

TRUE AND FALSE CHRISTIANITY

Galatians 5:1

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: In the early days of the Church getting started, many of the Christian Jews were very strong in uniting Christianity with their Jewish legal observances and ceremonies. They wanted to include uniting Jewish legal observances with Christianity as an additional ground for Salvation and succeeded for a while in introducing this corruption into the Christian Churches. The freedom, liberty of love, of justification and of sanctification by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone was being contaminated. Jesus Christ freed people from being enslaved to rituals, ceremonies, laws and creeds and He mentioned that He came to make all things new. Sadly, however, even in today's time there are mingled within true believers, true Christianity, false believers who have a wrong and false view of what true Christianity is all about.

I. FALSE CHRISTIANITY/RELIGION PEOPLE ARE STILL ENSLAVED

1. There are those who profess to be Christians but "religion" is not their deepest interest.
 - Their "Christianity" is like a child's life in which he/she chooses to play rather than to truly worship.
 - Worship is not what they naturally turn to as being the main object of their affections.
 - Their attention is somewhere else, even when they are outwardly professing to be Christians.
2. To these, "Christianity" is more like a secondary thing, not great, not commanding, not prominent, but stuck in some corner.
 - They hurriedly do their prayers, read the Scriptures while their minds are actually elsewhere.
3. Worship, to them, is more of an act of conscience rather than of the heart, not drawn by love, but by a guilty conscience feeling.
4. Their "religion" is not included in what makes them happy. They can't be happy with it or without it as their conscience bothers them either way.
5. They are religious for the same reason that they take medicine. Only when they are sick do they take medicine, and only when their conscience bothers them do they attend to religious matters.
6. Their "religion" is not loved for its own sake, but only as something that will can not be quickly forgotten.
7. "Religion" is regarded by these kind of "Christians" as important, yet not the most loved thing in their lives.
8. If these people ever encourage anybody else to become involved in worship or such, they stress the need to attend, more than the results of being blessed.
9. These "false" worshippers want to impress others with their being "religious."
10. These people look at their religion as a duty they must attend to in order to prepare them for their death someday.
11. They do not enjoy their faith and never expected to be happy, therefore believing that Christianity will be more appreciable and enjoyable in Heaven than down here.
12. They use their "religion" as a restraint to keep them from being so sinful and as a whip to urge them on to religious duties.
 - They feel that they must be religious or they will be damned.
13. They calculate how much they think they need to participate in religious matters to "do their share."
 - Upon doing "their share" they back away and attend to their own affairs.
14. They figure out how little they can get along with doing, giving, praying, reading God's Word and still get into Heaven.

II. TRUE CHRISTIANITY/RELIGIOUS PEOPLE ARE FREE

1. True Christianity is deliberately chosen by a person by his/her belief in the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. Believing in the Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest thing that a person can have and do.
3. Believing in Jesus Christ is the supreme, eternal choice compared to every other consideration, all possible choices in the world and life.
4. True Christianity (belief in the Lord Jesus Christ) is what harmonizes, unites and has all powers that can make up one's earthly life.
5. True Christianity is the only thing that constitutes real, permanent happiness.
6. True Christianity casts out fear - fear of hell, fear of disgrace, fear of others, and bathes the mind of the believer in an ocean of love and peace.
7. The true believer yields his/her soul in obedience to all the requirements of God, happily, joyfully.
 - God has plans for every life and the true believer delights to pursue God's plan for his/her life.
 - As husband and wife mutually love each other and give and support each other willingly, so is the relationship with God and the believer.
8. The true believer never yields to God through force but always prefers the will of God whenever it is known, regardless of his/her own personal desires even those expressed in prayer.
 - A true believer always prefers God's will over his/her own.
 - A true believer is never miserable for submitting to the will of God.
9. The true believer never submits to God's will as he/she would to taking a dose of medicine, but it is more like eating his/her favorite food.
10. The true believer does not think about how little spiritual matter he/she can get by with, but how much more he/she can obtain.
11. The true believer does not figure out how much sin he/she can get by with and still get to heaven or how much sin he/she can get into and still be a child of God, but how holy can he/she become.
12. For the true believer, Christianity/Religion makes up his/her happiness and it is his/her continual exercise of spiritual things that blesses him/her.

CONCLUSION:

1. How disgusting it must be in the sight of God to see people professing to be God's children engaged, heart and soul in pursuing their own earthly joys determined to do their own thing.
2. People who "play" at being Christians are stumbling blocks to others.
3. False Christianity is more dishonorable to God than no "religion" at all.
4. People who have left their first love, if ever Jesus Christ was their first love, are entangled in nothing more than slavery, knowing what it is to be free, yet choosing to be re-enslaved.
5. Which are you? To which do you belong? Are you a TRUE Christian, living, loving, desiring the Christian life, devoted to God, obedient to His every command?
 - Or are you just pretending to be a Christian, worshipping, praying, reading God's Word, whenever your conscience tells you that you need to.
6. *"...Be ye not deceived, for God is not mocked..." "...If the Son hath made you free, then are ye free indeed..."*
7. So, which are you? Real, True, or a Pretender?