



## Religious Roots

### Robert Morris

**Focus** There's a difference between religion and relationship. Religion is man's effort to get to God. Relationship through Jesus is God's effort to get to us. The Holy Spirit draws us to Himself and convicts us of our sin. When we submit our will to God and give Him lordship over our lives, we have a relationship with God and we're saved!

**Fun** Give a small gift to one or two people in your group today. Make sure everyone is wearing a nametag; then at the end of your group, have everyone take them off and put them in a container. Draw a name or two out and present your gifts.

**Review** Key Scripture: Matthew 7:21–23

- **Matthew 7:21**

*"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."*

Some people might have attended church all of their lives but still don't know Jesus because they haven't submitted their will to Him.

- **Matthew 7:22**

*"Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?'"*

Many who are involved in service to God aren't saved. Others who attend church often don't have a full understanding of what a relationship with Him means.

- **Matthew 7:23**

*“And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”*

Unless we submit our will to God and choose to let Him take control of our lives, we aren’t saved. Our hearts must be transformed if we want to spend eternity with God. When we’re tempted to fall back into our old ways, we can ask Him to help us because He gives us the power to overcome!

**\*Group Dynamics Idea\***

“Amazing Grace” was written a long time ago, but the words still apply. Read or sing the words after your gathering today.

**Discuss**

1. In Matthew 7:21, the word “does” reflects those who did the will of God. Who are the “many” referred to in verse 22?
2. Define the difference between religion and relationship. Have you ever had to battle religious roots? What does lordship mean to you?
3. We’ve all had to make difficult choices. Share an example of when you chose to set your plans aside to listen to what God was telling you to do. What happened when you submitted to His will?
4. Being strong-willed can get us into trouble sometimes. Share about a time when you struggled to do the right thing. What got you back on track?
5. How has your life changed since you asked Jesus to come into your heart? Have you shared your story with anyone recently? If not, look for opportunities to do this.

**Take Home**

As we conclude, remember the following:

- We aren’t saved by going to church.
- Serving God isn’t enough to get into heaven.
- Laying down our will for His is what’s important.
- To be saved, we must give God control over our lives.
- When we’re tempted to go back to our old ways, God is powerful enough to help us stay strong and overcome.

## **Prayer**

Dear God, I ask You to forgive me for all my sins. I ask You to come into my life today and change me. I receive You today as my Lord and Savior. Thank You, Jesus, for saving me!

## **\*New Leader Tip\***

Begin your study on a positive note by asking if anyone would like to share how they've been blessed this week. Ask your group to bless someone in return during the following week. It's a great way to change the focus from ourselves to others!