

# Marks Of A Real Christian

**Introduction.** You cannot pull a beautiful diamond out of a mine, nor can you dig a solid gold brick out of the ground. A rough diamond must be cut and polished before its beauty can be seen. Precious metals are melted down and the dross is removed. Perfection takes purifying.

Some do not react well when they learn the requirements of godly living because they think they are too hard. The rich young ruler walked away from Jesus because he thought the cost was too great (Matthew 19:16-22). Real Christians do not make a halfhearted commitment (Romans 6:16-17; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:5).

Being a Christian is not a pastime; it is a passion. Instead of allowing it to affect our very inner being, some are content to wear it as a “veneer.” Veneer is something pretty that covers up something unsightly. Do any of you fit this description? If you do, you can do better. You know it, I know it, and certainly God knows it. Today, we are going to look at the marks of a real Christian. Are you one?

## ***I. Real Christians Pray***

- A. They freely talk to their heavenly Father. Most of us only spend a few minutes a day if that much talking to God. Most relationships would die from a lack of communication if we neglected them that much.
- B. We should spend time and approach the throne of God (Hebrews 4:14-16; 7:25; Romans 8:26-28). Jesus and the apostle Paul said we ought to pray, that should settle it (Luke 18:1; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Timothy 2:8).
- C. There is nothing that will help you draw nearer to God than prayer (James 4:8). There may be people here today who have Christians for years, but do not feel close to God. Let me suggest that you pray to Him.

## ***II. Real Christians Work***

- A. No visitors, staying at home, running around, nor any hypocritical brother or sister is big enough to keep the real Christian away from the assembly on the Lord's day and all the other assemblies (Acts 20:7; Hebrews 10:25).
- B. Nothing can survive in a vacuum. No one can exist all alone. Christians are the same way. Consider the exhortations to closeness and fellowship in the New Testament (Hebrews 10:24; 1 John 1:7). I need you and you need me. Neglect leads to desertion. We need recharging and building up during the week.
- C. Sometimes we have the attitude that we can just come in, pick up our songbooks and sing, “I'm coming home to glory” without doing anything else. But that is a joke, plain and simple. God expects us to pull our weight as members of the body (Romans 12:3-8). Much more work gets done when everyone contributes!
- D. It is very encouraging and the work is built up in so many ways when you see Christians struggle to become better servants of God. For example, a man who struggles to lead a prayer or give an invitation for the first time or a woman who struggles to teach a Bible class is not only a help to the work, but is also an encouragement to everyone else in a congregation. I am so grateful for the motivation I received when I first started to get in front of brethren.

### **III. Real Christians Give**

- A. Some Christians need so much preaching on this subject (1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 8:7).
- B. A universal law of life is that we reap what we sow (2 Corinthians 9:6-11; Galatians 6:7). In general, America promotes a lifestyle that convinces Christians to hold on to everything they get, but we know better (2 Corinthians 8:12-15). Brethren need compassion and we show it by helping them with the physical needs of this life (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35; Galatians 6:10).
- C. It is good to preach and study about giving because it is a direct “thermometer” of our spirituality. How we decide to spend our money tells God how high on the priority list He is (Matthew 6:33; cp. 2 Samuel 24:24; 1 Chronicles 29:3-9).

### **IV. Real Christians Study**

- A. We should spend time reading and studying (John 5:39; Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 2:15). Countless numbers of people are afraid of the Bible simply because they have no knowledge of it (Hosea 4:6, 17; Hebrews 5:11-14). The book of Revelation
- B. We contend for truth (Jude 3). Truth is not based on subjectivity; it is based on objectivity. Paul refers to it as “sound doctrine” (1 Timothy 1:10; 2 Timothy 4:3; Titus 1:9; 2:1), “sound in the faith” (Titus 1:13; 2:2), and “sound words” (2 Timothy 1:13; Titus 2:8).
- C. A careful student is protected against the whims of the religious world because they have a firm foundation (1 John 4:1-6). They have carefully evaluated spiritual teaching (John 7:22-24). A real Christian believes the way they do because they can prove it. They are then prepared to teach (1 Peter 3:15).

### **V. Real Christians Live**

- A. Paul and the other apostles were ambassadors of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:20-21). This means a representative which acts in behalf of someone else. In a similar fashion, we are too (Matthew 5:13-16; Romans 2:21; Titus 2:7-8).
- B. You live so that those who are not Christians can see Christ in us (Philippians 1:27; Colossians 1:27).
  - 1. We need to watch our words (Matthew 12:31-37; Ephesians 4:29; 5:4; Colossians 3:9; James 3:8).
  - 2. We need to watch our clothing (1 Timothy 2:9-10; 1 Peter 3:3-4; cp. Exodus 28:42; Isaiah 47:2-3).
  - 3. We need to watch our friends (2 Samuel 13:3; Job 6:14-21; cp. 2 Kings 5:13; Ruth 1:16-17; John 1:40-41, 45).
- C. Have you ever heard anyone say, “I had rather see a sermon than hear one?” We are saved to save. This means looking for a rich harvest (John 4:35; James 5:19-20; Jude 22-23). But a bad example destroys our chances to convert.

**Conclusion.** If you want to make an exact reproduction of something, you use a template. The Bible is our template. If our lives are held up to this “template” it should reflect this pattern just like the piece that is cut reflects the template. If your life does not show a pattern familiar to the Bible, you should turn and repent (Acts 3:19).