

Could a Person Be Lost When He Thinks He is Saved?

How many people examine their lives and conclude they are headed for hell? The number is probably very few. Yet Jesus taught that many are traveling the broad road which leads to destruction (cf. Matt. 7:13). Why is there such a discrepancy?

One reason is that these hell bound folks believe they are saved. Among that throng there will also be those who did not think they were saved but did not consider themselves to be lost either. Of course, there is no middle ground between being lost and saved. If one is not saved then he is lost. However, worldly people do not think very deeply on such matters.

Why might a person be convinced he is saved when in fact he is lost? For some it is because they accepted the doctrine of men. Numerous groups teach salvation is obtained for merely believing in Jesus and confessing His name. The Scriptures do not speak about obeying a form of doctrine to be saved (cf. Rom. 6:17). However, there are also warnings about false doctrine to be avoided (cf. Matt. 15:8, 9; Rev. 2:15). If one accepts error regarding how to be saved, he will be lost (cf. Gal. 1:6-9). God's plan of salvation is easily found in the New Testament. It includes faith and confession but also repentance and baptism for the remission of sins

(cf. Acts 2:38). On the other hand, man's teaching about obtaining salvation cannot be found in God's word.

A favorite trick of the devil is to deceive people into believing a lie (cf. Gen. 3:4; 2 Thess. 2:11, 12). Putting confidence in false doctrine for assurance of salvation is believing a lie. Trusting in feelings about one's relationship with God is also believing a lie.

On the Day of Judgement, many will be surprised that they are lost when they thought otherwise. Many will say to Jesus – "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name? And then [Jesus] will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'" (Matt. 22, 23). Yes, it is quite possible for a person to be lost when he thinks he is saved.

Thankfully, inspired writers reveal the truth that it is possible to know that one is truly saved. 1 John 5:13 reveals the great news that "you may know that you have eternal life." By obeying the gospel a person can be sure he has been saved from sin and will continue to enjoy God's favor as long as he is faithful.

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