

2024 BIBLE STUDY SERIES
THEME: “GET YOUR HOPES UP!”

SEPTEMBER 11, 2024

AUTHENTIC CHRISTIAN LIVING
“WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A GENUINE CHRISTIAN?”
ROMANS 12:1-2

Topics

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- ☐ Introduction
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- ☐ Exploring the Text
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- ☐ Life Application

Reflection Question

- A. What do you believe it means when someone or something is described as “genuine” or “authentic”?

- B. What signs do you look for when you meet someone for the first time and they say, “I am a Christian.”

Important Emphasis

“To understand God’s will correctly it is first necessary to have a renewed mind”
Ancient Christian Commentary

There is a vital term that Paul uses in Romans 11 that term is “remnant.” This means “something left over, especially the righteous people of God after divine judgment” Rom. 11:5

Today there is a remnant. Western culture calls them Christians. The Greek term is *Christianos* imitators of Christ. The word disciple is the Jewish term. “A student or a learner”. John 13:35

The cornerstone of our Christian faith is Christ. Christ is the heartbeat, Christ is the example, and Christ is the Model. The world attempts to remove Christ from our lives by speculation or by sin. Speculations like he is not real. Latin historian Suetonius suggested there were Jews expelled from Rome because of disturbances made at the instigation of one called Chrestus. 1 Cor 15:6 The world attempts to remove Christ by promoting entrenchment in sin. We must believe in Christ to receive forgiveness and mercy for our disobedient activity.

Josephus (Ant 18.63-64) Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works... he drew over to him both many of Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was the Christ.

Paul continues in Romans 11 speaking to the disobedient nature that we have and how God has pardoned us through His matchless mercy that God has bestowed upon all of them and all of us today.

The Apostle lays a fabulous foundation for what he will give rise to in Romans 12. How does he do this? By mentioning how we are recipients of mercy despite our disobedience. This mercy that we have received from God should incentivize us to move into holy action. This was also true in the Old Testament when God granted deliverance from the hands of the enemy or deadly situations. Exodus 20

Paul in Romans 12:1-2 Max Ander suggested that Paul combines concepts that are doctrinal / practical. Perhaps this is Paul’s clearest indication that the two are vitally linked. Romans 12 is where Paul says, In light of what God has done, here is how we should live.

Having expounded the basic principles of his doctrine Paul now goes on to teach its moral consequences for the Christian Life

Pivotal invitation – urge to call those to plead to beckon. 2 Timothy 2:4

Participants involvement- brethren *adelphoi* in the Greek all of the believers. 2 Cor. 5:18-20

Pardon that is instantaneous – The mercy of God which is necessary for obedience. Lamentations 3:22-23

Providential investment- Present your body. The problem with a living sacrifice for some of us is that it may try to crawl off the altar. Luke 9:23

Practical infiltration- the worship you give which is your lifestyle. Phil 2:5

Paul appeals to the remnant, the believers, the Christians! The difference between asking and appealing is that we ask about unimportant matters but appeal about important ones...

Key terms

Acceptable
Attitude(s)
Authentic
Authority
Behavior
Believe
Biblical
Disciple
Christian
Commitment
Consecration
Conformed
Follower
Fruit
Genuine

Holy Spirit
Humility
Integrity
Lord
Mark
Mind
Mindset
Obey
Observe
Persevere
Quality
Real
Regenerated
Relationship

Renew
Renewed
Renewing
Righteousness
Sacrifice
Salvation
Sanctification
Saviour
Service
Spiritual
Suffer
Transformed
Will of God
World/Worldly
Worship

Scripture Reference – Romans 12:1-2 (NASB 1995)

¹Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Outline

- I. Introduction
 - A. Definitions
 - B. Other Names
- II. Consecration and Dedication for Service (Romans 12:1 NASB)
 - A. A plea for preparation
 - B. A plea for sanctification
 - C. A plea for maturation
- III. Transformation and Perfection in Service (Romans 12:2 NASB)
 - A. A command to avoid worldly conformation
 - B. A command to seek godly transformation
 - C. A command to put on godly perfection

EXPLORE THE TEXT**I. Introduction**

Unfortunately, we live in a period where many _____ Christians live just like the _____. Each day it becomes more difficult to tell the difference between an authentic or genuine Christian and a false Christian. The wheat is growing together with the tares, and it can be difficult to tell the difference between them (**Matthew 13:24-30**). For example, some professing Christians do not believe in the _____ and relevance of the Bible. They believe that Christian values are old-fashioned and irrelevant in today's modern culture. These professing Christians support various _____ values and willfully practice them without godly sorrow or repentance.

In **Romans 12:1-2** we learn that the _____ Christian should not _____ to the standards and values of this world. Instead, the Christian mind must be _____ and _____ to discern God's acceptable

will for their life. The Apostle Paul was teaching and encouraging the Jewish and Gentile Christians in Rome on how they should live.

In this Bible Study series, we will compare _____ (secular) and _____ views on what it means to be a genuine Christian. We will learn how to differentiate between fake and genuine Christians based on characteristics established by God. The focus will be on private and public **behaviors** such as devotion, prayer, bible study, home life, work ethics, and self-governance--notably in the era of Social Media. Today's lesson will focus on defining what it means to be a Christian and how to identify the signs of a genuine Christian.

A. Definition of a "Christian"

What is a Christian According to The World? If you speak to people from different parts of the world, the word "Christian" has a different meaning to different people. The _____ has incorrectly defined what it means to be a Christian. Even certain dictionaries do not correctly define the word "Christian" because these particular dictionaries do not _____ a biblical view of what it means to be a Christian. Many people believe that being born in a "Christian nation" or "Christian home" automatically makes them a Christian. Others believe in their religious traditions, such as being _____ as an infant or that keeping the Sabbath is a guarantee that they will have a place in heaven. However, none of these perceptions or definitions are correct because they contradict the Biblical view of what a Christian is, and how we become Christians.

What Is A Christian According to The Bible? The word "Christian" appears three times in the Bible in the following scriptures: **Acts 11:26, Acts 26:28, and 1 Peter 4:16**. The word Christian refers to a person who is a genuine follower of Christ and the teachings of the word of God. It also means: to be _____ about behavior, speech, thinking, values, and principles. Being a Christian also means having a genuine _____ **with God** through Jesus Christ. A Christian can be biblically described and defined as the following:

- A Christian is a person who is _____ or _____ **by the Spirit** (John 3:3-6; Romans 8:14-15)

- A Christian is a person who has _____ by faith and therefore becomes a _____ of _____ (John 1:12; Galatians 3:26)
- A Christian is a person who has _____ God's _____ gift of _____ and eternal life. He/she believes in Jesus Christ and that Christ died for his/her sins (John 3:16; Romans 10:9-13)
- A Christian is a person who _____ and _____ that he/she is saved by grace and not by the law or by personal merit "lest anyone boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 2:21)

B. Other Names for Christians

Other names were used by Christians and non-Christians to describe the followers of Jesus such as "*Followers of the Way*." Christianity was far from being simply an abstract belief; it was a whole way of life. The new way of living was obvious to those around Christians and to the Christians themselves, for they were following the lifestyle of Jesus, the way he had lived and taught. Soon the term "this Way" or "the Way" meant Christian. Thus Saul (the pre-Christian name of Paul) was sent to Damascus to arrest anyone belonging to "the Way" (**Acts 9:2**). Christians may also have used the term to describe themselves; Luke referred to the Christian movement as "the Way" (**Acts 19:9, 23; 24:22**). It is the only name Christians and non-Christians both may have used for the new movement.¹

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

1. What kind of Christian lives like the world?

2. What kind of Christian avoids conforming to the world?

¹ Elwell, Walter A., and Barry J. Beitzel. 1988. "[Christians, Names For.](#)" In *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible*, 1:432. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House.

3. How does a genuine Christian become transformed?

4. Why do some dictionaries contain incorrect definitions for the word Christian?

5. How many times does the word "Christian" appear in the New Testament? List the scripture references.

6. Identify two or more characteristics of genuine Christians.

7. What is one alternate name that Christians were called in the early church?

EXPLORE THE TEXT

II. Consecration and Dedication for Service (Romans 12:1 NASB)

Paul's letter to the Romans emphasizes _____ for Christian living (Chapters 1-11) and the practical application of these principles (Chapters 12-16). The letter discusses God's mercy in sending his Son for sinners and outlines our obligations to God. It compares coming to God through Christ with living for God in Christ, urging a response that is acceptable or pleasing to God.

A. A plea for preparation

Paul emphasizes the importance of living to please God in a world filled with temptation and sin, urging believers to _____ their entire beings to God. By _____ their bodies to God, believers offer their thoughts, emotions, desires, and plans. When the body is surrendered to God, every aspect of life, including free time, pleasures, and behavior, becomes aligned with His will.

B. A plea for sanctification

Paul urges the Roman Christians to offer their bodies as a living and holy _____ to be completely set apart for God and dedicated to his service.

C. A plea for maturation

The teachings of the gospel are not mere theories but are intended to impact people deeply. The apostle urges the Roman Christians to fully _____ themselves to God. Through the presence of the Holy Spirit within, individuals are led and empowered to mature and develop spiritually as _____ Christians.

III. Transformation and Perfection in Service (Romans 12:2 NASB)

When believers offer their entire selves to God, a change will happen in their relation to the world. Christians are called to a different lifestyle than what the world offers with its behavior and customs, which are usually selfish and often corrupting (Galatians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:14).

A. A command to avoid worldly conformation

Christians are to live as citizens of a future world (Colossians 3:1-2). There will be pressure to _____ and to continue living according to the script written by the world, but believers are forbidden to give in to that pressure.

B. A command to seek godly transformation

Refusing to conform to this world's values must go even deeper than the level of behavior and customs—it must go to the _____ of the way we _____ (**Proverbs 27:3**). Believers are to experience a complete transformation from the inside out. And the change must begin in the mind, where all thoughts and actions begin. Much of the work is done by God's Spirit in us, and the tool most frequently used is God's word. As we memorize and meditate upon God's word, our way of thinking changes. Our minds become first informed and then conformed to the pattern of God, the pattern for which we were originally designed.

C. A command to put on godly perfection

When believers have had their minds transformed and are becoming more like Christ, they will know what God wants and they will want to do it for it is good, _____ to God, and _____ for them.

Check for Understanding

8. What does the Apostle Paul offer to the Roman Christians to promote Christian Living? (Romans 12:1)

9. What does God require that genuine Christians offer as sacrifice and service to Him? (12:1)

10. What has God provided to help Christians succeed in their efforts to serve and please God?

11. What are genuine Christians called to avoid doing in the world? (12:2)

12. Where does transformation begin for genuine Christians? (12:2)

Life Application:

- Are you confident that you are a genuine Christian? If not, how do you plan to make the necessary corrections?
- Identify a partner or mentor who can walk alongside you as you continue growing toward becoming a genuine Christian.

References:

Life Application New Testament Bible Commentary
Barnes Notes on the New Testament
Lexham Theological Bible Dictionary
Moody's Theological Bible Dictionary