

# What is a Christian?

Many people today completely misunderstand what a true Christian is. People say things like:- She's a good Christian woman because of the good things she does." "I'm a Christian because I was baptised as a baby." "A Christian is someone who goes to church." Yet the bible makes it clear none of these things in themselves make us a Christian. Becoming a Christian is about a **RADICAL** transformation of the heart and life through a living response to Jesus and all that He has done. It is not just about believing certain facts about Jesus or even doing external religious duties. It is about an inward surrender to God and submission to His Son!!

**Discuss** - (In group / or small groups)

**Q1)** In your own words, what do you think a real Christian is?

**Q2)** What evidence would you look for, in a person, to prove the truth of their conversion?

**Q3)** Do you think that it is possible to **really accept Christ** and carrying on living as you did before?

So what do we learn about being a real Christian?

## Truth 1 - Salvation is a gift that is given, it cannot be earned!!

True salvation is not about what we can do to earn God's favour, but is about us submitting and claiming the work of Jesus for ourselves. Jesus is the one who has taken our guilt and shame. He is the one who has taken our sin and paid the cost of our disobedience by dying in our place on that cross. In so doing He has fully satisfied the justice of God and paid the cost that was required because of our sin. God Himself, even though He was the offended one - has paid for the offence Himself by sending His Son to die on behalf of the sinner. Salvation is therefore not earned by man but has been brought by the blood and death of Jesus!!

A true Christian is someone who has responded to this free gift of salvation by :- turning our life away from wrongdoing and selfish. We do this by taking responsibility for our sin and saying sorry to God for our acts of rebellion.

We do this by turning our lives back to God, by putting our full faith and trust in who Jesus is and by submitting ourselves to what He has done for us on the cross. This turning back to God through Jesus means giving up claims we have on our lives and giving our lives completely over to God.

Romans 5 v 6 - 11 \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 1 v 3 - 12, Ephesians 2 v 4 - 10 \_\_\_\_\_

## Truth 2 - Jesus becomes Lord of our lives!!

When we become a Christian we hand over our lives to God and commit ourselves to fulfil God's plan for our lives. Being a Christian is to actively live day by day, year by year, with a willingness to hear and obey God's callings on our lives. Ownership of our lives has past out of our hands into the hands of God. A true Christian does not just know this in their mind, but lives like this day by day. The whole focal point of growth to maturity is that we learn to live under the authority and in obedience to God's Word and Spirit. To declare Jesus as Lord with our lips and yet deny His Lordship over our lives daily is to be a foolish builder who built his house upon the sand. When the storms of life come, your faith will crumble away.

Matthew 7 v 21 -27 \_\_\_\_\_

## Truth 3 - Take on / are given a New Identity

When we become a Christian a number of different things happen that seal and confirm that we are truly "born again" and belong to God:-

**All** sins are washed away by the blood of Jesus - are completely forgiven and - no longer exist in God's eyes.

**Become** a new creature - through the new birth experience. Spiritual new birth is the gateway to a relationship with God

**Become** a child of God - a child of His Kingdom. with God Himself as your Spiritual Father and King.

**The** Holy Spirit comes to live within us opening up intimacy with God, assurance of our salvation and releasing all the provision of heaven to enable us to live a good, successful Christian life that glorifies God.

Galatians also tells us that the Spirit works a transformation in our lives.

Galatians 5 v 16 - 26 says \_\_\_\_\_

**Become** part of a new family - part of the true church of Jesus Christ with all the rights and privileges of this.

**Called** to invest our lives in the building of God's Kingdom in this generation, using the gifts He has given us. As you can see being a Christian is more than just external behaviour, it is more than just a quick prayer at the front, or signing a response card. It is about a new standing, a new life, a new relationship with the God who created us. It is the greatest miracle that God does in our lives, bringing us from death **to** life - Darkness **to** light - Sinner **to** Saint - under God's wrath **to** Under God's blessing

