

Works Without Relationship is Rejection

Matthew 7:21–23, KJV 1900	
21. Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have <i>we not <u>prophesied</u></i> in thy name? and in thy name have <i><u>cast out devils</u></i> ? and in thy name done many <i><u>wonderful works</u></i> ? 23. And then will I profess unto them, <u>I never knew you</u> : depart from me, ye that work iniquity	

Cross-references: Matt 7:21–23; John 10:27–28; 1 John 2:3–6, Nehemiah 2:1-8

The goal is to get into the Kingdom of heaven. How do we get into the Kingdom of heaven? The key to getting into heaven is **doing the will of the father** who is in heaven. Some people believe that the name Jesus is the key to access the kingdom of heaven.

Philippians 2:8-11 *"7. Instead, He emptied Himself by assuming the form of a slave, taking on the likeness of men. And when He had come as a man in His external form, 8. He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death— even to death on a cross. 9. For this reason, God highly exalted Him and **gave Him the name that is above every name**, 10. so that **at the name of Jesus** every knee will bow — of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth 11. and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."*

The name **Jesus** means "**the LORD saves**," originating from the Hebrew name **Yehoshua (Joshua)**. This meaning is significant because an angel instructed Joseph to name the child Jesus, "because he will save his people from their sins". For Christians, the name encapsulates the core belief that Jesus provides **salvation** and **reconciliation** with God.

Jesus, the savior said, "I never knew you"....

To say I never knew you, is to suggest several thoughts,

1. We never met before in order to have known one and other.
2. We have met but have not established a relationship

3. We met and established a relationship but had a very bad fallout, went our separate ways and wished we never, ever met!
4. We met but never entered into an intimate relationship!

Therefore, how can Jesus, all wise, all knowing an omniscient God say I never knew you? The statement "I never knew you" is not to suggest, Jesus never physically knew the people. The statement could suggest they never was born into an intimate relationship.

Suggested thoughts on knowing in relationships are:

1. Knowledge Beyond Information

In the biblical sense, "knew" doesn't just mean intellectual awareness. Jesus obviously *knows* everyone as Creator. The word carries **covenantal intimacy**—like when Scripture says **Adam "knew" Eve**, it means **deep relationship**. So, when Jesus says, *"I never knew you,"* He's saying, *"You never belonged to Me. We never had a **covenant relationship**."*

2. Religious Works Without Relationship

The context (Matthew 7:21–23) is sobering:

- Folks are preaching, casting out demons, performing miracles in His name.
- Yet Jesus rejects them because their **hearts were never surrendered**.

This suggests it's possible to do **church work** without ever being in **Christ's will**. Ministry activity can never replace relationship with the Master.

3. The Divine Verdict

This statement functions like a courtroom sentence. Jesus the Judge declares:

- **"Depart from Me"** → separation. (**divorced**)
- "Workers of iniquity" → their deeds looked holy, but their motives were corrupt. It's a warning that outward success in ministry doesn't guarantee eternal acceptance.

4. Theological Weight

Augustine once said:

"Many whom the church has, God has not; and many whom God has, the church has not."

That's the echo of Matthew 7:23. The true test is not our public works but our private walk with Christ.

Bottom line: "I never knew you" is the most chilling statement in Scripture. It reminds us that Heaven's roll call isn't about what we *did* for Jesus but whether we *knew* Him and He *knew* us in relationship.

Therefore, how can Jesus, all wise, all knowing an omniscient God say I never knew you? The statement "I never knew you" is not to suggest, Jesus never physically knew the people. The statement could suggest they never was **born into** an intimate relationship. If that is true and it is possible to be true. The question would be then, what are behaviors we could have done to cause Jesus to say, I Know you?

12 Behaviors we consistently (Ways) do that compels, Jesus to Say, "I Know You"

1) Trust Jesus—and keep trusting

Anchor (KJV): John 6:29

Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

HCSB cross-refs: John 6:29; Romans 10:9–10; Ephesians 2:8–10; 1 John 5:12.

2) Obey what He said (not just hear it)

Anchor (KJV): Luke 6:46–48

And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? Whosoever cometh to me, and heareth my sayings, and doeth them, I will shew you to whom he is like: He is like a man which built an house, and digged deep, and laid the foundation on a rock: and when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently upon that house, and could not shake it: for it was founded upon a rock.

HCSB cross-refs: Luke 6:46–49; John 14:15; 1 John 2:3–6; Matthew 7:24–27.

3) Abide in Him and bear fruit

Anchor (KJV): John 15:5

I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

HCSB cross-refs: John 15:4–10; Matthew 7:16–20; Galatians 5:22–23.

4) Practice real repentance and holy living

Anchor (KJV): 2 Timothy 2:19

Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

HCSB cross-refs: Luke 3:8; 2 Tim 2:19; Hebrews 12:14; 1 Peter 1:15–16.

5) Love people tangibly—especially “the least of these”

Anchor (KJV): John 13:34–35

A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

HCSB cross-refs: John 13:34–35; 1 Corinthians 13:1–3; 1 John 3:16–18; Matthew 25:35–40.

6) Forgive freely

Anchor (KJV): Matthew 6:14–15

For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

HCSB cross-refs: Matthew 6:14–15; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:13.

7) Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly

Anchor (KJV): Micah 6:8

He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

HCSB cross-refs: Micah 6:8; Matthew 23:23; James 1:27.

8) Keep a Word-soaked, prayer-saturated life

Anchor (KJV): Psalm 1:1–3

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

HCSB cross-refs: Matthew 6:6; Acts 2:42; Colossians 3:16; Psalm 1:1–3.

9) Confess Christ publicly and endure

Anchor (KJV): Matthew 10:32

Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.

HCSB cross-refs: Matthew 10:32–33; Hebrews 10:23–25; Revelation 2:10.

10) Join His mission: make disciples

Anchor (KJV): Matthew 28:19–20

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

HCSB cross-refs: Matthew 28:19–20; 2 Timothy 2:2.

11) Walk by the Spirit, not the flesh

Anchor (KJV): Romans 8:14

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

HCSB cross-refs: Romans 8:14–16; Ephesians 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19–21.

12) Build on the Rock, not the stage

Anchor (KJV): Matthew 7:24–25

Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

HCSB cross-refs: Matthew 7:24–27; Luke 6:46–49.

Reflection & Action (This Week)

Relationship: Where am I actively abiding in Jesus each day?

Obedience: What command am I obeying today that I was neglecting last month?

Repentance: What sin am I forsaking—specifically—and what's my guardrail?

Love: Who will tangibly experience Christ's love through me this week?

Mission: Who am I discipling or inviting to follow Jesus with me?

Weekly Action Plan

1. Write one concrete act of obedience and do it by mid-week.
2. Schedule two 15-minute "Word & prayer" appointments.
3. Serve "the least of these" once (call, visit, give, or carry a burden).

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, I trust You. Help us abide, obey, love, forgive, do justice, and walk by Your Spirit. Make our lives a house on the Rock. In Jesus name. Amen.