

# "The Nature of True Christianity"

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Galatians 5:24 "And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

It seems to be a common question within and without the Church these days: "why are so many professing Christians living as if they were unconverted?" According to the latest statistics, the divorce rate among Christians has now surpassed that of non-believers. We are witnessing in these times Pastors and Evangelists falling into gross sin and leaving the ministry. Our meetings have become nothing other than entertainment parlors and the success of our ministries is based upon externals such as numbers and facilities.

It seems that the spiritual war we are fighting is taking a toll on us. The average believer is as carnal as the average unbeliever. You cannot tell the difference between the two any longer. The true nature of Christianity seems to be a rarity indeed. Why are we experiencing such a rash of secularism and carnality within the Christian ranks? The answer is clear; we have not crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

The true nature of Christianity is plainly spelled out here by the Apostle Paul. Those that belong to Jesus Christ have (past tense) crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. That means all of the love of the world and the things that are in the world are nailed to the Cross of Christ Jesus. The problem is that we want to hang on to our love for the world and the things therein. We are not willing to take them to the Cross to be crucified, therefore we are still governed by their control.

Jesus said in John 12:24 "...Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." We are unfruitful in our Christianity because we have been unwilling to take that old Adam like nature to the Cross to be crucified. We remain under the mastery and control of the old nature, governed by its carnal impulses and cravings. James said, when a man is tempted he is drawn away and enticed by his own lusts! We continue in sin and under the power of its control because of our own love for sin. Soon the love for sin becomes slavery to sin!

Christian let me speak to your heart today: "Until you take that old nature to the Cross, with all of its lusts and worldly appetites, you will never experience the power of the resurrection that brings victory to the believer!" There cannot be a resurrection until there is a crucifixion. This is why the Apostle said: "I die daily!"

Every day we have choices. We can choose to partake of the cup of the world or the cup of Christ Jesus. The cup of the world is sweet to the taste but once it is swallowed it begins its work of death. The cup of Christ Jesus is bitter to the taste but once it is swallowed it begins to work life in the heart of all who partake of it. (Matt 20:22-23)

Paul chose to drink of the cup of Christ. The bitter cup of Christ meant being shipwrecked and in the sea for three days and nights. It meant being imprisoned and beat with forty stripes. It meant being pelted with rocks and robbed. It meant being mocked and scorned. Yet Paul said; "it is not I that liveth but Christ who liveth in me!" Paul's life had become as a grain of corn. It had fallen into the ground and died, yet it produced much fruit. You cannot produce life without experiencing death but Paul said: "O death where is thy sting?"

The last shall be first in the Kingdom of God and the least shall be the greatest. The weakest shall be the strongest and the most humble shall be the most exalted. The most disregarded shall be regarded the most and the most unworthy shall be most worthy. The one who serves the most shall lead the best and the forsaken shall never be cast away.

God hates worldly wisdom. He is not concerned about our degrees or pedigrees. Our prestige and influence are meaningless before Him and our accomplishments are as dung before Him. God wants us to come to Him as a little helpless child seeking to do His will and not our own. Our theological insight and precise homiletics with poetic deliveries are as a sounding brass, utterly despicable before the God of wisdom who rules in majesty! God is looking for brokenness and contrition from His dear children!

God is looking for the true nature of Christianity in all of us.