

Judge for Yourself

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. All right, take your Bibles if you would and open them with me to Matthew chapter 7.

I'm excited to share with you today, Jesus starts this chapter off as we're in the last parts of the Sermon on the Mount. He starts this chapter off talking about judging.

And I'm sure that Trent helped you to understand great truths about that idea of judging, that we are not to judge really. The idea of the verse is you're to judge yourself.

You are to take the thing out of your eye that's injuring you as you look at the other man's eye. And so I want you to read with me if you would Matthew chapter 7. We're going to go back to the beginning of the chapter because I think it helps you to understand this last part.

You're fixing to find out about two of a whole bunch of things between now and the end of the chapter. You're going to hear about two ways and you're going to hear about two trees and two people and two houses or two builders.

[1 : 01] And we're going to talk about those. And the idea is that you would judge yourself. The idea is that you would judge. Look at you in Matthew 7 verse 1. It said, Judge not that you be not judged.

For with the judgment you judge, you shall be judged. And with what measure you met, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that's in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that's in your own eye?

You're looking at a little splinter in your brother's eye, but you forgot there's a two before in your eye. Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, let me pull the splinter out of your eye, but I have a two before in my own eye?

In verse 5, first cast out the two before out of your own eye, then you'll be able to see clearly to cast that splinter out of your brother's eye.

And so I want to go with you if I can, start in verse 13. And if you write in the margin of your Bible, you might write down two ways. You might write down two ways. Read with me if you would. Verse 13.

[2 : 01] He says, Enter ye at the straight gate, for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leads to destruction. And many there be which go in thereat, because straight is the gate, and narrow is the way which leads unto life, and few there be that find it.

Father, I pray now that you might draw us to you, and I pray, God, that you'd help us to examine our lives and to see if you are at work in us. Help us to examine our salvation.

Help us to leave here, knowing for sure that we are born again and on our way to heaven, and that the Holy Spirit of God is doing a work in us. And I pray, God, that you'd help me to look at me, and not at someone else, and help each of us to look at ourselves.

And, God, that you would get honor and glory from our lives, and we'll give you praise. In Jesus' name, amen. So I want you to notice here, there are two ways. There is a broad way, and there is a narrow way.

There is a straight or narrow gate, and there is a wide gate. And so here's the idea that I want you to look at today. Be careful not to deceive yourself.

- [3 : 06] Knowing the language and believing intellectually the right doctrine is not enough. Obeying the rules will not get you saved. No religious act or amount of religious activity gets us saved.
- Many people are religious but not saved. They are lost. They are not following Jesus. They are simply going through the motions of Christianity. They are cultural Christians.
- Do you remember the key verse to this whole chapter, these chapters on the Sermon on the Mount are, if your righteousness doesn't exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees, you won't get to heaven.
- If you aren't really saved, if you are going through the motions, if you're playing a game, you're not really saved. There are two ways mentioned, each with a distinct destination, a broad way that leads to destruction, a broad way that's easy.
- It is popular. But you don't get to heaven by an opinion poll. The majority are not always right. There's a narrow way. It leads to life. The narrow way is not popular.
- [4 : 09] Few people are on that way. True believers are the minority. The narrow way is lonely and costly. The narrow way is exclusive. That's a harsh term to say that most aren't on the right way.
- But that's what Jesus said. That's what Jesus said. Would you go back and read with me? Matthew chapter 7 and verse 14. If you got your ink pen, maybe you'll mark a word. He said something very harsh.
- Verse 14. He said, straight is the gate, narrow is the way which leads to life, and few there be that find it. Circle the word few. Jesus said, man, there are not many of them on the right way.
- There's one way that's broad and it's wide and it's easy and it's popular and everybody seems to be on that way. And there's this other way that's narrow and it's straight and not very many people.
- Not very many people are going that way. It is not the most popular way. It's not the most popular way to live. The word is an exclusive word.
- [5 : 10] It's an exclusive word. Christianity is exclusive. It says you must come by Jesus Christ or you can't go to heaven. Not everybody can get to heaven.
- Not everybody can get saved. Not everybody can. No matter. You can't say it. Well, everybody's doing the best they know how. They're going all right. That's not how it works. He uses the word straight.
- You look at the verse. It says S-T-R-A-I-T. That's an interesting word. We don't commonly use it any longer. It means strict. It means rigorous.
- It's the idea of a narrow, limited in space or time, constricted, difficult, causing distress. We're in a straight betwixt two. We don't know what to do.
- We're in a straight. We're in a distressing time. The way we use that word in our day and time is a straight jacket. That's about the only way we use the word straight is a straight jacket.
- [6 : 04] That's where they lock in a jacket. You can't move yourself. That's where he said it's a strict way. Do you realize that Jesus was very narrow and very strict in what he's saying?
- There's not much tolerance in God's word. We may want to think that God is open and kind. We may think that all roads lead to heaven, but that's not what the Bible says.
- There's only one way. It is Jesus Christ and no other. There's no room for good works. No room for being religious. No room for other religious groups.

The harshest thing about Christianity is that it's very exclusive. You either get in the straight and narrow, the tight and constrictive, the only way, the only road, or you can't be saved.

Boy, that's tough. Here's a good example of judging yourself. Judge yourself. There's a popular way. There's a way everybody likes to go.

[7 : 04] There's a way everybody else is doing it. And there's this narrow way. And this is where we're judging ourselves. Jesus says, as he's talking, he's finishing up his section on judging.

And he said this. Guys, look around. There are two ways. There's one way. And everybody's going that way. And there's this other way. And not very many people are going that way. And this morning, you need to make a decision.

Has your profession of faith in Christ cost you anything? Has his work in you caused any division from friends or family?

There are only two roads and two directions. And you must choose one. And when you do, that will naturally separate you from others. All decisions have cost.

To say yes to one thing is to say no to another. To follow Christ is a term for the popular easy way. Coexist doesn't coexist with the word of God.

[8 : 07] You can't have what Jews are good people. Muslims are good people. Mormons are good people. And every other group is good people.

And we all just coexist. We can coexist on this planet. But we won't coexist throughout eternity. You will come through Jesus and only Jesus.

You can't say that you've got to speak in tongues to get to heaven. You can't say you've got to get baptized to get to heaven. You can't get to heaven because you're a good guy. Choose one of two ways.

Either you chose Christ and what he did on the cross of Calvary. Or you didn't get saved. He moves to a second comparison. Look if you would at verse 15. The first, there were two ways.

There were two ways. One way that was popular. One way that was unpopular. One way where a lot of people went. Another way where very few went. Now he talks about two trees. He moves to another one.

[9 : 02] Two trees. In verse 15 he says, Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing. But inwardly they are ravening wolves. That is a harsh, unkind verse.

He's standing before Pharisees and Sadducees and religious leaders. He's standing before the scribes and religious leaders of his day. And he says, Listen to me. There are people all around you that look good.

They look like they're dressed right. They look like they got the right talk. They look like they belong. But they're not true. On the outside they paint a good religious picture. But on the inside they are ravening wolves.

Verse 16. You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather thorns, grapes or thorns or figs of thistles? Even so, every good tree brings forth good fruit.

But a corrupt tree brings forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit. Neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that brings not forth good fruit is to be chopped down and thrown into fire.

[10 : 10] Wherefore by their fruits you shall know them. Again, be not deceived. Put a circle around the word beware. You've got to make some judgment calls here. You've got to make some right decisions.

Beware. You are not to judge by appearances. You are not to judge by what they say. Many will say the right thing but it will not be from their heart. They simply know how to deceive.

You will determine who they are by their fruits. And you live in a very religious world. You can't turn the television on without seeing something religious. You can't listen to the news without seeing something religious.

You can't help it. It's everywhere. There are people that have great families. There are people that love their God. There are people that are doing very good works. There are just a lot of good people. But here's the truth.

The truth is Jesus is the only way to go to heaven when you die. Jesus said I'm the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by me. And so when you turn on the television or you read a book or you hear stuff, you've got to stop and say, is this what the Bible says?

[11 : 15] Is this showing me that man's a sinner and has no way out but Jesus or does it have something else? You've got to stop and judge the tree. You've got to stop and judge the tree. And you don't judge the tree by its pretty leaves.

And you don't judge the tree by how big the roots are, how big the branches are. You judge it by its fruit. Every tree reproduces after its own kind.

Good fruit comes from good trees and bad fruit comes from bad trees. You must judge again. Boy, we're talking about your eternity. We're talking about where you're going to spend eternity.

First, we're to judge about the two ways. One was easy, popular, and fun but led to destruction. That's got to be wild. Can't you imagine that when Jesus looked at him and said, I know everybody's doing that but they're on their way to hell.

I know everybody's doing good stuff over here but they're on their way to hell. There's this other way. The other way was straight, tight, constrictive, and narrow. It was not popular but it led to life.

[12 : 16] Now you're to beware of, now you're to judge by outward appearances. Beware, it says in verse 15. They looked good on the outside but they were not what they purported to be.

They gave all appearances of being good and right but they were rotten from the core. However, you will reproduce what you are. Be comes before do.

That's what's on the little triangle here. Be, who you are will make you do what you ought to do. You can't stop. You're going to end up doing whatever you are. Pigs do pig stuff and sheep do sheep stuff.

It's not about what you do. It's about who you are in the very center of your being. Good trees naturally produce what's good. Bad or corrupt trees produce bad or rotting fruit.

You can tell about a tree by its fruit. You are to be judging yourself again. Everybody stop and let's judge ourselves. Everybody let's look at ourselves.

[13 : 13] Hey, quit looking at the other guy's eye and checking out his splinter. Check out the two before in your own eye. Check out yourself. Has your believing in Christ changed your life?

Has your believing in Christ changed your life? Not discussing what a person can fake, but the real down deep inside of you stuff. Has God made a difference in you?

Not talking about did you get baptized? Not talking about did you join the church? Not talking about are you living out a sweet life and being a nice person? Not talking about if you're a good boy scout and help the kids across the street and take care of little kitty cats.

Not talking about did God do something way down deep inside of you. Has your purpose changed from you to him? Has he changed you?

The prophets were false. The more you know them in their lives, the more you can see they're not genuine. They're using God to get things for themselves and to make much of themselves.

[14 : 17] I believe so much of Christianity today is more about what a preacher can use that Christianity for for himself. He wants to teach you prosperity and health and wealth and getting money, but it's for himself so he can get more stuff.

He wants to preach so he can be lifted up. Jesus said, stop and judge. Is this true? What fruit is it leading to? What's happening? They use people.

You will know if you watch long enough if they're real or not. So check out the two trees. Look at the two trees. And your judging is to find this out. What kind of fruit is it producing?

Two trees. Then he goes to two people. Look at what in your Bible. Chapter 7 and verse 21. Now we've got two people. Chapter 7 and verse 21. This is one of those most alarming passages of Scripture.

In the entire Bible. In verse 21 it says, Not everyone that says unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven. But he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

[15 : 21] Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? Then will I profess to them, I never knew you.

Depart from me, you that work iniquity. It's time to judge. Two ways. Two trees. Two people. Beware. Religious service is not the way you know if they are genuine.

What people say may not be what is really in their hearts. They may, in their own pride, believe that they're doing enough, and good enough to do things their way.

They may have so deceived themselves, they will be shocked in the judgment. Look at the story. It's a crazy story. In chapter 7, starting in verse 21, down through verse 23, it's a crazy story.

There are two people. One that says and one that does. One that says and one that does. He said, there's some of these people in the story, men are doing good stuff. They're preaching and casting out devils, and they're doing all this good stuff, but he will eventually say to them, I never knew you.

[16 : 27] Well, you looked good, and everybody was impressed by you, and everybody thought you were a great preacher, a great prophet, a great preacher, a great man of God. They thought that, but it wasn't true. You never knew me. Because you did stuff, and you said stuff, but it wasn't real.

Can I just stop and say, that's what scares me to death about the Southeast United States of America. That's what scares me about you, is because you could easily be playing the game.

You could easily be saying, I go to church, I've been baptized, I give my money, I do everything I'm supposed to do, I ought to be okay. But nobody goes to heaven, because they ought to be okay.

Everybody goes to heaven, because they came to a place in their life, they realize, they sinned against the Holy God. Good people go to hell. Lost people go to heaven.

Lost people who get saved. People who came to a point in their life, they realize, I sinned against the Holy God. People who realize, that I couldn't get to heaven on my own. People whose righteousness, exceeds the righteousness, of the religious people, of Jesus' day.

[17 : 30] Again, there are two. One is talking it up real good. The other will be obeying. One will believe, that he has truly done great things. The other will come as a sinner, believing in the grace of God, to save him.

You understand the story here? They get to the judgment, and when they're at the judgment, this guy says, Now God, you've got to let me in. Didn't I preach, and didn't I cast out demons, and didn't I do mighty miracles, and wonderful works in your name?

And he's going to say, Yep, but I never knew you. Bye. That's a horrible story. It kind of reminds me, of the story Jesus told, when two men went up to the temple, to pray.

And one went in the temple to pray, and he held his hands up, and he said, Father, I pray, I thank you, that I am not like other people, like this guy right here. You know I pay my tithes. You know I pray.

You know I do all the things, I'm supposed to do. And I really appreciate it. And the Bible says, that Jesus tells a story, and that guy left, but he wasn't satisfied, and he wasn't blessed. The other guy got ready to leave, or got ready to pray, when he prayed, he didn't even lift his hands, he didn't lift his face, he ducked his hip.

[18 : 34] And he smote his chest, and said, God be merciful to me, a sinner. And Jesus said, that guy went down, blessed. Judge. How'd you come to Christ?

How'd you come to Christ? Can I say to you, because I say this, because I really do love you, and I care. So many of us, prayed a prayer, because mama told us to. Some of us got baptized, because our parents told us to.

Because it was the cool thing to do. It was what we were supposed to do. It's because, it's what you do at church. But there never was a time, when we came to a place in our life, and said, I know, I know I'm a sinner.

I know I deserve to go to hell, and I need Jesus, to save me, and to do a work, in my life. Remember, words are not a substitute, for obedience.

Religious works, are no substitute for obedience. They preached, they cast out demons, they did miracles. They did it, in Jesus name. Did you ever consider this?

[19 : 32] There was an apostle, named Judas, who was there, in all the miracles. Who was there praying. Who kissed the very door of heaven, and goes to hell.

Who never truly believed. He was probably, the best looking member, of the apostles. Not necessarily, in physical appearance.

But you never give the money, of the church, to the guy, who looks like a crook. You give the money, of the church, to the guy, you really say, that guy's got character. That guy will take the books, and do it good.

That guy will be a great guy. Who do you pick, to be your treasurer? You pick the best guy, you know. I mean I've been doing this for years, as a missionary in Peru. As soon as we got enough money, to need a treasurer, I went around the church, I thought to myself, who can I trust, to keep their stinking hands, out of the offering basket.

If we let them be, that's who Judas was. They didn't pick Peter. They didn't pick John. Oh John probably had, such a loving heart. Somebody had come by, and said we need something. John said I'll just take it out, we won't even ask you about it.

[20 : 33] They didn't pick John, they picked Judas. Judas said I'll take care of the money, bless God. He's a good guy. But he was a lost guy. Could that be you? Could that be you? In this story here, there's like a preacher.

I mean, these are preachers. These are preachers. In the last one, when we looked at the trees, there were prophets. Outwardly looked good, but inwardly weren't good. I want to know, am I born again?

Am I on the way to heaven? Has the Lord Jesus done a work in my life? Don't forget the Judas factor. It's not learning the Bible, learning the vocabulary, singing the songs of Zion, the songs of Jesus, but truly obeying God.

We went to Sunday school, and they told us to be good little boys and girls, live like Jesus, love Jesus, and we had Jesus in our hearts, but maybe we never came to the place that realized we weren't good little boys and girls, and we weren't good.

We needed Jesus to save us. What we do has nothing to do with Jesus loving us and saving us. It's not by our works. It's by His grace. But we need Him.

[21 : 38] Chapter 7 and verse 24. We get to two builders. We get to two builders. The Bible said, Therefore, whosoever hears these words, you should underline hears, they listen, and they do.

That's the key. They do them. I will liken them to a wise man who built his house on a rock. And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not.

For it was founded upon a rock. And everyone that hears these sayings of mine and does them not shall be likened to a foolish man which built his house upon the sand.

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell. And great was the fall of it. It came to pass when Jesus that ended these sayings that people were astonished at his doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes.

This chapter is about choosing, deciding, and judging ourselves. There's a storm coming. It will destroy the majority because they have not built on the rock.

[22 : 50] Both houses probably look very good from the outside. the problems aren't seen until the storm comes. We can fake it for a long time, but not forever.

Over the years of my life and ministry which I've been preaching since I was 15, and I've been dealing with people, and people have often said to me, what about all these good Christians that walked out on God?

This very week, I heard about a guy who pastored for about 15 years, and then one day, something bad happened in his life, and he walked away from God, and he no longer served God, and he lives in the world, and said everything he did was wrong, and they said, what happened to him?

And I would have to say to you, I think he was on the wrong way. I think he was the wrong tree. I think he was a talker, not a doer. I think that he built a house, but he didn't put down the foundation.

I think that when you looked at him, you would have said, boy, he looks good. He looks good. He has all of it. He knows all the right words to say. He's learned all the songs, and in every way that we would outwardly judge, he's a good guy, but when the storm came, and the winds blew, and the rains came, his house fell apart.

[24 : 01] He wasn't built on a rock. He wasn't built on truth. He wasn't built on the Lord Jesus Christ, and here's what we got to do. We have to hear the truth. We have to hear the truth.

I mean, really hear it, and the truth is hard to hear because the truth says that you're a sinner. The truth doesn't come and say, hey, this is your best day, and everything's good, and all is going to work out.

The truth is you're sick. The truth is you're dying, and you're going to hell. The truth is you failed Almighty God. The truth is, man, you're in trouble. That's the truth.

That's what you got to hear, and then you got to hear this, but Jesus paid it all. Jesus did everything so that you could be saved, and you're going to trust Jesus. It doesn't sound as popular to do it that way, we've seen the illustrations, the way representing how we began in our life, the trees that illustrate how we've grown, the people that illustrate our lifestyle, and the houses at the end of our lives when the big test comes.

the real question shown to us in this passage is that in my opinion, what will God say when it's all over? He knows Austin, me, all the way down in the core of my being.

[25 : 16] He knows if I'm faking it. He knows if it's real. He knows if I've faked it so much I believe the fake, because that's apparently what happened with the two people. Some of those guys, man, they were not saved, but they had got into this religious bit so much that they believed it with all their heart and they said, we preached and we did all this and in front of the Lord they said, we did good stuff and he said, I know, but that wasn't what I asked you to do.

We must prepare for the test, the judgment, the storm that's coming. Real faith will result in obedience. Faith is never exhibited simply in words.

they said, Lord, Lord. You can say the good stuff but have you in your heart way down deep inside came to a place that you realized you sinned against the Holy God and you trusted Him.

They did great stuff but they did not obey. The hardest thing in the world is to say, I need help.

I need help. I need somebody to save me. I'm not doing too good on my own. James told us in the book of James to be doers of the word and not hearers only.

[26 : 37] Southeast United States of America, I mean, we are so good at it. We come to church, we sing the songs and we say amen but it doesn't affect anything about us. Hey, in the profundity of our heart, the depths of our heart, nothing's changed.

We don't walk out of here saying, man, I am God's son. I was saved by His grace and He's done a work in my life. That's not how it is. We just come, we've learned all the songs, we've learned all the actions, we've learned how to be religious.

We're kind of like that religious crowd. And if your righteousness doesn't exceed the righteousness of the Pharisees, you won't get to heaven. You won't get to heaven. He said, judge, please don't forget the Judas factor.

We study diligently, we learn all about the Bible, we know all the things to say about the Bible but it hasn't affected us. Judas was close enough to Jesus. He wasn't just close, he was the treasurer.

You just can't get any more in than that. He participated in worship and service but that wasn't enough. He kissed Jesus but that wasn't enough.

[27 : 51] He participated in great works and miracles but that didn't keep Judas from being lost and going to hell. It's not about how well the house looked on the outside.

It wasn't about them building a house. They both built a house. One represents someone who heard what Jesus said and obeyed. The other represents someone who heard and did not obey and did not obey.

It's judgment time. It's not time to look over and cast and say they got a might and they got a splinter in their eye. It's time to look at me. It's judgment time.

Which road are you on? Has your road, your decision to trust Jesus made a difference in your life? Has your road, your decision to trust Christ made a difference?

Has it cost you something? Any decision has repercussions and costs. Have you said yes to Jesus and no to yourself and to the world? So first question I would ask you is go back to the ways and look.

[28 : 59] You see, we choose which way we're going to be in and too often we want what's popular. We want to be tolerant. We want to get along with everybody. We want everybody to like us but following Jesus was a drastic radical decision that changed your life forever.

It was, hey, come after me, take up your cross and let's go die. It was, hate your mother and hate your wife and hate your life. Hate yourself and follow Jesus. It was a radical decision.

By the way, every decision you make has repercussions. I married Betty on August the 18th, 1973. Now let me just say that decision had radical implications.

It meant that my life was committed to one woman. It meant no to other girlfriends. It meant no to other life. We said yes to each other and when you say yes to Jesus, you're saying no to a whole lot of stuff.

If you say a real yes, that's what's going on. Which tree describes you. What has your life been producing? Remember that what you do is based on who you are.

[30 : 06] You should judge yourself and make sure that he is producing in you something that shows his hand, his power, and his work. What's God been doing in you? Look back over your life and say, has God been moving in my life?

Not are you culturally Christian, not do you fit in, not do you know the songs, not have you memorized the Bible verses. One of the most radical things in my young ministry, I was in my early 20s and I would go to jail and preach in jail.

And so often a guy my age would be behind the bars and he'd say, oh sonny, hush. I was a Sunday school teacher and a deacon. I was a pastor.

I can quote those verses as well as you can. That's not how you get saved. Getting saved means I turn to Jesus. Can you say amen? I see my sin.

I repent of my sin and I turn to Jesus. Which tree are you? Which person are you? Do you just talk a good talk or is it real to you?

[31 : 13] Do you live in obedience to him? Do you really think that your religious actions make you deserve God in heaven? It's amazing how much we want to how much we want to think what we're doing makes us deserve heaven.

Every born again believer knows this. We don't deserve heaven. We don't deserve heaven. We know that if, man, if we got what we deserved we'd go to hell.

But Jesus died for us. Which life, which house are you building? Are you a doer or just a hearer? Probably one of the most frustrating things that can happen in the life of every preacher is everybody will listen but who puts it in practice?

Have you dug deep enough? Have you put it in the foundation that can stand the test of time? Will your faith stand the test that are coming? And let me just tell you this.

Your whole life will be blown around in a storm. Your life's going to be rocked before it's over. It's going to be shaken. It's going to be an earthquake. I can remember living in Peru and we had built all these church buildings and we had built the Hunter Church and it had the highest structure and it was the first building we built and we had this earthquake.

[32 : 33] It was over seven and a half on the Richter scale and all I could think of is I've got to get to Hunter and see if the building stood. Did we dig deep enough? Did we plant good enough columns?

Did we put in the right amount of steel? And I got there and I saw some cracks but it was still standing. A storm's coming. You will know if you're real.

But today, why don't you take the time and examine to make sure you're calling an election or sure. Why don't you take the time to make sure that you are born again? Don't look at others.

Judge yourself. That's the theme of chapter 7, isn't it? Quit looking at the other guy's splinter. Austin, look at yourself. Put out of your eye whatever's there.

Make this a time of inward reflection. Seek God, ready to believe and obey. Trust and obey. For there's no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.

[33 : 33] I don't want to get you to doubt your salvation. I can't stand it when a preacher does that. But I do want you to check yourself out. I would hate to think you've come to vision.

You've listened to me preach through the Bible verse by verse and you've listened to Trent as he preached through the Bible. You've listened to Robert as he's preached through the Bible. Listen to Brother Frick. We've preached through the Bible. You've listened to all this and at the end of the time you'd say, I went to church all along but it never really changed my life.

That means you've got to stop every now and then and say, I'm here. It's time for me to examine me. Do I know I'm on the way to heaven when I die? Do I have the assurance that Jesus is my Savior?

You say, well what have I got to do? Well here's the whole point. There was a religious crowd doing all the cool stuff and there was this other group saying it's Jesus and Jesus alone. In John 14, 6, Jesus said, I am the way, the truth, and the life.

No man comes to the Father but by me. And just let me say this. We teach and preach. It's grace. It's all God saving you. But take a hint. If God doesn't work in your life after you have this quote unquote move of God and act of grace in your life then maybe there was no move of God and act of grace in you.

[34 : 48] If living out your faith is a part of your life, maybe you never really got saved. Maybe you just play in the game. Judge yourself today.

Have you seen your sin, realize you deserve to go to hell, trusted Jesus and know you're on the way to heaven. Don't let it all end and stand before God and say, God, wait a minute.

I was a member of Vision. I got baptized and I gave to missions. And I did everything they told me to do at that church and I'm here. And he's going to say, I never knew you because the only people that get to heaven will be the ones that say, and I deserved hell.

But Jesus died for me and paid my sin debt and I trust Jesus. With every head bowed and every eye closed, Father in heaven, would you work today? Would you show your power?

Would you draw your people? God, would you convict those that don't know you? God, I pray for the teens today that you would show them that they can't be saved on their mother and their daddy's faith.

[35 : 51] They can't go to heaven because of what mom and dad said or some preacher poured water on them or in them or over them or put them under it. They can't get there that way. I pray, God, our teenagers today would examine their life and decide today, did I trust Jesus?

Am I on the right way? Is my life producing what it's supposed to be? Do I have a Christianity that only talks about it? Can my faith stand the test of time? And Lord, then I pray for the adults and I pray for everybody that we would make decisions today.

That we would examine ourselves and be sure that we would judge ourselves and know for sure what would happen if we were to die. God, I pray you'd work in our lives. I pray you'd call us to you. I pray you'd, God, do whatever it takes to shake that one who's not saved to make him see himself and herself and be saved today.

This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. For more information, log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.