WHERE AM I? (SPIRITUALLY)

SALVATION

Our understanding is that you are here because you say that you are a Christian, a follower of Jesus Christ. How you have come to that conclusion is important. Many people call themselves “Christians” because they “go to church, Sunday School, prayer meeting, tithe, are involved in some ministry of the church”. Those are all “good” things, but – listen to Jesus in

Matthew 7:21-23 "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 in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, didn't we prophesy in your name, drive out demons in your name, and do many miracles in your name??' Then I will announce to them, 'I never knew you. Depart from me, you lawbreakers!’

Maybe these people believe they are “Christians” because someone led them to “Bow your head and say this prayer and you’ll be saved.”

Let me read an excerpt from the book *Follow Me* by David Platt, that deals with just such an instance and comments on it:

*I have a friend-let's call him John-whose first exposure to the concept of hell was during an episode of Tom and Jerry when he was young. During one particularly vivid scene, Tom was sent to hell for something bad he had done to Jerry. What was intended to be a humorous cartoon scared John to death, and he later found himself at church talking with an older man about what he had seen.   
The church man looked at John and said, "Well, you don't want to go to hell, do you?"   
"No," he responded.   
"Okay, then," the man said, "pray this prayer after me. Dear Jesus ... "   
John paused. After an awkward silence, he realized he was supposed to repeat after the man, and so he hesitantly responded, "Dear Jesus ... "   
"I know I'm a sinner, and I know Jesus died on a cross for my sins," the man said.   
John followed suit.   
"I ask you to come into my heart and to save me from my sin," the man said.   
Again, John echoed what he had heard.   
"Amen," the man concluded.   
Then the man looked at John and said, "Son, you are saved from your sins, and you don't ever have to worry about hell again."   
Surely what that man told my friend in church that day was not true. Surely this is not what it means to respond to Jesus' invitation to follow him. Yet this story represents deception that has spread like wildfire across the contemporary Christian landscape.   
Just ask Jesus into your heart.   
Simply invite Christ into your life.   
Repeat this prayer after me, and you will be saved.*

*Should it alarm us that the Bible never mentions such a prayer? Should it concern us that nowhere in Scripture is anyone ever told to "ask Jesus into their heart" or to "invite Christ into their life"? Yet this is exactly what multitudes of professing Christians have been encouraged to do, and they've been assured that as long as they said certain words, recited a particular prayer, raised their hand, checked a box, signed a card, or walked an aisle, they are Christians and their salvation is eternally secure.*

*It's not true. With good intentions and sincere desires to reach as many people as possible for Jesus, we have subtly and deceptively minimized the magnitude of what it means to follow him. We’ve replaced challenging words from Christ with trite phrases in the church. We've taken the lifeblood out of Christianity and put Kool-Aid in its place so that it tastes better to the crowds, and the consequences are catastrophic. Multitudes of men and women at this moment think that they are saved from their sins when they are not. Scores of people around the world culturally think that they are Christians when biblically they are not.*

Salvation is Conditioned upon one Thing Alone

In the New Testament in about one hundred and fifteen passages, the salvation of a sinner is declared to depend only upon believing, and in about thirty-five passages to depend on faith, which is a synonym of believing. Therefore, the Scriptures are violated and the whole doctrine of grace confused when salvation is made to depend on anything other than believing. The divine message is not "believe and pray," "believe and confess sin," "believe and confess Christ," "believe and be baptized," "believe and repent," or "believe and make restitution." These six added subjects are mentioned in the Scriptures and there they have their full intended meaning; but if they were as essential to salvation as believing they would never be omitted from any passage wherein the way to be saved is stated (note John 1:12; 3:16, 36; 5:24; 6:29; 20:31; Acts 16:31; Romans 1:16; 3:22; 4:5, 24; 5:1; 10:4; Galatians 3:22). Salvation is only through believing in Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:9

NOTE: <

At this point share your testimony using the following outline:  
 1. What my life was like before I gave my life to Jesus.  
 2. How (when) I committed my life to HIM.  
 3. What my life has been like since.  
Place the emphasis on 2 & 3, don’t dwell on 1.>

Close in prayer and let the discussions begin.

DISCUSSION

SCRIPTURES: Matthew 7:21-23; John 1:12; 3:16, 36; 5:24; 6:29; 20:31; Acts 16:31; Romans 1:16; 3:22; 4:5, 24; 5:1; 10:4; Galatians 3:22

Does any of this sound familiar to you?

Where do you stand relative to what has been shared?

How do you answer “Where am I (spiritually)?

Share your testimony using the following outline:

1. What my life was like before I gave my life to Jesus.

2. How (when) I committed my life to HIM.

3. What my life has been like since.

Place the emphasis on 2 & 3, don’t dwell on 1.