

The Profile of a Christian
Defining a Believer
6/30/2019 Sunday AM

Scripture: Colossians 3:1-17

Introduction

- This morning we are going to discuss **The Profile of a Christian: Defining a Believer.**
- In our world today, it seems that we need some clarity around what is meant by the title Christian.
- **Merriam Webster** gives this definition, “one who professes belief in the teachings of Jesus Christ.”
- **Google** gives this definition, “a person who has received Christian baptism or is a believer in Christianity.”
- **James Dobson’s Focus on the Family** says, “The term “Christian,” as we understand it, refers to anyone, man, woman, or child, who trusts in Jesus Christ as his or her Savior and Lord and who strives to follow Him in every area of life”
- **Franklin Graham** says, “A Christian is a man, woman, or child who has experienced a spiritual new birth through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. That new birth is a gift of God, through Jesus Christ, given by the grace He freely offers to all.”
- What all four of these definitions have in common is their reliance on Jesus Christ and believing in Him.
- This morning we will seek to study the Scriptures to understand what it means to be a Christian and to look at the attributes and characteristics that should make up and define a believer.

John 3:3

“In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.”

- In Jesus’ dialogue with the Jewish religious leader Nicodemus, he plainly says that a person must be “born again” in order to make it to Heaven.
- Being born again literally means “to be born from above.” It is a spiritual regeneration that takes place as the Holy Spirit renews us into right alignment with God the Father.

Romans 10:9-13

⁹That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. ¹¹As the Scripture says, “Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.”

¹²For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile--the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, ¹³for, “**Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**”

- Paul explains clearly in his passage how a person obtains salvation. **Step 1:** Confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord. **Step 2:** Believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead.
- Once you have done both of these things, then “you will be saved.”
- This is the moment that the rebirth mentioned in **John 3:3** happens.
- You surrender your entire body, mind, and soul over to Jesus Christ, as the Lord of your life.
- This is when the shackles of your past are broken, you are made new, and are freed from the bondage of sin.
- What **v.13** is saying in this passage is that “everyone” has the opportunity to obtain salvation whether they be Jew or Gentile because it all has to do with calling on the name of Jesus as Lord of all.

- So, what we have so far, is that a Christian is someone who confesses that Jesus Christ is the Lord of their lives, they believe fully that God raised Jesus from the dead, and at that moment of surrender, the Holy Spirit regenerates that believer and they are born again.
- **What did Franklin Graham and James Dobson say?** “A Christian is a man, woman, or child who has experienced a spiritual new birth through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. That new birth is a gift of God, through Jesus Christ, given by the grace He freely offers to all.” That person “trusts in Jesus Christ as his or her Savior and Lord and who strives to follow Him in every area of life”
- I think that sums up what nicely what a Christian is, now, what does one “look” like?

Colossians 3:1-17

¹Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. ⁵Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. ⁷You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. ¹¹Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, but Christ is all, and is in all. ¹²Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. ¹³Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. ¹⁵Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. ¹⁷And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

- **Vv.1-4** – Paul is writing here to Christians in Colossae and he is imploring them to put their hearts and minds on Godly things and not on things of this world.
- He is reminding them that when they were saved, they died to their old life and now they should be walking in their new life which is “hidden with Christ in God.”
- **V. 5** – Here Paul tells them plainly to “Put to death” these things which belong to their old earthly nature: “sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry.”
- **V.6** – The list mentioned above is the reason “the wrath of God is coming.”
- **V.7** – These are ways that people used to walk in **BEFORE** they were Christians!
- **V.8** – “But now you must **rid yourselves** of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.”
- **Vv.9-10** - “⁹Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being **renewed** in knowledge in the image of its Creator.”
- **V.11** – This verse correlates back to **Romans 10:13**.
- **V.12-17** – Paul now turns to how a Christian should “look” **AFTER** their regeneration. ¹²Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with **compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience**. ¹³Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. **Forgive as the Lord forgave you**. ¹⁴And over all these virtues **put on love**, which binds them all together in perfect unity. ¹⁵Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. **And be thankful**. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. ¹⁷And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.
- We have a clear understanding as to what a Christian is, it is simply a follower of Jesus Christ.
- A believer is marked by Christlike living, the way we treat each other, and the way we treat outsiders.
- It is not a hereditary title that is passed down from generation to generation.
- **To be a Christian is not simply a title at all, but a lifestyle that is modeled after our Lord Jesus Christ.**
- It is a personal relationship with Jesus, where you surrender your life into his hands and trust him to lead, guide, and direct your life, down to the very steps you take.
- **When you call yourself a Christian, make sure your credentials are valid and you don't get caught with a fake ID!**

Wednesday Night Bible Study:

Romans 15:14-33