

Monday April 16, 2012 - Are Christian's Different?

According to a Gallup poll, those surveyed responded that "Churchgoers do not differ appreciably from non-churchgoers in matters of moral and ethical behavior." One can argue that the gap between religious thinking and human thinking has narrowed over the years to the point where there is little or no gap anymore. The gap has narrowed mostly as a result of the "religious" coming around to the world's way of thinking, rather than by the world being converted. In other words, the "religious" have become "conformed unto the world" and not the world conformed unto Christ.

Scriptures teach beyond a shadow of a doubt that Christians, God's Chosen people, are to be different from those who are in the world...

Rom. 12:1-2 - I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

The Bible says that Children of God are brought out of the darkness of the world into the Light of His dear Son...

Col. 1:12-13 - ...giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love

1 Thess. 5:5 - You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness

1 John 1:5-7 - This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.

We are to be the lights of the world since we abide in Christ and follow His example ---

Matt 5:14 - You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden

John 8:12 - Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.

The children of God are a bought people...

Acts 20:28 - Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

We are a chosen people...

1 Peter 2:9 - But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light.

We are a special people inasmuch as the gospel is addressed to all (**Mark 16:15-16**), all who believe and obey it are chosen to salvation. With this understanding we realize that there are certain marks on children of God that show distinction and possession by God.

Our entire walk is different...

Eph. 5:8-10 - For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord

When we walk in sin, we walk in darkness of the truth, but when we learn of the truth as it is in Jesus, we can walk according to the teachings of his life. The fruit of light, of knowing and doing this truth of God, is to produce a life in goodness and righteousness and truth.

We walk by faith and not by sight...

2 Cor. 5:7-10 - For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord. Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad

These are a few scriptures which show that we, as children of God, are to be different from the world. How are we to be different from the world?

We are the salt of the earth...

Matt. 5:13a - You are the salt of the earth.

What is meant here is that Christians are the preserving power. What happens when we lose our effectiveness of preservation? When we do not make a difference anymore! --- **Matt. 5:13b - but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men .**

We are the lights of the World --- **Matt. 5:14-16.**

The basic work of light is to take away darkness. As Christians we manifest the things of darkness by our way of life...

Eph. 5:13 - But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.

All the wicked practices performed in secret, which we are commanded to reprove, are exposed in their hideousness and corruptness through the light of the gospel. In this one relation we as children of God are different from people of the world since we love light and hate darkness.

John 3:19-20 - And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed..

John 8:12 - Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

We serve only the Lord...

It is very important to have a sound concept of what being a Christian is all about — in particular, we need to have a scriptural perspective on what is involved in being a “servant” of God. We ought to view serving God just as the Prodigal Son viewed going home to his father, requesting the privilege of being just a servant

Luke 15:18, 19 – I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.

A strong concept of godly service is reflected in the song: “O Master, let me walk with Thee in lowly paths of service free.”

1 John 2:3-6 – Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked

Living as a Christian is a matter of walking with God. The Bible pictures faithful men “walking” with God. “Walking with” implies friendship and close companionship. Walking with God requires walking in His truth.

1 John 1:5-7 - And this is the message which we have heard from him and announce unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: but if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

John 8:31-32 - Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, “If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

John 14:6 - Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me.

The one with whom we walk is our Master; we are His disciples. We must live for the Master, and adopt His manner of life and character. Walking with the Master is not always easy. We walk with the Lord in paths of service. Life in the Lord's kingdom is a life of service. Life ought to be more than a selfish concern about whether our own needs are being met. Discipleship to Christ is an opportunity, a privilege.

We need to make discipleship an entire way of life, not just one of our many "activities." When we walk with the Lord, we come to know Him and people see how different Christians truly are! We need to have a close personal relationship with God. The words of another song speak of the glory of walking with the Master: "When we walk with the Lord in the light of His word, what a glory He sheds on our way."

What's the difference between a Christian and those in the world?

A man got out of bed at 3:00 AM on Saturday to go fishing, but couldn't get up for Sunday morning Bible class!

He went a hundred miles on Friday night to a ballgame, but thought ten miles was too far to come to church twice on Sunday and once on Wednesday.

He took his family to the circus and spent a hundred dollars, but can't afford to give more than twenty dollars to the work of the Lord.

He was on the membership committee at the civic club, but couldn't find the right approach to invite a friend to services.

He took an aspirin and went to work despite an annoying headache, but a similar headache is cause for missing worship.

What's the difference? A matter of wanting to. A matter of loving God and Christ. An understanding the price which was paid for us to be a special people. A matter of understanding the truth and conforming our lives to live in accordance with it.

Being different just for the sake of being different is not what is under consideration. It is being worthy to be called a child of God that makes us different and sets us apart from the children of the world.

Watch your "THOUGHTS", they become "WORDS".
Watch your "WORDS", they become "ACTIONS".
Watch your "ACTIONS", they become "HABITS".
Watch your "HABITS", they become "CHARACTER".
Watch your "CHARACTER", for it becomes your "DESTINY"