



Adult and Teen Life Groups Conferencing Guide

SERMON DATE: 03/29/2026
DISCUSSION DATE: 04/05/2026
TEXT: MATTHEW 7:21-23

THE SELF-DECEPTION OF A MERE PROFESSION

I. THE SELF-DECEPTION OF A MERE PROFESSION (vv. 21-23)

A. A false doctrine of assurance

B. A failure of self-examination

C. A fixation on religious activity

D. A forethought that the good overcomes the bad

FOR CONFERENCING

1. **Read Matthew 5:3.** What is the divine standard (requirement) for entering the Kingdom of heaven? What does the first beatitude mean? (Can you explain it?)

2. **Read Matthew 5:20.** What did Jesus mean when He said, *“unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven?”* **Read Romans 3:10 & 23.** Are there any who are righteous that can enter the kingdom on their own? **Read Matthew 5:48.** What does God require of us? How then may we enter God’s kingdom? (Hint: **Read Romans 3:21-26; Romans 5:18-19; II Corinthians 5:21; & Philippians 3:9**)

3. **Read Matthew 7:21-23.** In what ways have those that Jesus described deceived themselves into thinking they are on the way that leads to eternal life? What reason did Jesus give for rejecting them in verse 23? In contrast to that, who did Jesus say will enter the kingdom? What is the difference between saying and doing?

4. What does it mean to call Jesus "Lord, Lord"? Why is that not enough for salvation? What is the difference between doing works *in Jesus' name* and *knowing* Jesus?

5. In what ways might one be tempted to trust in their religious works or words rather than a relationship with Jesus?

6. How can one examine their life to see if they are truly in the faith?

7. **Read James 2:14-24.** Why doesn't a “claim” to have faith save a person? How does a living active faith differ from a dead faith? How does the statement “faith without works is dead” not a contradiction of the biblical teaching of justification by faith alone?

8. What are some “works” or acts of obedience that should naturally accompany living faith in your life today?