

# Believers and Professors

by C.I. Scofield

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*C.I. Scofield's sermon emphasizes the critical distinction between true believers and mere professors within the Christian faith, highlighting the implications of each status.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 7:22, Matthew 13:24, Matthew 25:11, Luke 7:50, John 10:27, Acts 8:13

**Topics:** "False Professors", "True Faith"

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## Description

C.I. Scofield preaches about the presence of false believers among true believers, as depicted in the Bible, and how this will continue until the final judgment when the righteous will shine forth in God's kingdom. The Scriptures clearly distinguish between true believers who are saved by faith and mere pretenders who are condemned for their hypocrisy and lack of genuine faith.

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## Transcript

Ever since God has had a people separated to Himself they have been sorely troubled by the presence among them of those who professed to be, but were not, of them. And this will continue until "the Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall Sober out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity... Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father" (Matt. 13:14-43).

Scripture plainly tells us of this mingling of tares and wheat-of mere professors among true believers. Yet misguided students have frequently applied to the children of God the warnings and exhortations meant only for the self-deceived or hypocritical.

The fact of such admixture is abundantly recognized in the Scriptures. (See Gen. 4:3-5; Exod. 12:38; Num. 11:4-6; Neh. 7:63-65; Neh. 13:1-3; Matt. 13:24-30, 37-43; 2 Cor. 11: 13-15; Gal. 2:4; 2 Pet. 2:1-2.

It is impossible, in a brief Bible reading, to refer to all the passages which discriminate true believers from the mass of mere formalists, hypocrites, or deceived legalists, who are working for their own salvation instead of working out a salvation already received as a free gift. (See Phil. 2:12-13 with Eph. 2:8-9.) The following comparison of verses will sufficiently indicate the lines of demarcation.

**BELIEVERS ARE SAVED; MERE PROFESSORS ARE LOST**

**TRUE BELIEVERS**

"And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (Luke 7:50).

"And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42).

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John 10:27-29).

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day" (John 6:37,39).

"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut" (Matt. 25:10).

"Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference" (Rom. 3:22).

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." (Rev 19:7-8).

I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (John 10: 14).

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his" (2 Tim. 2:19).

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John 6:47).

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24).

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6).

"But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Heb. 10:39).

## PRETENDERS

"Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip. But Peter said unto him ... Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God" (Acts 8:13,21).

"They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us" (John 2:19).

"But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come

unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (John 6:64-66).

"Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not" (Matt. 25:11-12).

"Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers! how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Matt. 23:28,33).

"And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: and he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness" (Matt. 22:11-13).

"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:22-23).

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him?" (James 2:14).

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance" (Heb. 6:4-6).

"Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him" (Heb. 10:38).

#### BELIEVERS ARE REWARDED; PRETENDERS ARE CONDEMNED

Compare: Matthew 25:19-23 with Matthew 25:24-30; Luke 12:42-44 with Luke 12:45-47; Colossians 3:24 with Matthew 7:22-23.

Some texts are not free from difficulty, but with prayer and careful study light will surely come when keeping in mind the important rule: Never use a doubtful or obscure passage to contradict a clear and positive one. Do not use an "if" to contradict a "verily": Hebrews 6:6 to contradict John 5:24.

The cases of Judas Iscariot and of Peter should present no difficulty. Judas was never a believer; (see John 6:68-71). Peter never ceased to be one (Luke 22:31-32).

It should be ever remembered that these principles are to guide us only in rightly dividing the Word of God, but are never to be applied to living persons. The judgment of professors is not committed to us, but is reserved to the Son of Man (Matt. 13:28-29; 1 Cor. 4:5).

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