

To Say One Is a Christian

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. (Acts 11:26)

Certain assumptions are made when someone claims to be a Christian. First, his life draws from the life of Jesus, as a branch draws from the vine. Without that connection, he can do nothing (John 15). The Bible warns (2 Cor. 11:4, Gal. 1:6-8) against false teachers preaching another Jesus. Henry Morris lists the Jesus of country music, the socialist Jesus, the New Age Jesus, and the ritualistic Jesus of sacramentalism, none of which is the Savior. The true Jesus is the Creator of the universe, the Word made flesh, the one Sacrifice for sins forever, the resurrected Lord and our coming King.

Christians are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works (Eph. 2:10). So if God is doing nothing through him, he is not fulfilling what God intended for him. The second assumption about someone called a Christian, therefore, is that he offers himself up to God (Romans 12:1,2). He is available to God for His purposes. His purposes are carried out when he fellowships with other believers (Hebrews 10:25), among unbelievers (1 Corinthians 9:22), in the family (1 Timothy 5:8), in civic settings (Acts 5:29), and at work (Colossians 3:23).

A third assumption is not to be discounted. A person who says he is a Christian loves God. God does not just love - He IS love. The Bible speaks of the lavish love God has toward the world (John 3:16) and His pleasure in someone who does what He says (Zephaniah 3:17, John 15:9-11). In response a person abides in God's presence in fullness of joy and blesses the Lord (Psalm 16:7,11). This revelation comes through the Spirit, not by the intellect.

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. . . . Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. . . . But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. (1 Corinthians 2:9-14)