

Jesus at the Center of the Kingdom
Counterfeit Faith • Message 6
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Prayer Points for Prayer Time:

- Ask God to make your faith real, genuine and rooted in Him.
- Ask God to show you the places in your life where you are holding back from Him.
- Pray that Brookwood will help people move from knowing about Jesus to truly following Him.

Worship Psalm:

“But the time is coming—indeed it’s here now—when true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. The Father is looking for those who will worship him that way.”

John 4:23 (NLT)

Scripture Reading:

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!’”

Matthew 7:21-23 (NIV)

A. Introduction

(Matthew 7:21)

(Show Slide: Genuine fake watches). Gotta love the honesty. He’s going, *I’ve got the best fake stuff around...* Ultimately, he knows what he has is a counterfeit item...

On the outside, it looks real. At first glance, it looks real, but it’s not.

When I was in middle school, I played football. At first glance, on the outside, it looked like I was a part of the team. I had the jersey, I went to practice, I went to the games, I sat with many of the football players...

But I wasn't really a football player. My heart wasn't in it. I just did it because my friends told me to, and I thought it would help me find my sixth-grade love. I wasn't really committed. On the outside you couldn't really tell.

To me, Jesus gives perhaps the most chilling passage in the Bible in these three verses.

Because He says, in essence, there are those who look like they are on the team... on the outside, at first glance, they have Bibles, they come to church, they pray, they serve and from the outside it looks like they are really Christians. But the truth is, they aren't really Christians because on the inside, their hearts aren't really in it. They aren't really committed.

So, in the last chapter of Matthew, He shows four examples of something real and something counterfeit:

Two roads- a wide and narrow one.

Two prophets- sheep and then a wolf that, on the outside, looks like a sheep.

Two fruits- good fruit and bad fruit.

Two houses- one built on rock and the other built on sand.

And that's why Jesus says this...

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."

Matthew 7:21 (NIV)

So, how do you know if you truly are on the team? If you've been saved? If you're a follower of Jesus?

This is a timely talk because people have wondered, *Is my faith real? Am I saved? Am I going to heaven?* Even a well-known pastor recently said he's only 90 percent certain.

This passage gives us four ways to know if your faith is real or if it's a counterfeit.

B. Counterfeit Faith

1. **BELIEF** in Jesus doesn't make you a follower of Jesus.

(Matthew 7:21)

Demons believe in Jesus, so belief isn't enough... but what's concerning is this, listen:

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."

Matthew 7:21 (NIV)

The word **Lord** is the Greek word *Kyrios*, which is the word for God. So they are saying, *We believe you are God. You're the creator of it all.*

So they recognize Jesus as God. These aren't random people. They are people who, at first glance, look like they are on the team.

Belief is a first step...Jesus really died, really rose again, and really can change your life. The Bible says things like, *If you believe in your heart... you will be saved.* Belief is important.

But here's the key: just because you believe something doesn't mean you build your life around it.

I believe I should eat less fried food... but I still eat a lot of fried food.

Recognizing and believing something doesn't mean we build our lives around it.

See, megachurches, if we aren't careful, can grow because we tell people what they want to hear instead of what Jesus actually says... Gotta be honest... Looking at the subjects we've covered, last year it was tithing... this year it's, are you really saved... I'm like, *Do I really want to teach this? What about grace or loving others?* But we can't shy away from what Jesus says.

And here's what He says: belief isn't enough.

2. **FEELINGS** for Jesus doesn't make you a follower of Jesus.

(Matthew 7:21-22. C/R: Psalm 42:11; Luke 10:41)

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?'"

Matthew 7:21-22 (NIV)

Lord is repeated twice... In Semitic language, when you repeat a name, it is a sign of affection or emotional connection. When David wept over his dead son, he said, *Oh, Absalom, Absalom.*

"Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things,"

Luke 10:41 (NIV)

Feelings are a good thing... stereotypically, men can be a little more logical, while women can connect a little more emotionally. I think often times that's why more women tend to raise their kids spiritually or be more spiritually in tune... but I love that at Brookwood, there are so many emotionally integrated men...men who have learned to process pain, say *I love you* to their kids, and connect with Jesus...

Now, I do have to say there is one area men are maybe more emotionally charged... I saw this, and it's too good not to share. (Show meme about illness.) ☺

Now here's the thing: Jesus is showing us that the people here had an emotional connection, they had a warmth in their heart for Jesus. Said another way, they felt things. They were stirred by songs and the Bible. They probably had messages that stirred their affections... these are good things...

But you can feel things and not build your life around them.

I think it's good to feel things... but feelings can lead you astray...

"Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God."

Psalms 42:11 (NIV)

Don't listen to yourself preach... start preaching...

3. WORKS for Jesus doesn't make you a follower of Jesus.

(Matthew 7:22)

"Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?'"

Matthew 7:22 (NIV)

What's so striking here is that Jesus is showing that many of these people think they really are believers... notice he says, *Many will say*...

They will make their case because they will be so surprised. They think, for sure, they are followers of Him, and one of their arguments will be their works...

If you saw someone cast out a demon, wouldn't you assume they are saved?

If you saw someone predict something in the future, wouldn't you assume they are saved?

Or if you saw someone lead a Bible study or have a spiritual insight, wouldn't you assume they are saved?

To go to one of Jesus' other analogies, when He talks about the two trees (verses 16–18), both have fruit. It's not that one tree has no fruit and one is dead, dry and rotting with fruit hanging off the branches. It says that one tree has good fruit and the other has bad fruit. And by "bad" fruit, it means poisonous fruit, not just shriveled fruit.

It says the tree is "diseased," which means the fruit is poisonous. The fruit does not look bad or shriveled up. It is something on the inside that makes it bad.

The two houses look the same. It is the foundation that is different. It's counterfeit.

Do you get the point? Jesus is not talking about one guy who worships Jesus and another guy who sits at home, smokes dope, plays KISS records backward, and hates the church and God.

He's saying there are two people in the church. Both have religious fruit. Both look like sheep. Both call Jesus Lord. It is only by looking on the inside that you see they are different.

Works are good, but you can do things for Jesus and not build your life around Him.

Here's a really profound point. Are you ready?

4. FOLLOWING Jesus makes you a follower of Jesus.

(Matthew 7:23. C/R: John 10:27-28)

"Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"

Matthew 7:23 (NIV)

Notice, *I never knew you.*

Think about it: they had belief, they had feelings, they had works, but no relationship...

That's why we say Jesus at the center...

See, what makes someone a follower of Jesus is that they follow Him. They know Him, and they are surrendered to Him...

I say this all the time to our church... but there are no terms in surrender. You are either surrendered to Jesus, or you aren't.

If you're married, I've got a little exercise for you. I want you to go home tonight and say, *Hey baby, there are 168 hours in the week. I'm going to let you be my spouse for 165 of them, but for 3 hours a week, I'm single. But the rest of the time, I'm all yours baby.*

Do you think they will say, *Wonderful!*

Sometimes we go, *Jesus, you can have a couple hours on Sunday. Here are a few dollars, or I'll give you 30 minutes each morning...* but we don't make Him Lord.

This is what we do with Jesus: *Lord you can have every area of my life... but not this...*

See, if He's not Lord of all, then He's not Lord at all.

If He's not Lord of your relationships, your career, your opinions about morality, or your money, He's not Lord at all. If you can't say that Jesus has the final say in every area of your life, you don't really know Him as Lord.

Now, let me explain something really important. I'm not saying that the only people who have it all together are Christians. That would rule out all of us, including me. My life is still all screwed up. I still struggle with sins I've had for years.

What I am saying is that you have to acknowledge that Jesus' claim over your life is total. There is no portion of your life that is off limits.

"My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand."

John 10:27-28 (NIV)

First person vs third person... He saves us. He changes us.

Communion: *Do this in remembrance of Me.*

Bread- His body broken for you. He paid the price for our sins and rebellion.

Wine- Blood represents life. Jesus gave up His life for us. Have you completely given up yours to follow Him? Just as He surrendered His life for you, have you surrendered yours completely to Him?

Take a moment to do that now if you have not.