

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

John 3:16



FAITH... OUR CHRISTIAN ANCHOR

(Message 1 of 4)

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Perhaps the most known scripture of the bible is John 3:16, when Nicodemus came to Jesus at night wanting to know how to inherit the Kingdom of God. While this scripture seems quite simple, it incorporates many elements that define the true meaning of being a Christian.

We know that the first element is faith in God and Christ, as Hebrews 11:6 teaches us, “But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.” Then, how does faith enter our hearts? Paul in Romans 10:17 provides the most direct and clear answer; “So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” In essence, we hear the Word of God through true ministers of God, through the study of God’s Word, and other reliable sources teaching the pure Word.

Then, it’s a matter of attitude on our part; in other words, believing means to put our actions where our mouth is. Gal 2:20 states, “I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

How is that working in our lives right now?

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“And whatever you do in word or deed,
do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,
giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

Col 3:17



TRUE FAITH... A HEART ATTITUDE

(Message 2 of 4)

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True Christianity is not found in ceremonies, liturgies or even religions. Rather, it is found in the heart of those who believe in Christ as Savior, thereby making Him Lord over their lives.

That's why Paul in Col 3:23-24 said, "And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ." In essence, our attitude should always be to honor, praise and worship God in whatever we do in life. Paul also added in Col 3:2, "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth." Clearly, our hearts must focus on God and not the world's futile attractions.

Therefore, as true believers, our heart's focus should be to incorporate Christ in all aspects of our lives, whether it is family, friends, career, sports or entertainment. In essence, all our activities must honor God rather than follow the world. Like Paul said concerning the love of money and all its perversions, "But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness." (1 Tim 6:11).

If we confess Christ as Lord, shouldn't Jesus' words in John 14:15 echo strongly in our hearts, "If you love Me, keep My commandments?"

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What measure could we use to know whether we really are true believers in Christ? Jesus answered this quite clearly in the featured scripture... “The works that I do he will do also.”

In clear language, if our actions aren't where our mouth is, we're fakes and only deceive ourselves as James 1:22 says, “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” True Christianity in action incorporates what Paul's said in Eph 2:10, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

While salvation is not based on works, as some religions falsely teach, they are however part of the Christian walk once we believe in Christ by faith. What works, or perhaps we should call it “walking the talk” mean, is that it represents living as Christ taught us. This in turn pleases the Father and demonstrates to ourselves and God that we truly believe and thereby live according to God's Word.

Weren't Jesus last words “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit?” (Mat 28:19) When's the last time we shared the message of salvation with anyone?

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The featured scripture gives us a clear understanding that to be a true believer in Christ, we must do the will of the Father. It also leaves no doubt in our minds that to enter God’s Kingdom, surrender and obedience to God’s Word is required, and not simply an option.

Many scriptures describe hypocrites and liars this way: “They profess to know God, but in works they deny *Him*, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.” (Titus 1:16) Then, Jesus quoting Isaiah said, “These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.” (Mat 15:8-9)

Unfortunately, our society has refined the system of deception to an extreme that it teaches the world’s definition of love in complete opposition of God’s commandments. People declare themselves Christians, yet live and profess like the world. That’s why the apostle John said, “My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.” (1 John 3:18)

The warning for all is, do we live our faith, or do we simply pretend to believe in our own watered down version of God’s Word? Isn’t it time for self-examination?

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