

“OUR CHRISTIAN CHARACTER”



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God’s whole desire for us in this Gospel Age is that we not only have the image of Christ but to grow up and be developed into a full stature of Christ. To be like Him, to see things as He sees them, to value things as He values them, and to live and walk as He did while on this earth.

That is the example that we are to follow, and we can never afford to get away from it if we ever expect to receive Eternal Life. That is what we need God to do in our Christian life. Teach us, day by day, and work on our Christian characters to develop us into full grown men and women in Christ Jesus and be no more like little children as Paul tells us in Ephesians 4:14, *“be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive us.”*

We are to receive God’s full Truth and live by it and become full grown men and women in the very stature of Jesus Christ. It is all by letting God do the work within us and not to try to do it of ourselves. We just need to be willing to let God have full control of our lives, and then He can teach us and develop us into the very image of Christ.

John tells us in 1st John 2:6 that, *“He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.”* Fully trusting in God because we cannot do this in our own strength. And, above all things, we are to take the same attitude to God as Jesus took to His Father in Heaven.

Then, we will become as loyal to God as Jesus was, love God as He loved Him, and trust God as He

trusted Him. He never laid up even a penny for His future and didn’t even have a room to sleep in.

Matthew 8:20, *“And Jesus saith unto him, the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.”*

That is quite different than what we sometimes think we need. As the late Pastor said, “We sometimes make ourselves a pretty fine nest.” But Jesus never had that, He trusted His Father every day for His daily bread.

We are also to take the same attitude to our fellowman as Jesus did. He never resented anything anybody ever did, neither did He try to right His wrongs or even use a human effort. We are called to walk, and talk, and act the way He did.

1 Peter 2:18-23 tells us, *“Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thank-worthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously:”*

When we have Christ dwelling within, we will take the same attitude, and it will be no trouble to take it. It was no trouble for Jesus to meet His wrongs right. He never said a word to try to defend Himself. When we are fully conformed to the image of Christ, it becomes just as easy and a real pleasure to walk as Jesus walked and to meet things as He met them.

You will notice that those who have not the Holy Spirit, will easily flare up if you say or do something to disturb them. For them to flare up, eases up their pent-up feelings. That is just those who have not their trust in God to right their wrongs.

But when God takes control of a person’s heart, it is just as easy, pleasant, and delightful for them to meet the situation as Jesus would meet His

wrongs. It is an entirely different nature dwelling within, that is God’s plan for us.

When Christ gets possession of our lives, we won’t have that urge to settle things on our own because it won’t be any trouble at all to meet things right. We may be tempted at times, but it is only a temptation. When we have the very nature of Christ fully developed in us, then we will find pleasure in meeting things as Christ met them.

That’s the great difference between the Christians of the Bible and the professing Christians of today. Bible Christians had real spirituality; they were not different people; they were just as helpless and hopeless as we are, and they allowed God to teach and develop them.

Elijah was one of the greatest prophets in the Old Testament. We may have looked on him as some kind of a different person than we are, or maybe he had something about him that people don’t have today. But he wasn’t any different, in himself.

James tells us in his fifth chapter that Elijah was a man of like passions as we are. It was because Elijah allowed God to possess him, and what he allowed God to do for him.

It’s just the same as anyone else that we read about in the Bible, the Hebrew children, Elisha, Daniel and even Abraham. Abraham allowed God to teach him, develop him, and to work on his character. That’s what made him such an example for us.

When James tells us that Elijah was a man of like passions as we are, he meant that he was not any different than we are. He was born with that same evil nature as we were born with and under the same control of the devil and self that we are. But Elijah allowed God to teach and develop him and that made all the difference in the world.

He had the same opposition from the devil and the self-life ruling and reigning within. He was not the least bit different, naturally, than any of us, and that is very valuable to know, because we can have the same answers to prayer that he had.

James continues—*“Elijah earnestly prayed that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. He prayed again and*

the Heavens gave forth rain and the earth brought forth her fruits." This remarkable answer to prayer was an example inspired by the Holy Spirit, placed in the fifth chapter of James, to let you and I know that we have the same God with us today that Elijah had with him back in the Bible. We can have that same kind of faith and the same attitude to God and receive the same answers to prayer.

Of all the things that Satan has tried to convince people of, is that God has changed. People today cannot have the same results in their life that they had in the Bible. God will not teach and develop them, and He won't hear and answer their prayers.

That is a great delusion that Satan tries to make professing Christians in the world believe. That puts them right out of any hope for time and Eternity. Because, the very moment we accept a changed Christ, there is no Christ. We are done, lost forever.

The foundation of all Truth is that God has never changed, nor can He ever change. Since this is so, that means that we can have the same results, the same answers to prayer, and best of all, the same spirituality that they had in the Bible.

God will teach any one of us that will let Him take control until we are able, as Malachi tells us, "To discern between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not."

Paul says the same thing in 1 Corinthians 2:15, "*he that is spiritual judgeth (or understands) all things, yet he himself is judged (or understood by) no man.*" That means he understood but anyone with a carnal mind could not understand him.

The great difference between Christians in the Bible and professed Christians of today is that Bible Christians were taught by God and the professed Christians of today are taught by man. The sad result is that they have become blind to the real Truth of God. Jesus said, "*If the light in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness.*"

When God sees a chance to work with us, He will work rapidly because the possibility of our being in the last days is pretty certain, and His desire is that we all shall be saved. Although, sad to say, there will not be many who will turn to Him in faith. As

Matthew 22:14 tells us, "*Many are called, but few are chosen.*"

Of course, nobody knows but God Himself, but [it certainly looks as though we are in the closing days of the gospel age. We would be wise, by God's Grace, not to do anything that would hinder our preparation for Eternal Life.](#)

One of the plagues, after the supernatural judgements, will destroy one third of the population of the earth. That is just one plague, and there will be several more. Some people might wonder what the object of all this is, but one is to warn people of the Lake of Fire. The harder and more desperate our pathway is, the more it is a warning against a more terrible fate that is lying just ahead of us.

The Lake of Fire is a most terrible place, and it is real. This terrible trouble that is coming on this earth, is a final and stern warning of the fate that awaits people if they don't repent. It is also a proof to man that he cannot make either himself or this world go right by his own efforts.

This is all happening because of man trying to go through life without God, ignoring God, and trying to restore the Garden of Eden and find perfect happiness; all by their own efforts.

Man has had six thousand years to try to do this, but all his human efforts have turned out to be worse than useless. Everything has turned out to be just opposite to what he expected.

This make this world ripe for Christ's coming and for the millennium, to prove that only God can make this world what it should be. And only God who made the Garden of Eden in the beginning, can make this world again like the Garden of Eden.

That is what we need to stop and think about, because it is the same as in our individual lives. We start out to make our own way in this world, having certain ambitions and goals that we are seeking, and of course, in most cases we fail. We find out that we are helpless of ourselves. Then, God can get in and do something for us.

Once we get rid of our own efforts and dependence on ourselves, then He can work. God wants to work in our lives, He wants all to be ready,

but unfortunately, there will only be a comparatively few that will be ready.

That place will be so grand, so wonderful, so glorious, tongue cannot describe it. A place that we cannot afford to miss. There is nothing in this world that we could afford to take part in if it would hinder our preparation for that glorious place.

The other place is so totally opposite, but again, tongue cannot describe it. The lake of burning Sulphur is so terrible and torturing and everlasting that tongue cannot describe it.

We are a wonderfully made people, made in the image of God, but turned out to be in the image of the devil, through Adam's sin and rebellion. But, through the work of Jesus Christ on Calvary's Cross and the power of God, we can be brought back to the image of God.

We can't afford to lose any time about it nor afford not to make the most rapid progress in getting prepared for Eternal Life—and in escaping the things that will be coming to pass very shortly. We have no other course to pursue, except to fully accept God's plan in its entirety. That is our only hope.

There is nothing else to look to, nothing else worth having. We just have to (by the grace of God) meet things as His Word says and have Him shape our Christian character fully into the very image of Jesus Christ and trust in God alone for everything. That is our only hope.



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