

# **Authentic Christianity**

**August 9, 2015**

**We have studied the different religious sects of the Jews during the time that Jesus walked on this earth among men. Today I want to give you some food for thought concerning authentic Christianity. There is a saying that if you want to be able to distinguish between counterfeit money and the true dollar bills, you must study the real McCoy. The same principle holds true concerning the Bible. Study the Scriptures and hide them in your heart. You will be a light that guides those who are seeking to come to the truth.**

**I want to take you through some verses in 1 John that will give us some key characteristics of a true believer. Chapter 1 of 1 John starts out by stating that God was from the beginning and the Apostles heard about him, they had seen God through Jesus, they had touched him and He is the Word of life. John declares that eternal life was with the Father and was shown to all his disciples for they saw him and heard him and now they have been sent to declare the truth to the world.**

**One of the first sign of an authentic Christian is that they have fellowship with those who believe and state that the Word of God is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. They believe that God is light and that there is no darkness in him. Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." True believers walk in the light, have fellowship one with another and the blood of Jesus have cleansed them from all sin. 1 John 1:7. True believers will not declare that they have light in their lives and continue to walk in darkness. Holiness is manifested in their lives. Authentic Christians acknowledge that we all have a sin problem, but if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Chapter 2:3 it says that we prove that we know God when we keep his commandments. Those who keep the Word will have the love of God manifested in their lives. A true believer will not hate his brother for one who hates his brother is walking in darkness. Those who walk in the light love their brothers and don't give an occasion for stumbling in their lives.**

**1 John 2:15 tells us not to love the world, neither the things of the world for those who love the world do not have the love of the Father in them. The Scripture explains the things that we need to be aware of that tie people to the world. Satan tempts people through the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life. The world and these things will pass away but the will of God will abide forever. He uses the same tactics that he used on Adam and Eve for they are effective in trapping people into sin and darkness.**

**In 1 John 2:22 the Word distinguishes the true believer from the counterfeit. It declares that those who deny that Jesus is the Christ, is antichrist and denies both the Father and the Son. The person who denies the Son denies the Father also. He who acknowledges the Son acknowledges the Father also. To those who believe on Jesus Christ and on the Father, have the promise from God of eternal life. Verse 25.**



Another characteristic of authenticity is compassion. In chapter 3:17 says that whoever sees his brother in need and refuses to reach out to help him lacks the love of God. We are not to love in word neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth. We must believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ and to love one another. We know that we abide in him by the Spirit that dwells within us. Chapter 4 tells us to test the spirits to make sure that they are of God. Many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God. Every spirit that denies that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. That spirit is of the antichrist. Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world. Love one another for love is of God. He that loveth not knoweth not God for God is love. We love him because he first loved us. Chapter 4:19. If a person says he loves God yet hates his brother, he is a liar for how can we hate our brother whom we have seen and love God whom we haven't seen? If you love God, love your brother also.

Whosoever is born of God overcomes the world by believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The only way to life is through the Son of God. Verse 20 says that we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding that we may know him that is true and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep you from idols.

By reading the book of Acts, you will notice the way that believers responded to the Word of God and to each other. In Acts 2:41, the people gladly received the word of the Apostles, were baptized and then continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrines through fellowship and in breaking of bread and in prayers. They were concerned about spreading the gospel and bringing people to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. In Acts 8, Philip left a revival in obedience to the spirit of God who told him to witness to an Ethiopian who was sitting in his chariot out in the desert reading the book of Isaiah. After Philip joined the man in his chariot, he witnessed to him concerning Jesus Christ. Soon they came to a body of water and the Ethiopian asked if he could be baptized.

In Acts 10, Peter was sent by the Holy Spirit to witness to Cornelius, a Gentile, though Peter had always obeyed the Jewish law that forbade him to have any contact with Gentiles. Following his preaching of Jesus, Cornelius and his whole household were converted and baptized with the Holy Spirit and Peter baptized them in the name of Jesus. Those who have a personal experience with the saving power of Jesus Christ will desire to lead others to the saving power of Jesus Christ. It will always come from a heart of mercy and love not by a desire to control others, manipulate others or to force others to a certain religion or denomination. God's spirit doesn't force anyone; He woos and pleads and calls our names. He offers us saving grace! He invites us to open the door of our hearts and dine with him. We respond to the love that is offered. James 1:27 says that pure religion is manifested by visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction and to keep unspotted from the world. The Word of God warns us about counterfeit religions.