

CHRISTIANS ARE DIFFERENT FROM EVERYONE ELSE

2 Corinthians 4:7-12

Introduction: There is quite a difference between Christians and Christianity for there are those who attempt to imitate the real, genuine thing. There are millions of "church members" but not all of them are "real Christians." Not all "Christian organizations" are authentic parts of God's Church. Paul wrote about people being "fake" Christians, as they were mixing the truths of Christ with the traditional Jewish beliefs. So, just who are the "real" Christians?

I. GOD MADE MAN FOR A SPECIFIC PURPOSE

1. God intended for people to be a type of container made of earth, clay pots, "vessels."
 - People are intended by God to contain something.
 - What do you use containers for in your home?
 - The life without Jesus is like a container that is empty.
 - Empty containers are just that - empty, having nothing within, just an empty container.
 - Every human being is to be a container, to hold something God has in mind.

2. The human body is made up of the components of the earth, dirt, clay.
 - The human body is of little real value regardless of what a person thinks he/she is worth, the flesh is of little value.
 - True there are some kinds of soil, earth, dirt, clay that have more value than the other, however no matter how used, eventually it cracks, crumbles and becomes useless.
 - Think about it - we are all composed of just earth from the original form, Adam, but we have all been made to hold something, although our bodies are of little value in themselves.

3. God made us to hold something very valuable.
 - We are here to hold a priceless treasure. Something the whole world needs and should have.
 - We are to hold "power." Power beyond anything mankind has ever seen.
 - It brings together, harmonizes, gathers, breaks down walls and barriers, and can change a person's life or an entire society.
 - However, this power is imitated, copied, made to appear like the real thing, fooling a lot of people, but whenever it is tested against the real thing (Christ), it's falseness comes out.
 - We are made to hold Jesus Christ. (*Colossians 1:26-27*) (*1 Corinthians 6:19*)
 - The real thing is: CHRIST IN US! Not someday to take us to heaven, but everyday living within those who believe in Him.
 - Think about it! God puts His Son within us, faulty, weak, sinful people in order that we might have abilities that we did not have at our birth.
 - Another thing, God delights to manifest His life and grace through weak, faulty, sinful people like us.

II. HOW CHRISTIANS ARE TO LIVE (2 Corinthians 4:8-9)

1. Christians continue to have the same difficulties common to everybody.
 - Becoming a Christian does not give one a smooth, easy life and where all hardships are smoothed over and one lives a life of peace and ease.
 - Christians often have more difficulties and pressures than non-Christians.
 - Afflictions such as family difficulties, sickness, job problems, etc.
 - Perplexities such as loss, fears, anxieties, worries, uncertainties, decisions, etc.
 - Persecutions such as misunderstandings, being ignored, insults, character attacks, etc.
 - Catastrophes such as things happening without warning, accidents, frightening, etc.
 - However Christians are to react differently.
 - Christians have THAT POWER within that pushes back equally against whatever comes from outside the Christian's life protecting the Christian from destruction and despair.
 - The home of the Christian is different because CHRIST IS THERE.

III. HOW CHRISTIANS ARE DIFFERENT (2 Corinthians 4:10-11)

1. Christians identify with and accept the meaning and result of the death of Jesus.
 - The cross brought an end to people having to live evil lives. God got rid of what stood between people and Him - Sin, by the death of His Son, Jesus.
 - Ego and Self are no longer running the life of a Christian for the Holy Spirit guides and directs.
 - The Christian allows Jesus to live His life through his/her earthly body and life.
 - With self and ego gone from the Christian's life, Jesus is free to work and "shine."
2. The secret to being helpful and useful to others is by dying to SELF.
 - With self out of the way and Jesus controlling the Christian's life, others can see that Christians have something that they don't have and wish they did.
 - The Christian is blessed and everyone around that Christian can be blessed as well.

CONCLUSION:

1. Christian, remember that YOU, WE are made to hold Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit indwells us and that is God's purpose and plan for all mankind.
2. Christian, we are different from non Christians and we are to act like it for we are quite able to do so for if we have indeed surrendered our all to Jesus, He will be living His life withing/through us.