

"THE BIBLICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE TRUE CHRISTIAN"

2 CORINTHIANS 5:14-21

TEXT: VERSE 17

INTRO: **WHAT IS A TRUE CHRISTIAN?** If we were to go into the streets of Altoona and ask that question, no doubt we would get a number of answers including:

- One who was brought up in a Christian home.
- One who has been baptized and goes to church regularly.
- One who reads and tries to obey the Bible.
- One who is an American citizen (Christian Nationalization)

Even though those descriptions may be the common responses to the question, "**WHAT IS A TRUE CHRISTIAN?**," neither one of them describes a **TRUE CHRISTIAN** according to the Word of God. One of the **GREATEST CONCERNS** of that is the reality that many people hold to such descriptions of what a **TRUE CHRISTIAN** is but will realize when they stand before the Lord that they are found wanting (Note Matthew 7:21-23). **SO, WHAT IS THE DESCRIPTION OF THE TRUE CHRISTIAN ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE? WELL, 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17 GIVES ONE OF THE clearest descriptions of the true Christian in all of the word of God, which we shall study today.** As we study this text, ask God through the Holy Spirit to reveal to you whether or not **YOU ARE A TRUE CHRISTIAN ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE.**

TODAY'S STUDY MAY BE THE MOST IMPORTANT STUDY SOME OF YOU HAVE EVER CONDUCTED FROM THE WORD OF GOD CONCERNING WHAT A TRUE CHRISTIAN IS. OBSERVE THAT THIS TEXT DESCRIBES WHAT A TRUE CHRISTIAN IS, BUT ACTS 16:31 TELLS US HOW TO BECOME A CHRISTIAN. SO, LET'S APPROACH THE SUBJECT SERIOUSLY!

I. THE TRUE CHRISTIAN IS RECOGNIZED – VS. 17a.

"IN CHRIST"

- A. As Being **JUSTIFIED** By Christ – Romans 5:1,2
 - To be declared **NOT GUILTY** in reference to sin
- B. As Being **RIGHTEOUS** In Christ – 2 Corinthians 5:21
 - To be in **A RIGHT STANDING** With God
 - (Compare Isaiah 64:6; Romans 3:9-23)
- C. As Being **CLEANSED** Through Christ – 1 John 1:7
 - To have our sins **CLEANSED, SENT AWAY AND COMPLETELY CANCELLED** through faith in Christ alone.
- D. As Being **IDENTIFIED** With Christ – Romans 8:14-17; Hebrews 2:9-11
 - To be a **PRESENT AND ETERNAL HEIR** with Christ as our Spiritual Brother.

NOTE: Christ=The eternal Son of God. Believers=The adopted Children of God.

II. THE TRUE CHRISTIAN IS REGENERATED – VS. 17b.

"A NEW CREATURE" (CREATION)

- A. Regenerated from being Spiritually Dead – Ephesians 2:1-3
- B. Regenerated to being Spiritually Alive – Ephesians 2:4-7

III. THE TRUE CHRISTIAN IS RENEWED – VS. 17c.

"OLD THINGS PASSED AWAY – ALL THINGS BECOME NEW"

A. The Passing of Old Things – (Gk.- "ARCHAIOS" – "ORIGINAL") The old spiritual condition manifested by actions, attitudes, activities, relationships, language, lifestyle, eternal destiny.... **ETERNALLY PASSED AWAY THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST RESULTING IN A TRULY CHANGED LIFE!**

B. The Presence of New Things – (Gk. "KAINOS" – "NEW IN QUALITY AND CHARACTER") The new spiritual condition involving a radical transformation in quality and character manifested by new desires,

perspectives, relationships, attitudes, activities, language, lifestyle, eternal destiny...**ETERNALLY BECOME NEW THROUGH FAITH IN CHRIST!**

IV. THE TRUE CHRISTIAN IS RESPONSIBLE – VSS. 18- 20

“AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST”

A. To Represent Jesus Christ before Others – Our Testimony

-A personal responsibility to consistently live for Christ with a Christ-centered lifestyle.

-Philippians 1:27; 2:15,16

B. To Reconcile Others to Jesus Christ – Our Evangelism

-A personal responsibility to consistently proclaim Christ with a Christ-centered life and ministry.

-Proverbs 11:30; Mark 16:15; 2 Timothy 4:5

V. THE TRUE CHRISTIAN IS REWARDED – VS.21

“MADE THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN HIM (CHRIST)”

A. By Christ’s Work on the Cross for Us

-Jesus Christ died for the sins of the whole world so that **WHOSOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM IS REWARDED WITH ETERNAL LIFE** – 1 John 2:2

B. By Our Faith in Christ for Salvation

-Our **FAITH IN CHRIST ALONE**, is the avenue of our salvation **WHICH RESULTS IN BELIEVERS BECOMING CHILDREN OF GOD** -John 1:12

-Romans 10:13; Ephesians 2:8,9; Acts 4:12

LESSON AND APPLICATION

1) Are you a TRUE CHRISTIAN? -2 Corinthians 13:5

2) If you are a TRUE CHRISTIAN, live in such a way so as to draw people to Christ, not turn them away from Christ. Galatians 5:16

3) If you are a TRUE CHRISTIAN, never allow a day to pass without giving God the PRAISE for what HE has done for you THROUGH CHRIST!

-Colossians 1:12-14