because Teaching like that ignores the fact that this Sermon was originally written in Hebrew and then translated into Greek and then Latin and then into English. And whereas the English translation may seem to be disconnected- when you learn the Logic of 1st Century Jews- you can see the Connection very easily.

So, the “*Small and Narrow Gate*” and the “*Narrow Path*” should be understood as this radical new Doctrine that Jesus is preaching on that Mountain to those people on that day. And that is what will bring Sinners into the new Kingdom of Heaven and will identify them as being true sons and daughters of Abraham and heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven. So, the “*Small and narrow Gate*” and the “*Narrow Path*” is the Teaching of Jesus; the Doctrine of Jesus; the Theology of Jesus; and the Truth of Jesus.

So, the Difficulty in Christianity is NOT about how hard we are to strive to obey Commandments and Rules. That is an Old Covenant mentality. The Difficulty in Christianity- the area where all our Striving should be- is in what we are to BELIEVE; and NOT in what we are to DO. All of our “DOING” will *automatically* flow out from us- AFTER we see, “**the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ**”! Human beings will respond in joyful and humble Obedience once they behold the Glory of God. We can’t help it- God made us this way!

So, Faith in what Jesus taught here will result in us being “*poor in Spirit*”; And, to “*mourn*” over our former Sins. Hoping in Jesus and in what He taught will produce in us a new “*Gentleness*”- that defies Logic and we will hunger and thirst for Righteousness. Trusting in Jesus will produce in us a new Mercy based on Truth rather than Sympathy; and will purify our Hearts; and push us to be “*Peacemakers*.”

But Faith in Jesus and what He alone has done for us will also result in Persecutions; and Afflictions; and Trials; and Tests; and Tumults; and unfair and unjust Treatments. Yet it will also make us to be the Light of the world and the salt of the earth.

Hoping in what Jesus did and Who Jesus is- rather than in what my own hands can do for me brings about a newness of Life where I will not only NOT

Murder- but I will refuse to hate. I will go past not looking and lusting to actually loving my neighbor as myself and sacrificially loving and serving my Wife.

I will then honor my Marriage Vows and believe in the Sovereignty of God to the degree- I won't see the Need to avenge Wrongs done to me. Then I will be free to turn the other cheek; and give my Coat; and walk two miles with those who hate me.

The Power of the risen Christ will grant me the Gift of being able to truly love my enemies; and to pray for them; and to do them "Good". And then I won't have to receive the praise of men when I give; or when I pray; or when I fast.

This radical New Covenant brings in a new Era- where I care nothing about the accumulation of more and more worldly Possessions; which frees me to seek God's Will in all that I do and say and think and want.

God the Holy Spirit will unveil my blinded mind; and I will be able to have an Eye that is clear; and one that is focused on Jesus and His Plans rather than my own. And that will free me to live without Worry about what I will eat; or what I will wear; or what I will own; or what I will put into my barns.

Beholding the Glory of God in the Person of Jesus Christ will empower me to judge righteous Judgment; and to escape the Self-righteousness that has plagued me my entire Life. And I will be gifted with the Fear of the Lord because I know that the manner in which I judge others is the Way I will be judged myself; and I will walk on the path that allows me to treat others the Way I wish they would treat me.

All of these godly and lovely and beautiful Attributes and Characteristics are found by walking on the Narrow Way through the Small Gate. And Jesus said that this Path leads to Life!

But *mysteriously*, Jesus also said this about the Small and narrow Gate and the Narrow Way:

... there are few who find it.

... and the Implication behind somebody finding something is that they have been seeking for it BEFORE they find it.

And that tells me how unique Christian Prayer is. Because to seek after this Pathway- this Belief System- the Teachings of Jesus- that is Narrow and Strait- is for me to pray- that I would have the irresistible Desire; and the unquenchable Spirit to seek after; to enquire; to search for this Small and Narrow Gate and this Narrow Path- lest I spend my Days on the Broad Way that leads to Destruction! And that is why King David said this in **Psalm 27:4**:

One thing I have asked from the Lord, that I shall seek: That I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, To behold the beauty of the Lord And to meditate in His temple.

David somehow understood that “DOING” godly things and obeying God- was the automatic Response to beholding, “**the beauty of the Lord**”.

So, Jesus said that NONE of these godly and lovely and beautiful Characteristics or Attributes that He articulated in this Sermon are found on the Broad Way. None! Yet in spite of that- almost inexplicably- there are “*Many*” who try to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven walking on this Broad Way! How could that be? Why is the Broad way so attractive to so many?

The King of this new Kingdom said that all they will find on that Broad Way is Destruction while those who embrace the radical Doctrine of Jesus Christ will find Life!

And that means that the “*Broad Way*” then is the “*Leaven*”; or the “*Teaching*”; or the “*Doctrine*” of the Scribes and Pharisees- while the Small and Narrow Gate and the Narrow Path is the Teaching of Jesus- that He brought forth that Day; on that Mountain; to those people.

And thanks be to God that Matthew saw the Need to record what Jesus taught that Day for us- so that we too- may become the sons and daughters of Abraham; the heirs of this new Kingdom of Heaven; and the Children of the living God!

But that means that the most common Understanding of how hard and difficult it is to obey all that Jesus taught here- completely misses the Point of what Jesus was teaching.

Jesus was NOT teaching; and we dare NOT teach ourselves; that Holiness or Righteousness or Obedience to Jesus and the Bible comes as a result of a lot of hard Work; and Diligence; and Will-power; and Effort. That is the Mentality of the Old Covenant; and one that is rank Poison to all who live underneath the New.

And it is also the Mentality of every Religion and human Philosophy on earth except one- biblical Christianity. Every false Religion invented by the Minds of Man; every wrong Philosophy; and every Doctrine of Demons teach a variation of the SAME THING:

We have to “DO SOMETHING” to earn God’s Favor and deserve His Salvation ... and the ONLY area where they differ- is in the details of what we have to “DO”.

But there is a Reason why they all teach this. It is *unfathomable* that a perfectly Righteous God would forgive ALL of their Sins and accept them into

Heaven- unless they did something really, really serious and important. To suggest that God forgives based on nothing more than Belief- runs contrary to every human Inclination that exists. And that is why it is the default setting for every Teaching on earth besides the 66 Books of the Holy Bible.

The Subjects and Issues that Jesus brings up in this Sermon- that we now call the “*Sermon on the Mount*” are the *highest* Expression of Morality that the world has ever seen- far eclipsing even the Ten Commandments themselves.¹ There is not any loftier Explanation of what it means to truly be born again; and to be a Christian; and to follow after Jesus in humble and joyful Worship; than the Words that are in this single Sermon.

And in the Language and Logic of the 1st Century Jews, who were actually there that Day to hear Jesus speak these Words- this Sermon contains the “*Blueprint for the New Covenant.*” It illustrates what it means to actually be a “*Child of Abraham*”; a “*true Jew*”; and a Citizen of the new “*Kingdom of Heaven*” that the Messiah is displaying before them through His Life; Death; and Resurrection.

Truly this Sermon is a “*Masterpiece*” of “*Theology*”; “*Morality*”; and genuine “*Spirituality*” and should be read and re-read by every real bond-slave of the Lord Jesus on a regular Basis. And we are correct to be absolutely amazed at what Jesus taught here.

But as we are amazed- we MUST not forget what the Apostle infallibly taught in **2Corinthians 11:3**:

But I am afraid that, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds will be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

So, we should concentrate and strive and labor and work and pray and fast- to BELIEVE correctly- or to behold Jesus in His Magnificence- or to walk on the Strait and Narrow Path (it’s all the SAME THING!)- and ALL the DOING that the Bible speaks about- will *automatically* flow out from us in Humility and in the fullness of Joy!

Amen. Let’s Pray.

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¹ I am NOT suggesting that the “*Sermon on the Mount*” and the “*Ten Commandments*” are at odds with one another. They aren’t. But the “*Sermon on the Mount*” is a much greater exposition of the “*Ten Commandments.*”

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.