

## Day 257– Wednesday, December 2, 2020

This is a five-part series. The following two parts will be sent Thursday & Friday.

### 4 Teachings of Jesus That His Followers (Almost) Never Take Seriously

#### **2. The only way to enter the Kingdom of Heaven is through DOING the will of God.**

*“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 ESV*

*“An expert in the law stood up to test Him, saying, “Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” What is written in the law?” He asked him. “How do you read it? “He answered: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself. “You’ve answered correctly,” He told him. “Do this and you will live.”- Luke 10: 25-28 HCSB*

“We are saved by faith alone, apart from works!” This is a very popular Protestant catch phrase. The doctrine of sola fide (faith alone) was developed by the Reformers in response to the Roman Catholic Churches corrupted teachings that emerged in the 16th Century teaching that one could gain favor with God and shave off years in Hell and Purgatory by giving money to the church or doing acts of penance. The intention of the doctrine of *faith alone* was very good- to correct the error that our salvation could be earned or that God’s grace could be manipulated. But like most doctrines that are formulated *in response* to another group’s doctrine, it often goes too far. One of the clearest teachings throughout all four Gospel accounts is that the way to enter the Kingdom of God is through living in obedience to the Law of Christ. Time and time again, Jesus makes very clear statements that condemn those who think that they will be saved because they believe the right things or do the right religious rituals. Jesus responds to people who believe they are religious and deserve heaven by saying that their outward religiosity is detestable to God and the only thing God desires is that they would exercise their faith by obeying the command of God- to do justice, love, mercy, and walk humbly. (Micah 6:8) Jesus says if anyone claims to be right with God but doesn’t serve the poor, needy, oppressed, marginalized, sick, diseased, and sinful, then they do not have a relationship with God. No matter what they proclaim with their lips. No matter how religious they may appear. Jesus says those who don’t obey will have no part in his Kingdom. He makes very clear that the way to “inherit eternal life” is through loving God and loving our neighbor. Isn’t it astonishing, then, how many Christians today have been taught that salvation comes through right believing instead of right practice- a message that is fundamentally contrary to the words of Jesus. (And even more to his little brother James who says, “You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone.” James 2:24 ESV)

“Life should NOT be a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in an attractive and well-preserved body, but rather to skid in sideways, chocolate in one hand, champagne in the other, body thoroughly used up, totally worn out and screaming “WOO HOO what a ride!” (Hunter S. Thompson)

Sincerely,  
Fr. Jim Kaptein