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MARCH 2019 “WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?”

**Our 2019 Prayer and Power Conference will be
SUNDAY, APRIL 28 - FRIDAY, MAY 3
Grace Christian Center
4184 East Patterson Rd.
Dayton, Ohio 45430
(937)426-4543**

**Sunday services are 10:30 AM and 6:00 PM
Monday - Friday services are 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM
Pre-Service Worship 45 minutes before all services.
You can register at www.jmmgrace.com
There is NO CHARGE to register or attend.**

Greetings in Jesus!

During a recent concert in Las Vegas, an extremely popular secular singer claimed to be a Christian. However, this singer, (well-known for proudly discussing intimate encounters with both men and women), began to harshly criticize current Vice President Mike Pence,

“To Mike Pence, who thinks it’s acceptable that his wife work at a school that bans LGBTQ, you are wrong. You say we should not discriminate against Christianity; you are the worst representation of what it means to be a Christian. I am a Christian woman and what I do know about Christianity is that we bear no prejudice and everybody is welcome. So you can take all that disgrace Mr. Pence and you can look yourself in the mirror and you’ll find it right there.”

This is the same person who, in an interview at the Berghain Club in Berlin, Germany said,

“You know what? It’s not a lie that I’m bisexual and I like women, and anyone that wants to twist this into ‘she says she’s bisexual for marketing,’ this is a (expletive) lie. This is who I am and who I have always been.”

So, then, is this woman a Christian or not? Some might say, “Well, Jesus said in John 3:16, ‘For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,’ so if she says she believes in Jesus, then yes, Brother Martin, she is a Christian.” But is that position biblically accurate?

In John 3:16 the word “believeth” comes from the Greek word “pisteuo.” This word does not simply mean someone who acknowledges and agrees that Jesus was and is the Son of God who died on the cross for the sins of humanity; it also means that a person accepts, agrees with and lives according to what the individual in question, (Jesus, in this case), has said and taught. Furthermore, consider what Jesus said in John 12:48, *He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in*

the last day. So then, does this mean that only the New Testament words of Jesus in red are our standard? Hardly.

In Matthew 4:4, Jesus said, ... *It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* Then 2 Timothy 3:16 states, *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.* Therefore, a person who professes to be a Christian must not only believe in Jesus as the Messiah, but must also accept what God has said in the Bible as the foundation for all he or she believes. There is no argument that can in any way successfully contradict this truth. Thus, we can use the Bible to define what it means to be and live as a Christian. Doing so eliminates all individual opinions. As we look to God's Word, here is just a sampling of what we can learn about being a Christian.

> A true Christian who lives as such will never, ever declare that there is more than one path to God.

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

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

> A true Christian who lives as such will never, ever declare that abortion is okay because it is a woman's right to do as she pleases with her body.

¹⁹What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? ²⁰For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. (Psalm 127:3)

³⁷Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, ³⁸And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood.

³⁹Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions. ⁴⁰Therefore was the wrath of the LORD kindled against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance. (Psalm 106:37-40)

> A true Christian who lives as such will never, ever declare that Christians who sin do not need to repent.

²⁰For I fear, lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I would, and that I shall be found unto you such as ye would not: lest there be debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults: ²¹And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed.

(2 Corinthians 12:20-21)

Read also Acts 8:4-23 (where a Believer is clearly told to repent, and Revelation chapters two and three, where six times Christians are told to repent.

> A true Christian who lives as such will never, ever declare that pre-marital sex, sex outside of marriage, homosexuality, cross dressing and/or transgenderism is not a sin and is acceptable before God.

⁹Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, ¹⁰Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

(1 Corinthians 6:9-10)

[effeminate (Gr malakos): 1. speaking of men or women who dress and act like the opposite sex (see Deuteronomy 22:5), 2. men or women who allow themselves to be abused sexually or allow their bodies to be used for the sexual pleasure of others.] [abusers of themselves with mankind (Gr arsenokoites): primarily, men who engage in sexual activity with men; can also refer to women doing the same.]

Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. (Romans 13:13)

[chambering (Gr koite): used in reference to unmarried couples living together and to unmarried couples in bed having sex]

> A true Christian who lives as such will never, ever declare that the use of drugs of any kind for the purpose of getting high, “feeling good,” etc is not a sin and is acceptable before God.

¹⁹Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, ²⁰Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, ²¹Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. (Galatians 5:19-21)

[witchcraft (Gr pharmakeia): originally, the use of medicine for curative purposes but became a term referring to the use of substances for pleasure, including the use of such substances during services of pagan worship, occult and witchcraft practices; figuratively, the image of an individual casting a spell on oneself through the use of such substances.]

> A true Christian who lives as such will never, ever declare that Jesus’ teachings before the cross do not in any way apply to Christians.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

(Matthew 24:35)

¹⁸And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. ¹⁹Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ²⁰Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28:18-20)

> A true Christian who lives as such will never, ever declare that extended times of prayer, fasting, worship, and reading, meditating and confessing God’s Word are all just works of the flesh. (There are far too many passages of scripture related to these topics to print in this letter. However, here are just a few references you can look up:

Matthew 6:5-16; John 4:23-24; Mark 4:14, 20, Luke 6:43-45, John 6:62 & Proverbs 18:21; 2 Timothy 2:15 & 3:16-17 & Psalm 119:148.)

These are but a few examples of how God, in His Word, defines what a Christian is and how a Christian lives and believes. It is true that all Christians must be taught both the milk and the meat of scripture; this is why God established the ministries of the Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor and Teacher. But after just a few, short minutes of reading this letter you have read spiritual standards that will never change, no matter what a preacher says or what laws a government may pass. Christianity and Christian standards are not defined by a denomination, voted on by a church council or open for debate. There is no such thing as, “You see it your way and I’ll see it mine.”

What is shocking is the fact that every, single point I have addressed is a major problem area in the Church today. The very things that the Bible reveals that Christians truly living for God will not do or teach are even now being boldly promoted by pastors and churches throughout the world. We are witnessing the fulfillment of Jesus’ Matthew 24 warning about false prophets. This means we are getting very close to His return.

Some Christians might say, “But I have a right to make my own choices. If I want to do some of those things you have listed, I have the right to do them.” That is one of the greatest lies ever embraced by Christians. As God’s children, we absolutely do **NOT** have the right to make such choices! Colossians 1:12 says we have been translated out of the power of darkness into the **Kingdom** of God’s dear Son. In a kingdom, there is a king. The king declares what is and is not permissible for the kingdom citizens. Our King is Jesus and that which is and is not permissible is greatly detailed in the Constitution of the Kingdom: the Bible.

A “right” is a liberty or freedom enabling a person to do something without fear of penalty or repercussion. Free will enables a person to make any choice regardless of what is permissible. Adam and Eve did NOT have the right to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, but they did have free will to make that choice, which they did, suffering extremely dire consequences. As Christians, we are citizens of the Kingdom of Christ and we do not have a Kingdom right to choose whatever we want; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 explains we have been bought with a price and we are not our own. However, we do have free will and can choose anything we want...but that does **NOT** mean we are free from consequences if we choose to do what the Kingdom Constitution forbids.

Psalm 119:89 declares, *Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven.* The word settled is from the Hebrew word natsav. It means, “set up, stand, to be firm, establish, stationed.” Comparable terms which might be used today would be immovable, set in stone, cemented in place, etc. In other words, what God has said will stand unchangeable and it alone is the criterion by which our lives and beliefs will be judged when we appear in judgment before Him. When ministers stand behind pulpits and so blatantly teach doctrine that contradicts the Bible, it is clear they do not believe or have not paid attention to Proverbs 30:4-6,

⁴Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his name, and what is his son’s name, if thou canst tell? ⁵Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. ⁶Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.

In Amos 3:3 we read, ***Can two walk together except they be agreed?*** How can any professing Christian maintain he or she is walking in true fellowship with God when their belief system is so antithetical to the inflexible, unchanging words of the eternal, unchangeable God they claim to serve?

At this point I would ask: Are you truly a Christian? What do you really believe? Are you firmly established on God's Word and do you live in agreement with what He has said? Or, do you believe that the blood of Jesus has done so much for you that you have the right, liberty and freedom to do as you wish, and that there is no accountability or penalty for doing what God, in the Bible, has said is wrong?

In Luke 6:46, Jesus said, ***And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*** We cannot be sold out to God and keep choosing our own will over His. His grace, love and mercy are such that He understands we are growing spiritually and He works with us in all our mistakes and foolish decisions. But He expects us to exalt His Word as the sole standard for what we believe and how we live. His life in us is 100% compatible with His Word, bearing witness with what is written therein as being life and truth.

As Christians, we are at the greatest crossroads in all of human history. The deception Jesus warned of in Matthew 24 is even now pulling great numbers of Believers into an abyss of heresy that will lead some into an eternity spent in the lake of fire. However, His life in us will strengthen us so that we are among those that shall endure unto the end, rejoicing at His return and joining Him in an eternity filled with His absolute glory!

In His Grace,

Jim

P.S. - This month I am offering a CD of a sermon that fits perfectly with this letter. It is titled, *Satan Twists God's Words* and you can order a copy using the form below.

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