

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BEING A CHRISTIAN

“A Person Reborn”

Romans 6:3-4

INTRODUCTION

- A. When it comes right down to it, “What does it really mean to be a Christian?”
- B. The noun “Christian” occurs 3 times in the NT.
 - 1. Acts 11:26 – the new “relationship” of the Christian is in view.
 - 2. Acts 26:28 – the new “character” of the Christian is in view.
 - 3. 1 PE 4:16, the new “way of life” of the Christian is in view.
- C. A person could not really be a Christian without knowing the steps he or she took to become one – e. g. MK 16:16; Acts 2:37, 38.
- D. It is important for the Christian to grow in his/her understanding of the real “significance” of what he/she did when he/she became a Christian.
 - 1. EP 1:12, 13 – “trusted” – “after that ye heard” – “the word of truth.”
 - 2. They are those who have obediently “received the word of God” – 1 TH 2:13.
 - 3. They are those who have been “enlightened” – “have tasted of the heavenly gift” – “made partakers of the Holy Ghost” – and have “tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come.” HE 6:4-5.
- E. Questions like theses ought to be asked and meditated on:
 - 1. What did I do?
 - 2. What Have I received?
 - 3. What are the implications and consequences of what I have done?
 - 4. What has happened to me?
 - 5. What have I become?
 - 6. What is different about me?
 - 7. What are the meaning, significance, importance, and value of becoming and being a Christian?
 - 8. What am I now to do?
- F. These matters have much to do with the Christians sense of identity.
 - 1. We shall hardly be successful in living the life of a Christian without the right “slant” on ourselves.
 - 2. We need the peace and strength of an accurate self-understanding, a healthy sense of personal worth.
 - 3. Overcoming temptation requires an adequate perspective on self.
 - 4. A distorted self-image will cause us to project a distorted picture of Christianity to outsiders. Misunderstandings are prevalent about religion and about those who are religious. Cf. MT 5:16.

DISCUSSION

I. A NEW LIFE.

- A. The Christian needs to think of his life as a “new” life. RO 6:4; 2 CO 5:17; RO 7:6.
 - 1. The newness is not physical, but spiritual. 2 CO 4:16.
 - 2. The character of this inner man is the most important thing that distinguishes one human being from another. Cf. EC 9:2-3, 11-12.

3. The Christian values the renewal of his thinking – RO 12:2; EP 4:23.
- B. In effect, the Christian is a “new creations”. GA 6:15; Cf. EP 2:10; JA 1:18.
- II. A NEW PERSON
- A. The new birth.
1. The “born again” person is not some special kind of Christian – if a person is a Christian at all he has been born again. JN 3:3-8; Cf. EK 36:25-27; EP 5:26; TS 3:5.
 2. The Christian has been born to a new hope by the word of God. 1 PE 1:3, 23.
- B. From death to life.
1. The Christian is “alive” in the truest sense. JN 5:24-25; RO 6:10-11, 23; EP 2:1-10; CO 2:12-13.
 2. “Eternal life” can be thought of in both a present and a future sense. TS 1:2; 1 JN 5:13.
- C. From darkness to light. Acts 26:18; EP 5:8; CO 1:13; 1 TH 5:5; 1 PE 2:9.
- D. In Christ. RO 16:11; 1 CO 7:39.
1. Baptism is “into Christ.” RO 6:3; Cf. GA 3:27.
 2. In Christ, there is no condemnation. RO 8:1.
- III. A NEW LOYALTY.
- A. The Christian is indeed a “converted” person. Cf. 1 TH 1:9.
1. Conversion inherently involves change – this case for the better. When change is successful we look back and call it growth.
 2. Without genuine conversion, including repentance, Christianity is meaningless. Cf. MT 4:17; RO 6:16-18.
 3. By God’s grace, the new Christian has won a crucial victory, and he/she needs to continue to make good that victory. 2 PE 2:20-22.
- B. The Christian’s conversion is to the Christ and His will. CO 3:1-4, 17.
1. The Christian is activated by new values. PH 3:4-8.
 2. The Christian decides his/her conduct by a new criterion. EP 5:17.
 3. The lordship of Christ is the Christian’s focal point. Acts 2:36; 1 PE 3:15.
- C. Christ lives in the Christian. GA 2:20.
1. An “old man” has disappeared, and a “new man” has taken his place. RO 6:5-8.
 2. There is an “indicative” and an “imperative” aspect of the “new man.” EP 4:17-24; CO 3:9-10; Cf. RO 13:14.
- D. The Christian’s new loyalty to the Christ is a matter of loving devotion. MT 15:8-9; 22:37-38. Cf. RE 2:2-5 – you are either cold or hot!

CONCLUSION

- A. The Christian is indeed a person reborn. He has reason to think of himself as “blessed.” EP 1:3.
- B. The experience of becoming and being a Christian fixes one’s attention on the glorious future. PH 3:12-14; LK 9:62.
- C. The word “hope” takes on a whole new meaning.
- D. 2 CO 5:17.