

Who Are the Christians?

by Craig Strain

A true Christian is someone who has been circumcised in the heart, loves God, and obeys God's commandments.

Duration: 1:22:23

Topics: "Christian"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher begins by praying for the Lord to magnify Jesus Christ through him and speak truth through him in the Holy Ghost. The message focuses on the confusion surrounding who is a true Christian in today's age. The preacher emphasizes the importance of waking up and being aware of the tough times we live in, as material possessions can deceive us. He challenges the listeners to examine their hearts and ask if they have been circumcised in the heart by Jesus, cutting away sin and giving them a new heart.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

This message is not copyrighted and is not to be bought or sold. You are welcome to make copies for your friends and neighbors. If you would like additional messages, please go to our website for a complete listing at www.charityministries.org. If you would like a catalog of other sermons, please call 1-800-227-7902 or write to Charity Ministries, 400 West Main Street, Suite 1, EFRA PA 17522.

These messages are offered to all without charge by the free will offerings of God's people. A special thank you to all who support this ministry. Good evening.

Another opportunity to hear from the Lord Jesus. I know the devil is not going to be happy with me this evening because the Lord has put a message in my heart. But greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world.

If you'll stand with me this evening, I'd like to sing that chorus, Come Bless the Lord, and those of us whose hearts are right, let's worship our God in spirit and in truth through this chorus. And then we'll pray. As I pray, you pray fervently in your heart to God that God will visit your own individual heart in this place this evening.

Let's sing. Come bless the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, Christ have I done, Christ have I done. Father in heaven, we thank you for this evening, God, that you have brought about.

God, by your hand it has come about. And Father, here we are before you, God, in your eye. Your ever-seeing eye is upon every soul here this evening, Lord.

Your presence is here, God. You know what's going to happen, Lord, in two seconds from now. You know the outcome of the evening.

And Father, what I pray is that you would magnify the Lord Jesus through me, God, like you never have before. Make him so desirable, God, this evening. He is the answer, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Lord of heaven and earth.

Father, you are so good. I just ask that you would take my lips and set them on fire for the glory of God. Father, I just ask that you would speak truth through me, Lord, in the Holy Ghost.

Lord, I have nobody else to lean on but you, God. Absolutely nobody else. So, Father, with all confidence in you, God, that you're loving and kind, I lean on you and trust you for this message.

I just pray, God, and ask that you would call thy Word, Lord, to become quickened and do the needed work this evening, Father. You're so capable and able of doing this, Father. I look to you for this, God.

You've got the answers. You've got all the answers, my Father. Have your will in your way this evening.

I just ask that you would make your words that come off my mouth alive, Lord, for the glory of God, for the glory and honor and praise of God Almighty. In Jesus' name, Amen. You can be seated.

For He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh, but He is a Jew which is one inwardly. And circumcision is that of the heart and the spirit. And circumcision is that of the heart and the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God, whose praise is not of men but of God.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, creation.

All things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

You'll turn to the book of Acts chapter 11 this evening. We'll start in verse 19, giving a title for this message for those who are doing tapes. Who are the Christians? I want to preach something that's in my heart, the burden that God has put in my heart.

And as I've went out, I've shared this burden before. And if we live in an age and in a time where there is a declaration of who a true Christian is, it's today. We live in a land and in an age where there is such confusion about who's a Christian.

Not to those who are walking in the Spirit of God, but in this world there's such confusion. And this evening we want to find out from God's Word these words have the answers. Who are the Christians? Let's start reading in Acts chapter 11, verse 19.

Acts 11, 19, Now they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen traveled as far as Pharnacia and Cyprus and Antioch preaching the Word to none but unto the Jews only. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, which when they were come to Antioch spake unto the Grecians, the Hellenists, preaching the Lord Jesus. What a wonderful person to preach! And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned unto the Lord.

Then tidings of these things came unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem, and they sent forth Barnabas that he should go as far as Antioch who, when he came and had seen the grace of God, God do it this evening, was glad and exhorted them all that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. For he was a good man and full of the Holy Ghost and of faith. And much people was added unto the Lord.

Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus for to seek Saul. And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church and taught much people.

And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. Who are the Christians? As I said moments ago, we're living in a time where things are confusing. Where things aren't so clear to the world of who a Christian is.

What a Christian is. Not only in this land, beyond this land. In the world.

Do you know that the word Christian has been so dragged through the mud? Do you know that word that we so freely use? I'm a Christian. You're a Christian. He's a Christian.

You know that word that's so popular, that's so... Oh, we hear it all the time. But do you know that that word has become littler in the eyes of the world? Do you know why? Because there's many people that profess to be a Christian, a follower of Jesus Christ. Do you know also an anointed one? Yes, that the true Christian is an anointed one.

Yes, I'm an anointed one. Yes, I'm a follower of Jesus. I'm anointed.

Because when we say we're a Christian, that's what we're saying. Anointed. No, I don't walk in the Spirit.

No, I don't serve God all week long. But I'm still a Christian. Oh, I live in sin.

My heart loves the world, but I'm a Christian. Yes, I was baptized when I was 15 years old. I go to church.

I tithe. I give all tithes of all that I possess. Yes, I'm a Christian.

What do you mean I'm not? Yes, that word is lost. It's respect. You know, the first part of that word has Christ in it.

C-H-R-I-S-T Christ. I'm a Christian. If we need something today, it is a clear message on who a Christian is.

Not because this is my idea, but what God has put in my heart. Who are these Christians? Who are these anointed ones? You know, these followers of Jesus. These people that are radical.

They're all fired up about Jesus. And it's Jesus Christ. They talk about Jesus.

They love Jesus. They walk with Jesus. They eat on Him.

They eat on Him and feed on Him. And drink from His well. Yes, this is a Christian.

Oh, that's exciting. But then we've got those that say they're a Christian. And they feed on the husks of the world.

They're lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. There's no life there. But they're a Christian, right? Wrong.

We're at a Bible school, right? Supposed to have... You know a school, you think a Bible school. Teaching. Oh yes, when you go to school, you get taught.

And we need to be taught the Word. But I'm telling you, we're in a day and an age where there's so much watered down Christianity. There's so many professors that don't have eternal life.

Even right here! I'm not being critical. I'm just sharing what is true. I feel like we're not where they were in the book of Acts.

Who are the Christians? We want to, by the grace of God and the help of God, share clearly from the Bible who the true Christians are this evening. So you pay attention. In the book of Romans chapter 2 verses 28 and 29 which were shared earlier.

For He is not a Jew. And we can take this to us. For He is not a Jew.

We can make this say He is not a Christian. He's not a child of God. For He is not a Jew which is one outwardly.

Neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But He is a Jew which is one inwardly. And circumcision is that of the heart and the spirit and not in the letter whose praise is not of men, but of God.

The Christians, one mark, and you can mark it down for sure of a true Christian is He has been circumcised in the heart. He has been circumcised in the heart. You know, I'm not going to take the time to flip to it, but Abraham received the sign of circumcision.

It talks about Abraham in verse 11 of Romans 4, and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised. Circumcised was something that they did on the outward. And it was a sign.

Do you know that those of us who are truly Christians remember followers of the Lord Jesus, anointed ones, anointed by God Himself. Beautiful. Those who are truly Christians have been circumcised in the heart, and do you know how they've been circumcised in the heart? Or, excuse me, do you know how this is able to be seen? Listen.

Ephesians 1, verses 13 and 14, it says, in whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that ye believed, you were sealed, you were confirmed, you were marked with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance unto the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of His glory. Ephesians 4, verse 30, another verse here. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

I wasn't going to read this, but I think I'll read this verse too. 2 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 21, Now, He which establisheth us with you in Christ and hath anointed us is God, who hath also sealed us. And given

the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts, do you know somebody that's truly been circumcised in the heart? You'll know it this way.

They've received the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit being that evidence, that mark, that seal, that confirmation that that individual has been circumcised in the heart. Circumcision in the heart.

For He is not a Jew which is one outwardly. No. Neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh.

But He is a Jew, a child of God, which is one inwardly. Inwardly. And circumcision is that of the heart in the Spirit.

That's a true Christian. They've been circumcised in the heart. God has broke down that stony heart by His grace, by His goodness, by the death, burial and resurrection of my Lord Jesus.

He's broke down that stony heart. And He's placed the Holy Spirit in there. That confirmation that that person has been circumcised in the Spirit.

That's what the Bible is teaching us. Oh, that circumcision in the heart. And oh, it's beautiful.

When we've been circumcised in the heart, we become pure in heart. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. And when we've been circumcised, we have the Holy Ghost.

And the Holy Spirit illuminates our hearts and our eyes to see those eternal things. It gives us power to maintain a pure heart where we can continually see God. Beautiful! Do you believe it? Are you fully persuaded that this is possible? Students and everybody.

Circumcision in the heart. You see, there are some, maybe quite possibly some here, that they outwardly, they were merely baptized this outward thing at twenty years old. And they say, I'm a Christian, because I was merely baptized.

Some, they're faithful to the church. They read their Bible. There are some that even have good desires.

They have a desire for God. But the desire alone doesn't save. For by grace are you saved through faith.

And that not of yourselves. We can't save ourselves, my brother and sister. We can't clothe ourselves with religion.

We can't go get baptized. We can't just read the Bible and pray these outward things and consider ourselves a Christian, a true Christian, but circumcised in the heart, in the Spirit, and they're alive under God. And it's a lasting thing.

I'm telling you what, this is real! We've got to wake up. I'm telling you what, if we don't wake up, some of us are in for a hard, hard time because you know what? We live in bad times. Tough times.

Oh no, all the money. What are you saying? Tough times. You don't think all this money we have and all this stuff hasn't deceived some of us? And you know what? There's some that will harp on money and all that and I'm not going to do that because it's beyond that.

The problem is beyond that. It's in the heart, my brother and sister. It's beyond that.

Have you been circumcised in the heart? Has the Lord Jesus cut away that sin in your heart? Has He cut away that lust? Has He cut away those unlawful desires? Has He cut away that adulterous eye? Has He cut away those fantasies and given you a new heart? It's possible. 2 Timothy 3 We find written there, let's start in verse 1, This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come. Do you know the Lord Jesus came in the last days? For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God.

How many of those are here this evening? Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. From such, Timothy, turn away, turn away, Timothy, from these who are lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. Isn't that what he's saying? That true Christian is the one who loves God.

You say, oh, that's pretty simple. Yes, it is simple, isn't it? You know, a true Christian, a Christian that's been circumcised in the heart, they love God. John 14.15 We find written there, if ye love me, keep my commandments.

If ye love me, keep my commandments. 1 John 5.3 For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, and His commandments are not grievous. That individual that's been circumcised in the heart, they love God.

Oh, they love God. They adore God from their heart, way in the Spirit. See, we're talking about in the Spirit this evening.

Inside. Not in the head. We're talking within.

That's where God dwells, within, not without. Within. They love God.

They adore God in their heart. They magnify God in their heart. They exalt Him.

They praise Him. They appreciate Him. They bless Him all the time.

And they mean it because it's from the heart. If ye love me, keep my commandments. And do you know that the Christian that truly loves God, they obey God.

They love His words. They find His words are precious. They're like the Bible says, honey.

Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. They're not burdensome. They're not heavy.

They're desirable. Do you find the commandments of God desirable? Do you find them desirable? I can tell you that's how God wants you to find them. Desirable.

Yes. I love God. I don't obey God, but I still love God.

I don't obey God, but I love God. No, you don't. You don't love God.

And I don't love God if I don't obey God. But I'm not saved by my obedience. I'm saved by grace through faith.

Praise God. But my faith, which is living, gives me strength to obey. Because I have access by faith into the glorious grace of God that empowers me to do the sweet will of God.

You see how it works, brothers and sisters? Do you see how it works? When we walk by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, God lets that grace flow into our heart and that grace enables us to do the will of God. And when we do the will of God, we have the smile of God upon our life and we're joyful and there's peace there and we love God. It's simple, but yet it's so beautiful.

I don't understand it all. They love God. Yes, that Christian that's really a Christian, they really love God.

They really do. And you know what? They love God more than the pleasures of this life even. Amazing! You may say, what? Yes, they love God more than the passing, passing pleasures of this life.

And they're passing. You know, some of you don't know me. I know the passing pleasures of this life.

Trust me, I do. And they're nothing. Nothing! God is so good.

When He touches you, when He really touches your heart, you'll understand. Yes, that's one that can bear the name of Christian, that one that can go and tell another, yes, I'm a Christian, I'm an anointed one, that one who obeys God. You can say that.

You go tell people that. But if you don't obey God, I wouldn't be going around that much telling people I'm a Christian. We don't want to dirty up that name any more than it has been.

John chapter 13 verses 34 and 35, Jesus speaking to His disciples, a new commandment I've given to you, that ye love one another. A new commandment I've given to you, that ye love one another as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love.

One to another. By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples, if ye have love one to another. That Apostle John said that.

I appreciate him. 1 John 5 verse 1, Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God. And everyone that loveth Him that begat loveth Him also that is begotten of Him.

By this we know, we know, John says, that we love the children of God. When we love God and keep His commandments. Now listen to this next verse.

For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And Jesus gave a new commandment that we would love one another. Do you see? If we don't love the children of God, we don't love God.

If we say we love God, and we don't love our brother and sister, we do not love God. Don't say you love God, because you're lying. Yes, that's a true Christian.

They love their brother and sister. And listen to what the beloved John says again. Inspired by the precious Holy Spirit.

Beautiful. God's words are so beautiful. 1 John chapter 3 verse 18, My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but indeed in action.

But indeed, and John says, and in truth, love this way. And brothers and sisters, when we really love in truth, we're loving our brother and sister in the Holy Ghost. Because John said in 1 John chapter 5, And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth. 1 John chapter 5 verse 6, And when we love our brothers and sisters in the Holy Spirit, we have this type of love. Listen to this type of love.

1 Corinthians chapter 13, because this is the love that God wants us to have. In verse 4, Charity suffereth long and is kind. Charity envieth not.

Are you envious of your brother and sister in the heart where nobody knows? Are you? Be honest before God. Love of God does not envy. Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, does not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked.

Too many of us are easily provoked. We just explode at the tip of a hat. Major problem.

The Spirit's not right. Because when a person's controlled and directed and led by the Holy Ghost, they suffer long. They get harassed and they still love.

Thinketh no evil. Are you keeping accounts of evil that people have done to you? The love of God won't allow you to do it. It just won't.

It won't allow you to keep accounts of evil that have been done to you. They gotta go. They gotta go.

And by the way, you also won't think evil of another if you have the love of God dwelling and active in your heart. You're not going to think evil of others. You're going to think good of them.

You're going to pray for them. Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth. Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.

Charity never faileth. This is the love of God that God wants us to have. Pretty awesome, isn't it? Beautiful.

But see, that's the love that God wants you and I to have in our heart. It's divine. It's beyond mankind.

It's of God. God is love. Love is of God.

This love comes from God. And brothers and sisters, God's Word again gives us the answers. You know, God's Word says, and not only so, but we glory in tribulations also knowing that tribulation worketh patience, perseverance, and patience, experience, trustworthiness, and experience, hope, and hope maketh not us shame because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

This love comes again by the Holy Ghost. See? Remember, the Holy Spirit is God. And when the Holy Spirit is filling us, we've got to remember this is God and God is love.

So, love is going to be there. Love emanating out of the very person of God. Do you love your brother and sister? Honestly? Do you really love them? If you don't love the children of God, you don't love God.

And if you don't love God, you need to examine where you're at before God. This is good for those of us that are walking with the Lord too. Acts 2, we find written there in verse 44 and 45, Acts 2, 44 and 45, And all that believed were together and had all things common and sold their possessions and goods and parted them to all men as every man had need.

Acts 4, starting in verse 32, And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul. Neither said any of them that oft of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things

common. And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

And great grace was upon them all. Neither was there any among them that lacked, for as many as were possessors of lands or houses, sold them and brought the prices of the things that were sold and laid them down at the apostles' feet. And distribution was made unto every man according as he had need.

And Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas, which is being interpreted the son of Consolation, a Levite in the country of Cyprus, having lands, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet. Hebrews chapter 11, starting in verse 24, Hebrews 11, 24, By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. For he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.

Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. You know who that true Christian is? It's that one who is ready, who is willing to give up their possessions and goods. You know something I saw a while ago, but I was so blessed today as I read through some of the book of Acts, wanting to get a picture as I was preparing, wanting to see who a true Christian was.

And always something the Holy Spirit so made real to me is that when one gets circumcised in the heart and the Holy Ghost falls upon them, all of a sudden they're willing to give up possessions and lands and money. They're willing and ready to give them up for the good of somebody else. For God.

That's what happened in the book of Acts. Yes, we can come up with our own idea and think, oh, well, they did it because they were just a group together and they're helping each other out. Yes, that's true.

But also, when the Holy Spirit's real in your life and in mine, I'm telling you what, you're willing to give up lands and houses and money for the Lord Jesus and for the benefit of another brother or sister. Guarantee it. You believe it? But you know, what was it one time I heard? Possibly 87... What was it? Some way high percentage in America that said they're Christians.

It was a high percent. Now, we all know that's not true. 80-90% of America is a true Christian.

Come on. I know better than that. God's Word teaches me that.

Do you know what? Out of this 80 or 90%, do you think 85% or whatever that percent was, do you think 80% of them would be willing to give up their possessions and their lands for the Lord Jesus for another brother or sister who has a need? Oh, but whoso hath this world's good and seeth his brother hath need and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? John poses a question. Yes. When we've been circumcised in the heart and are walking in the presence of God, yes, we really are willing to give up possessions and lands and money and toys and games for the Lord Jesus.

You know, this Christianity is a serious thing and that's exactly how I take it. No, somebody may think, man, he must live a boring life. You don't understand.

And I don't mean that to be funny at all. No. Let me tell you something.

I'm so happy and that's the truth. See, I've tasted the drugs, the alcohol, and it doesn't matter. It don't matter what else.

They're nothing. Nothing! Are you willing to give up your lands? Are you willing to even give up that fifth and sixth car for the Lord Jesus? You know, that fourth and fifth and sixth car? That seventh house? Are you willing to give it up for Jesus just if He asks you to? Because let me tell you, when the Holy Ghost falls upon your life, you'll be ready. And not only you'll be ready, but I'll be ready.

Because I'm riding this thing with you. Will you give your lands and possessions up? Your riches for the Lord Jesus? Will you? If you've been circumcised in the heart, you'll be ready and willing. Esteeming the reproach of Christ, greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.

He could have had all the treasures He wanted in Egypt. But you see, He saw God. He was seeing something that some of us aren't seeing.

That was God. John 20.19 20.19 says, Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut, where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst and said unto them, Peace be unto you. Acts 2.14 Peter standing up with the eleven after that the Holy Ghost fell on them at Pentecost.

But Peter standing up with the eleven lifted up his voice and said unto them, Ye men of Judea and all ye that dwell at Jerusalem, this same Peter, who for fear of the Jews... We just read about that in John 20. But oh, when the Holy Spirit came, we find a different Peter. For these are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.

Let's skip on down to verse 22. Ye men of Israel, hear these words. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by Him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken and by wicked hands have crucified and slain, whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

Peter, what happened to you? What happened to you, Peter, who for fear of the Jews were hiding? Stephen, in the book of Acts chapter 7. You know, Stephen delivered a beautiful message, didn't he? Let's break in on that message in verse 51 of Acts 7. He says, "...and ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears..." You know, and uncircumcised in heart and ears. "...ye who always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them, which showed before the coming of the Just One, of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers, who have received them all by the disposition of angels and have not kept it." When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart.

And they gnashed on them with their teeth. You know who that true Christian is? It's that one who speaks the Word of God with boldness and boldly confesses Jesus with their mouth. With their mouth! Brothers and sisters, yes, even with the mouth.

Some of us have a real easy time of speaking a lot. You know, we're able to really... there's some people that can really go for it in speaking. But there's some of those same ones when it comes to talking about the Lord Jesus, they're like a clam.

But see, as I read, I can't get away. How can I preach anything else? I cannot preach anything less than the truth. And I will not, or I want to stop preaching.

Now, yes, that true Christian is that one who speaks with boldness the Word of God. Arrogance? No! Boldness? Yes! Confidence! Assurance in the heart! Being assured by God of what they're saying is right. Arrogance? No! Boldness? Yes! I'll tell you what about the Apostle Paul.

Oh, boy, before he met the Lord Jesus, he was a persecutor of Christians, wasn't he? Hailing men and women, committed them to prison. Went to Damascus, went to the high priest, trying to get approval to get the Christians there. You know, those ones who found the way, the truth, and the life.

Went to go get them to bring them bound unto Jerusalem. But oh, God had better plans for him. And oh, as he went on his way to Damascus, God Almighty, the Lord Jesus shined upon him.

And that light shined round about him. And oh, my, Paul's response. What do you want me to do? And oh, the Lord appears to Ananias in a vision.

And Ananias, Lord, I've heard so much about him. All the evil that he's done. And I'm not quoting God's words.

But Ananias obeyed God and he went and he laid his hands on Paul. And he even called him Brother Saul. Beautiful.

And oh, those scales fell from his eyes. And I'm telling you what, we find a beautiful verse in Acts 9. It's written there and straightway or immediately. He preached Christ in the synagogues that he is the Son of God.

Yes, the Apostle Paul. The one who was just so vehemently against Christ. Oh, the Lord Jesus changed him.

He touched his heart. And immediately he's found in the synagogue preaching Christ. He's the Son of God.

He's the Son of God! Yes, that's the salvation that God brings through Jesus Christ who is Lord. That's awesome. I see the glorious grace of God bestowed upon Paul.

Paul says, and the grace of the Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love. And Timothy. Yes, God poured His glorious, precious grace, His favor out upon the Apostle Paul.

Oh, the Lord Jesus circumcised him in the heart. And oh, the Lord Jesus gave him the gift of the Holy Ghost. And because Paul had the gift of the Holy Ghost, because God came to dwell within him, Paul was able to straightway preach Christ, the one he was trying to destroy, that He's the Son of God.

And when you and I get circumcised in the heart and touched by the Lord Jesus, we go out and we open our mouth and we tell somebody, Jesus Christ is Lord. He is the Son of God. He is the answer.

It happens. Has it happened to you? Has it really happened? Have you been really touched by the Lord Jesus? If you have, you confess the Lord Jesus with your mouth. Brothers and sisters, I'm not talking on how it should be done.

I'm talking it should be done. I just hope God gets a hold of our hearts. I don't want to preach another message and see people say it was a good message and never be changed.

No. May God's Spirit do a glorious work. That's what we need.

In the book of Colossians 3, starting in verse 1, if ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on the things on the earth. Not on things on the earth, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

Those who seek and set their affections on things above, that is a true Christian. That is a Christian! Those who seek and set their affection, their mind, their heart, on things above. Not on the things of this life.

In the book of Philippians 3, we find these words that go right along with Colossians. Philippians 3.18 For many walk. There are some here this evening, maybe, whom this is true in their life.

For many walk, of whom I have told you often and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, some who mind earthly things, who set their mind on earthly things. You know, one that sets their mind on earthly things? They're an enemy of the cross. Because I want to share something with you that's true about the cross of Christ.

And I haven't been here for those sessions, but I know very little about the cross. But one truth I want to share that's true about the cross is when it's done its true work in your heart, you become a citizen of heaven. And because you're a citizen of heaven, and the Holy Ghost is in your life, you walk as a citizen.

For our conversation, Paul says, you know that word conversation is our citizenship. Where is your citizenship? Is it here? Or is it in heaven? Are you a member of the kingdom of God? Are you a member of this earth, this fading, dark, deceiving kingdom? Are you a member of that or a member of the heavenly kingdom? Paul says, for our conversation is in heaven. From whence? Amazing! Did you catch those two words? From whence? Also, we look.

Looking from my place of citizenship. For the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, you know, when we're seated in the heavenlies, brothers and sisters, we can really look for the return of the Lord Jesus. But when our citizenship is here, we don't look for His return.

No. Do you understand that? From whence? Also, we look. Too many of those 87% or whatever of America now would confess to be a Christian.

Most of them are not, by the way, and that's a fact. Most aren't. Most of those seek and set their affection on things below.

Their glory is in their sin. Their mind is upon the earth. Their God is their belly.

They stuff themselves and make themselves fat with food and drink. Funny? No. Sad.

I'm sharing a burden in my heart. Please take it that way. I'm not against you.

The Bible clearly teaches God's Word that a true Christian seeks and sets their affection, their desires on things above. Not on the things of this life. Not on toys.

Not on games. Not on sports. You know sports, that God, that false God, it's an idol.

Yes, it is! Sports is an idol in this land! You believe it? It's one of those false gods, you know. No, we don't bow down to sticks and wood like they used to. But so many of us bow down in our hearts to sports and games and gadgets, and we're putting another god before the King of Glory.

It's true. John chapter 15, starting in verse 1, Jesus said, I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit, He taketh away.

And every branch that beareth fruit, He purges it, that He prunes it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the Word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in Me, and I in you.

Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in Me. I am the vine.

Ye are the branches. And we need to remember that. He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit.

Not little fruit. Much fruit. For without Me, ye can do nothing, nothing.

If a man abide not in Me, he is cast forth as a branch and is withered, and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit.

Listen carefully. So shall ye be My disciples. So shall ye be My disciples.

Yes, that Christian that's true, that has the seed of God remaining in them, that seed being the Word of God, they bear fruit. They bear fruit. Galatians says, but the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, which is self-control.

Yeah, that precious fruit of the Spirit. Oh, yes. When we're abiding in Jesus, when we're feeding on Him, when we're walking in the Spirit, when we're yielding to the Holy Ghost, we get to bear much fruit.

Love, joy, peace. Do you want peace? It's available in Jesus Christ. Longsuffering.

You want to be longsuffering to your brother and sister? Walk in the Spirit of God. Gentleness. You know, Christians ought to be very gentle, but very powerful.

Very gentle, but very powerful. Strong in the grace of Christ. Meekness, temperance, self-control.

Yes, we even get to bear the fruit of self-control, brothers and sisters. Praise God! Do you know that a person walking in the Holy Ghost, they have self-control! Husbands, they have self-control! Yes, they really do. We get to bear fruit.

And if we don't bear fruit, likely we're not a child of God. Because if you're in the Spirit, you cannot but help bear fruit, because God is life. And where the life of God is, there's fruit coming out.

It's glorious. And lastly, in the book of Romans 8.14, I've shared this last night and today again, but you know as I read the Word of God and see it, I can't get away from the gift that God has given us, and that gift being the Holy Ghost. For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, God's Word declares they are the sons of God.

And you know, my brothers and sisters, the true Christian is the one that is led, directed, guided by the Holy Ghost. Yes, their life is dictated by the Holy Spirit. You know, even as the Spirit of God told Philip, go down and join yourself to that chariot and he obeyed and he brought forth fruit unto the glory of God.

Because he obeyed. But he was being led by the Holy Spirit. And every true Christian, mark it down! Those of you that proclaim to be a Christian, and myself also, if we truly are a Christian, we're led and directed by the Holy Ghost.

You know, brothers and sisters, if we're led and directed by the Holy Ghost, there's power there. Power over sin. There's grace there because the Spirit is called the Spirit of Grace.

And grace is there because the Spirit is there. I don't understand it all, but I know it to be true. When we're led and directed by the Holy Ghost, we're a child of the King.

Who are the Christians? And these points that we've shared this evening are God telling us who the Christians are. These aren't the only ones, but these are some of them. Who are the Christians? Let's pray.

Father in Heaven, what can I say? I'm just a man and You're God. God, I know that Your words and Your Spirit can break the hardest of hearts, convince the unbelievers that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the Savior of the world. I know, God, that You're able to do what I can.

I was glad to deliver Your words. And God, I just pray, do the work of salvation, God! And do the work in the hearts of Your children and in mine that needs done for Your glory, God, in honor and praise and the glory of our Lord Jesus. In Jesus Christ's name, I do pray.

You know one thing I want to add this evening as I shared all that? Perhaps I'm going to turn the time over to Brother Emmanuel. But you know, there may be somebody here this evening perhaps that they've come to see that I'm not a child of the King. Well, I want to tell you something very dear that Jesus Christ died for your sins, the Son of God.

He was buried and He was resurrected and He is alive! And because He is alive, He can forgive your sins and impart unto you eternal life! Because of His death, burial and resurrection! His! Thank you for your time. I do appreciate it. Are you one of those anointed ones tonight? That's what the word Christian means.

Christ means the anointed one. And Christians means anointed ones. Are you one of those anointed ones? There's a very big difference in those who call themselves Christians and those who are circumcised in the heart or are anointed.

Because God has shed forth the Holy Ghost and has anointed those who have come and repented and believed on Jesus. Praise God for His Word tonight. Let's stand and sing a song of invitation.

What's the number? 896 in your song books. If you are not anointed by the Lord Jesus Christ, He has shed forth the anointing and it's up to you and I to receive it by faith. Let's sing.

O do not let the word depart and close thine eyes against the light for sinner heart not your heart these days. O do not... Calls you and speaks the grace of God. Oh, I agreed so well with him that when... You will have the... Morals I may never find.

This is a time... Mistake... Oh... If you think you're... Still... He comes at... Mistake... Oh... To the... Feeling of... Mistake... Oh... Let's bow our heads to pray. Let be yet some... Visit us. Oh, visit us.

Shed abroad. Let there be a trembling in all those who are... Let them be afraid. Let their sin be coming.

That they could see... What it looks like. That they might be somehow be able to understand... And the sinfulness of that. Thank you for the...

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/15/SID15265.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/craig-strain/who-are-the-christians/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net