

## ALMOST THERE

Mark 12:28-34

(Not entirely original with me)

**Introduction:** There are many who have "almost" become Christians but for various reasons never did. There was a man who asked Jesus some questions about God's laws and Jesus could see that from the questions and the answers that the man gave, he was not far from believing in Jesus and Jesus told him that *"...Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God..." (Mark 12:34)*. The man was so near to the Kingdom of God (being saved) that all he had to do was to yield his heart to what his mind understood. There are many who were "almost there" as this man was but never followed through.

### I. WHEN IS A PERSON "FAR" FROM THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

1. When one's mind is entirely focused on something else other than spiritual thoughts.
  - Not "having time" to think about such religious matters right now.
2. When one's mind is full of worldly and ambitious thoughts and projects.
  - One is focused upon gaining material things, a good reputation, that he/she turns his/her back on religion and thoughts of Salvation.
3. When everything is going well without having "religion" involved.
  - No need for prayer or religious things as all is well as they are.
4. When a person knows little if anything about spiritual things and what he/she might know is confusing.
5. When a person refuses to listen and closes his/her mind to any talk of spiritual matters.
6. When a person is filled with prejudices and false ideas about religious/spiritual things.
  - Such were the Jews in the days of Jesus.
  - Certain ones are "elected" to be saved, one must wait upon "God's time," etc.
7. When one is so prejudiced or biased that they close their ears and will not allow themselves to be told about their lost condition, position in God's eyes.
  - When one is so entrenched in his/her attitude that they refuse to listen to anyone, even family.
8. When a person has no interest or has an open stance against "all" religion.

### II. WHEN IS A PERSON NOT FAR FROM THE KINGDOM OF GOD?

1. When the subject of "religion" comes up, one does not walk away or try to shift the conversation to something else.
2. When a person makes up his/her mind to be honest with God and him/herself.
  - He/she is at the point of really wanting to know what it is that God wants.
  - Such was the case of the man (Scribe) Jesus had the conversation with and to whom Jesus said:  
*"...Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God..."*
3. When a person finds that his/her excuses about not being interested in spiritual matters begin to fail and not ease his/her conscience anymore.
  - When one comes to the place that they just don't have an excuse anymore.
4. When one's thoughts begin to become filled with spiritual matters instead of one's business, and other worldly matters and it is difficult to focus and concentrate on professional duties.
5. When worldly pleasures no longer occupy one's mind and what was once pleasure becomes boring and dull.
  - When things that once occupied one's mind lose their hold and spiritual thoughts begin to creep in and linger longer and longer.
6. When one's conscience becomes so awakened, so pricked, that one is no longer comfortable and his/her mind keeps thinking about spiritual matters.

7. When spiritual darkness goes away and one begins to really see his/her position/standing before God and he/she sees his/her need of the Lord Jesus Christ.
8. When a person is "almost persuaded" to become a Christian.
  - A man told Paul that *"...Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian."*
  - Many have been at this same situation - almost ready, almost persuaded.
  - Right at the gates of the Kingdom of Heaven
9. When a person wrestles with the question of "Shall I accept Jesus now or shall I wait?"
  - How near a person is who is at this point.
  - Almost ready, but still hesitating.
10. Often people are placed in circumstances where they know what they should do, and they must answer yes or no, life or death, Christ or no Christ.
  - The hand of God is beckoning for them to come over the "line."

### III. THE CLOSER TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD, THE MORE CRITICAL THE POSITION

1. The man Jesus was speaking to was right at the line/point of decision.
  - His heart and mind knew what he should do.
2. The more a person is enlightened about the Kingdom of God and the Lord Jesus, the closer he/she is to the Kingdom of God.
  - When a person sees what he/she is in the eyes of God, what God requires, what Jesus did so that whoever believes in Him would have eternal life, the more critical his/her position.
  - The nearer a person is to the Kingdom of God and he/she decides against it, the consequences are far greater than those of a person who never heard, who are in darkness and have never rejected the truth.
  - A man told Paul that he was *"...almost a Christian..."*
  - Another man told Paul to *"...Go thy way for this time, and when I have more convenient season I will send for thee..."*
3. When a person is close to making a decision for the Lord Jesus, Satan is right there.
  - Satan is very crafty and subtle in getting one to wait, to put off, to not make a decision right then.
  - God has a person ready to take that last final step of belief, of commitment but Satan, in his sly ways, brings about delay.
4. Those who have been at the line of decision but have delayed, put off, turned away are in a far more critical position before God than anyone who has never heard the Gospel.

### CONCLUSION:

1. The Kingdom of God is available to every one but there is but one way to get in and it is God's way.
  - Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ
2. Every human being must decide for him/herself if he/she wants to enter God's Kingdom.
3. Every human being will one day stand before the Lord God and give an account of his/her life.
4. The more a person knows about spiritual matters, about the Lord Jesus Christ, about God's Kingdom, the more accountable that person is.
5. Satan is doing all he can to keep people out of God's Kingdom.
6. Have YOU believed in the Lord Jesus Christ?
7. Have YOU been delaying making the decision of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ? WHY?

