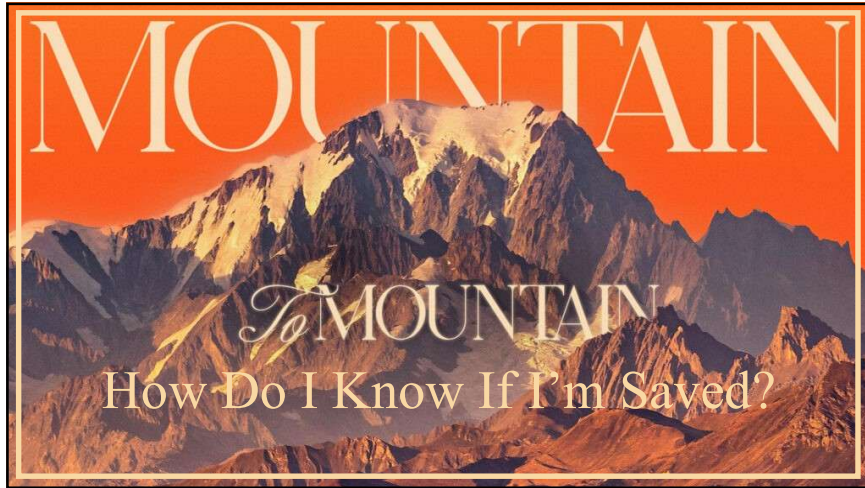




1

Matthew 7 (ESV)

15 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. 18 A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus you will recognize them by their fruits."

2

Matthew 7 (ESV)

21 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' 23 And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'"

3

Theme

True salvation is not built on our religious activity but on a real, surrendered relationship with Jesus Christ as Lord.

4

Salvation Requires Surrendering to Jesus Christ as Lord



5

Salvation Requires Surrendering to Jesus as Lord

- Jesus warns about false prophets who teach that external obedience earns salvation (Matthew 7:15).

The Sermon on the Mount begins with spiritual poverty, reminding us that salvation starts with admitting our need.

3 “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:3 ESV)

- We cannot earn salvation by doing good things, because “good people don’t go to heaven - forgiven people do”

6

Salvation Requires Surrendering to Jesus as Lord

- The will of the Father is that we repent & believe, not that we perform religious tasks.

9 The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.
(2 Peter 3:9 ESV)

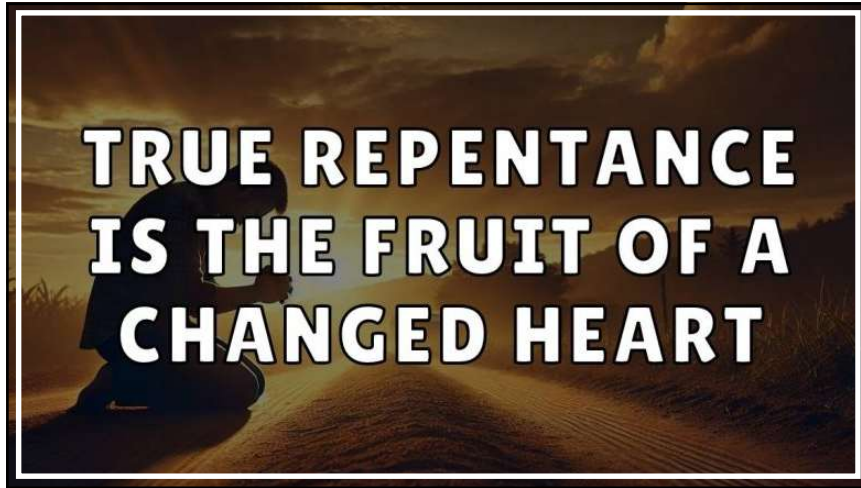
23 And this is his commandment, that we believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ and love one another, just as he has commanded us. (1 John 3:23 ESV)

7

Salvation Requires Surrendering to Jesus as Lord

- Calling Jesus ‘Lord’ is not enough unless our hearts are surrendered to Him (Matthew 7:21).

8



9

True Repentance is the Fruit of a Changed Heart

- Jesus says we recognize a tree by its fruit, meaning our outward life reflects our inward reality (Matthew 7:16-17).
- Fruit grows from the inside out, not the outside in.
- A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, showing that salvation leads to transformation (Matthew 7:18).
- Religious activity without relationship is empty, even impressive works like prophecy or miracles (Matt. 7:22).

10

True Repentance is the Fruit of a Changed Heart

- Religious activity without relationship is empty, even impressive works like prophecy or miracles (Matthew 7:22).
- The evidence of salvation is not perfection but direction - a life increasingly shaped by Jesus' lordship.

11

*Do You Know Jesus?
Does He Know You?*

12

Do You Know Jesus & Does He Know You?

- Many will be shocked on judgment day, believing their religious résumé guaranteed heaven (Matthew 7:22)
- Jesus' response is relational, not behavioral: "I never knew you" (Matthew 7:23).
- Knowing about Jesus is not the same as knowing Him ("Are you a follower of Jesus or just a fan of the Jesus stuff?").

13

Do You Know Jesus & Does He Know You?

- Judas followed Jesus physically but never surrendered to Him as Lord ("Is it I, Rabbi?").
- The only right answer to 'Why should I let you in?' is Jesus Himself ("The man on the middle cross said I could come").

14

Practical Application

- Rest in assurance that your salvation is secure because of Christ's finished work, not your performance.
- Release guilt from past failures - Jesus saves the spiritually poor, not the spiritually impressive.
- Reflect on your lifelong walk with Jesus - notice the fruit He has grown in you over the decades.
- Renew your surrender daily - even in our later years, Jesus invites you to trust Him as Lord.

15

Practical Application

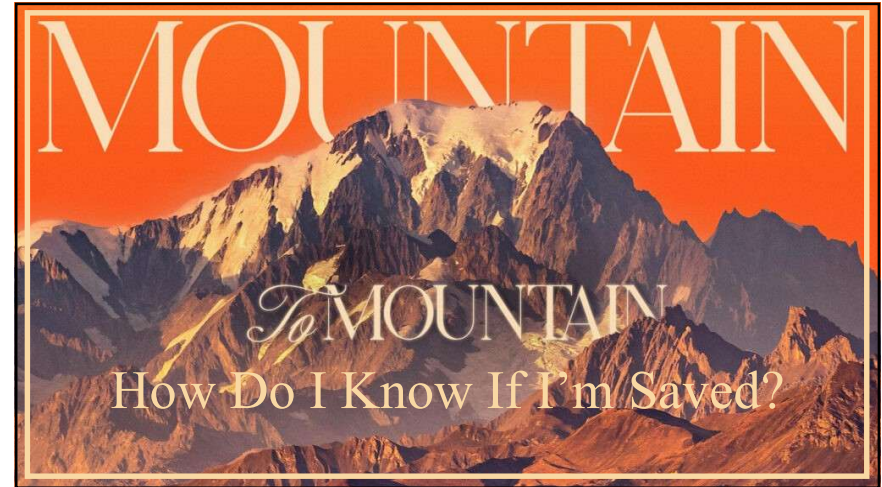
- Rely on Jesus for peace about eternity - He began the good work and will complete it (Philippians 1:6).
- Rejoice that salvation is relational - Jesus knows you, loves you & calls you His own.

16

Discussion Questions

- What does it mean to you personally that salvation begins with need rather than achievement?
- When you look back over your life, what “fruit” has God grown in you that encourages your faith?
- Why do you think Jesus warns that many religious people will be surprised on judgment day?
- How would you explain the difference between being a “fan of Jesus” and a “follower of Jesus”?
- What gives you confidence & peace about your salvation?

17



18