

What Is The Christian Life?

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Matt. 16:24-28

Many accept the concept of Christianity without knowing its true meaning.

To some, the concept of Christianity is just being baptized.

To others, the concept of Christianity is just going to church.

To still others, the concept of Christianity is just pleasing their family or neighbors.

True Christianity is more than that — it is living a special life.

A true Christian surrenders himself to the Lord.

Matt. 16:24, *“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.”*

A true Christian doesn't do what he pleases to do, but instead does what pleases God.

- Rom. 6:17-18, *“But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.”*
- Rom. 10:1-3, *“Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”*
- Rom. 15:3, *“For even Christ pleased not himself..”*

Peter thought he had a good idea to build three tabernacles, one for Moses, one for Elias, and one for Jesus. God was not pleased with this because Peter did not submit himself to the words of Jesus, but instead came up with his own ideas.

But God was pleased with Christ. Matt. 17:5, *“While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.”*

In this lesson we will look at the special kind of life that pleases God.

Christianity is a surrounded life

Job enjoyed God's hedge about him.

Job 1:10, "*Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.*"

God did not deny this hedge because Job lived a life firstly that was pleasing to God instead of living a life that was pleasing to himself.

God then allowed Satan to try Job, but He still kept a hedge about him to protect his life.

This hedge was not ornamental, but surrounded Job for protection.

The Christian life today is a surrounded life.

Eph. 2:8, "*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.*"

God's grace covers us when we live a life that is pleasing to Him. Grace is more than Christ dying on the cross for our sins; it includes all of God's plan of salvation.

- Titus 2:11-12, "*For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world,*"
- Rom. 1:16-17, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, *The just shall live by faith.*"*

Jesus Christ and His grace is greater than the world.

- 1 John 4:4, "*Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.*"
- 1 John 2:1, "*My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*"

But that does not mean that we continue to sin willingly.

Rom. 6:1-4, "*What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into*

Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

God's grace surrounds us and protects us when truly love God's word, place it securely in our hearts, and attempt to live by it.

Psalms 119:11, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee."

Christianity is a serving life

Many people want to be served instead of wanting to serve.

The greatest example of a servant is our Master, Jesus.

Mark 10:45, "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Paul served God.

Acts 27:23, "For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,"

Christians are to be servants, as well.

- *Gal. 6:10, "As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."*
- *Matt. 10:42, "And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward."*

Some unhappy people say, "Here I am, serve me!"

We need to have the same attitude that Paul had before his conversion.

Acts 9:6, "And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? ..."

Jesus completed His job as a servant of God.

John 17:4, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

When we perform our duty as a servant, our works will follow us.

- *Rev. 14:13, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea,*

saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.”

- Rev. 20:12, *“And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.”*

Christianity is a spiritual life

We are to walk spiritually.

- John 4:23-24, *“But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.”*
- Rom. 8:1-5, *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit.”*

We must live a life in the flesh, but not after it.

What does it mean to live life after the Spirit?

To crucify (kill) in our lives the desires of the flesh.

- Gal. 2:20, *“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”*
- Rom. 8:13, *“For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.”*
- 1 Pet. 2:11, *“Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul,”*

To put the kingdom of God first in our lives.

Matt. 6:33, *“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”*

That is, the things that are needful, not necessarily the things that we want.

Christianity is a shining life

Christians must be a light of God.

- John 8:12, *“Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.”*
- Matt. 5:14, *“Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.”*

Christians must shine as lights of the world.

Phil. 2:15, *“That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;”*

Live as an example of how a good Christian is to live.

Christianity is a happy life

We must love living a spiritual life.

1 Pet. 3:10, *“For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile:”*

God wants His children to be happy, even under difficult circumstances.

Paul and Silas were an example of being happy under trying times.

Acts 16:19-25, *“And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them into the*

inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks. And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.”

Peter and the other apostles were examples of being happy under trying times.

Acts 5:26-42, “Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him. When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them. Then stood there up one in the council, a Pharisee, named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the apostles forth a little space; And said unto them, Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men. For before these days rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought. After this man rose up Judas of Galilee in the days of the taxing, and drew away much people after him: he also perished; and all, even as many as obeyed him, were dispersed. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and let them alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God. And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.”

The prophets of old suffered, yet were considered to be happy.

James 5:10-11, “Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.”

We, too, should be happy when we suffer for doing the Lord's work.

- 1 Pet. 3:12-14, *“For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil. And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;”*
- 1 Pet. 4:12-16, *“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy. If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters. Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.”*

Get busy as a Christian and happiness will come after you.

