

# Are you really a Christian?

“Try your own selves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Or know ye not as to your own selves, that Jesus Christ is in you? unless indeed ye be reprobate.”

2 Corinthians 13:5



## LANGUAGE & CONDUCT

When a person comes to the Lord Jesus Christ in genuine repentance and faith and is saved by God's grace one of the first things that changes is their speech and conduct. James 3:2 says, "For in many things we all stumble. If any stumbleth not in word, the same is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body also." James continues in verse 5, "So the tongue also is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how much wood is kindled by how small a fire!"

James 3:1-12 is all about the change in language and conduct of a Christian. A truly converted sinner will not use profanity and bad language. Their tongue now brings forth pure and clean speech. Ephesians 4:29 says, "Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear."

Peter wrote, "For, He that would love life, And see good days, Let him refrain his tongue from evil, And his lips that they speak no guile And let him turn away from evil, and do good; Let him seek peace, and pursue it. (1 Peter 3:10-11)

Jesus said in Luke 6:45, "The good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth that which is evil: for out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh." We ought to be watchful and mindful of what we say and do.

Jesus gives us a warning about our conduct in Matthew 12:36-37, turn to that portion of Scripture in your Bible and read careful the words of Our Saviour. If as a Christian, we say an unclean word there should be a conviction there and an instant recognition of our error. Colossians 4:5-6 says, "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."

## A LOVE FOR THE WORD OF GOD

The Christian will love the Word of God. There will be a desire to read the Word of God and learn from it. John 14: 23-24 says, "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. "

A Christian will endeavour to read the Bible as often as he can. A verse in the Book of Psalms says, "but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night." (Psalm 1:2).

Another verse in the Psalms reads, “The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple.” (Psalm 19:7).

God has given us His Word so we can know the difference between right and wrong. We can read God's view on matters attaining to the Christian life.

The Bible has been given to us for our blessing and edification. We ought to read the Bible daily and grow in grace and knowledge of Scripture. Jesus said in Luke 11: 28, “But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it. ” God has given us the Scriptures not only to be read, but to be obeyed. The Word of God is for our direction and guidance.

Psalm 119: 105 says, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” James writes, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” Be doers of the Word of God. Scripture is for our own edification and growth in grace. Scripture is a blessing. The Word of God is for our own good.

### **MODEST APPAREL**

How we dress is very important. We make a big statement to the world by what we wear. That is why clothing and dress code is important to the Christian. The child of God will not dress like the world. Due to our salvation we live and behave differently from the world.

As a result of our salvation we live a moral and holy life. How we dress and live is a testimony to the world. Genesis 3:7 says, “Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.” Genesis 3:21 says, “And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.” It is good and wholesome for us to be covered up.

We should not wear clothing and symbols that does not invite the Spirit of the Lord. Jesus said in Matthew 5:28, “But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” This also goes for women to. If a man or a woman looks with lust at another person, they have committed the sin of sexual immorality. That is why it is very important we dress in an appropriate way that does not cause yourself or others to stumble. In 1 Timothy 2:9 Paul writes, “likewise also that women should adorn themselves in respectable apparel, with modesty and self-control, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly attire.”

Modesty in dress displays a modest and godly nature and heart. We are to profess godliness by the way we dress. For both men and women that means you should not dress in a way that causes others to lust. It is very important as a Christian that we dress in a way that shows godliness, modesty, worship to God and if married faithfulness to our spouse.

### **A LOVE FOR THE CHURCH**

A true child of God will love his/her brothers and sisters in Christ. 1 John 3:14 says, “1 John 3:14 We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.” The one who is born of God will love the people of God. This means the Christian enjoys the company of fellow believers.

The believer is most happy when in the presence of fellow saints. He desires a close fellowship with the church of God. The Christian will want to be an encouragement and blessing to the fellowship. The Christian will loving point out errors in the church and provide a biblical way forward so that the church will not fall into sin.

When pointing out error the Christian will do this for the well-being of the fellowship and show from Scripture the godly way forward.

A truly saved Christian will not seek to destroy the church. It is the desire of the Devil to come and destroy the church. A Christian will desire to build up the church in righteousness and will desire to see the Lord add to the church.

## **SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD**

Ephesians 5:19 says, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." In the previous verse the Bible says to be "filled with the Spirit." The Christian should be filled with the Holy Spirit meaning that the believer should delight in godliness.

Before salvation we were servants to self and to our sinful desires and pleasures. We ought to have an agreeable Spirit when it comes to things of the Spirit. The Christian should fight against the flesh and there should be a daily battle against sin. Due to God's grace poured out on His people we now love the things God loves and hate the things God hates, namely our own sin.

The enemy of the church is the Devil. The intention of the evil one is to destroy God's people. One way he does this is by tempting us to sin and to fall back into our old ways of living. This is why it is important to put away and to reject the former things we once embraced as non-believers.

Some examples of this would be unclean movies, books, television shows and the things of the world. It is a wise decision to cease from those things that does not invite the Spirit of the Lord.

We must be watchful to not allow anything unholy into our lives and homes. We should get rid of our Hollywood movies that promote a message that is not in keeping with Scripture. The Bible says in Proverbs 4:23, "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

The Bible will keep you from sin or sin will keep you from the Bible. We should consider how we spend our time. Do we spend our time in a constructive way that will benefit our soul and walk with God?

We ought to consider the company we keep. We may have to break friendships and links with people we once spent time with. For example, as a Christian we cannot socialise with people who are involved with sinfulness such as drunkenness, sexual immorality and night clubs. In some cases you will not have to end friendships with people, they will break away from you. As soon as they see a change in you and realise that you no longer have the same interests as they do the breakdown of friendship will come. One thing among many we will have to check is our music collection and what we listen to as Christians. We cannot please God with music that has fleshly lyrics such as some rock & roll and rap music.

We can remain friends with unbelievers, but we must not compromise our standing before God and the world. We ought to protect our testimony. It is of great importance that we are mindful of how we conduct ourselves around those who are not Christians. 1 Peter 2:12 says, "Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."

Christian people should seriously consider the things they do and view. Worldly and sinful music and entertainment has no place in the Christian home and life. Romans 6:20-21 says, "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death." Consider this passage very carefully indeed. This is an important part of Holy Writ and should be taken to heart. When we were unconverted, we were slaves to sin. We sinned because we loved to sin. We rebelled because we loved to rebel. We followed the fleshly desires because we had pleasure in them. We obeyed the standards of the world because they thrilled us. Romans 7:5 says, "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death." Now we have been

changed by God's grace and mercy, the former things should not give us any satisfaction or gratification in any way. We are new creations in Christ Jesus, saved for His glory and honour. This is how we ought to live.

We have been made free in Christ. Free from the bondage of sin. Free from the destructive vices or the devil, who wishes to destroy the body, mind and soul. The so-called "free society" that exists in the United Kingdom and many Western nations is not free by any stretch of the imagination. It is nothing but bondage, slavery and drudgery to the sinful desires of the flesh.

The Bible speaks about those who promise liberty, while they themselves are slaves of corruption. True freedom and real joy comes from knowing the Lord Jesus Christ and obeying His commandments, for our enjoyment and well-being. If we want to have victory over sin and joy in the Christian life, then we must put the flesh to death.

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