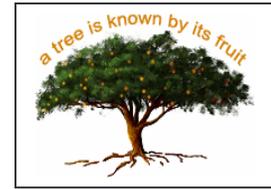


Check Yourself



In modern-day Christianity, we have a dilemma on our hands. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not being preached in its fullness. The Law of God is not being preached even though it is "our tutor to lead us to Christ" (Galatians 3:24 NASB). The Apostle Paul also said, "I would not have come to know sin except through the Law" (Romans 7:7). And because the Law isn't preached, sin isn't preached against since "sin is transgression of the Law" (1 John 3:4). You may here sin talked about in a very general sense such as quoting Romans 3:23, but that's about it. And because sin isn't preached, repentance isn't preached like it should be. Yes, the word "repentance" is mentioned here and there in some of the sermons of some modern-day preachers, but most people who hear the word "repentance" don't even know what it means. And because they don't know what it means, they won't know how to respond to the command "repent." For those who do know what the word repent means, if the Law of God isn't preached, they usually don't know what they need to repent of.

In place of the "full Gospel", is a watered down "gospel", which is NO gospel at all. It tells people to come to the altar and "ask Jesus into your heart", which is consequently something that is totally foreign to Scripture. Or the lost sinner is told, "You have a God shaped hole in your heart that only Jesus can fill." Or they may be told the incentive Gospel: "Come to Jesus for love, joy, peace, happiness, purpose and fulfillment in life." Lost sinners are asked to raise their hands if they want to get saved and then they pray the "sinner's prayer" after someone. Can such a Gospel save a person? Well, it can, at times, but that all depends on what the person knows before they hear these messages. These kinds of "gospels" can only save a person if they have prior knowledge of the TRUE Gospel. Usually, after a lost sinner prays "the prayer" they are told that they are on their way to Heaven no matter what they do from there on out. That all God requires of them is to say one little prayer. 2 Corinthians 13:5 says something altogether different. It says, "Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! Or do you not recognize this about yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test."

It is because of the modern Gospel that many people go around calling themselves Christians with no change seen in their lives whatsoever. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:17, "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come." Someone who is truly a Christian WILL be different compared to the way they used to be and compared to the world around them. They will be a NEW creature. They will be Born Again as Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3. They will bear the fruit of repentance as John the Baptist speaks of in Matthew 3:8 and as Paul speaks of in Acts 26:20. They will also have the fruit of the Spirit as spoken of by Paul in Galatians 5:22. They will have all of these "fruits" of a Christian because every True believer has the Spirit of God living in them. In fact, Jesus said in Matthew 7:15-20, that you will KNOW them by their fruit. That little passage of Scripture which is spoken by the very mouth of Jesus makes it very clear that not everyone is a Christian just because they say they are or think they are.

The New Testament of the Bible speaks of the Fruit of True Believers all throughout, but no book of the Bible speaks about it more then 1 John (at least in my

opinion). James has much to say concerning this subject as well, but I would like to take a look at 1 John in this article. I believe that 1 John 5:13 sums up this book of the Bible as a whole, "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life." So let's take a look at what 1 John has to say about those who truly DO have eternal life. I pray that, as you read, you will search your heart as 2 Corinthians 13:5 admonishes: that you will check yourself to see if you are truly in the faith or not. Eternity and where you will spend it is NOT something to mess around with, so please seriously check yourself. We are going to go through 1 John step-by-step and look at all the "fruits" of someone who is truly a Christian.

1) 1 John 1:6-7, "If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth; but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin."

- This verse makes it very clear that those who belong to Jesus Christ will walk in the Light. In other words, the True Christian will walk in Holiness. If we claim to have fellowship with Him and don't walk in Holiness, we lie and do not practice the Truth. And what does the Truth do according to Jesus? It sets us free (John 8:32)! And it is ONLY when we walk in the light that the Blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin. It is just like Romans 8:1 says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." There is only no condemnation for those who walk in the Light or according to the Spirit.

2) 1 John 1:8 "If we say we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us."

- I used to think that because this verse is in the present tense in the Greek and that it was speaking against holiness. That if anyone claimed that they could live above sin, that they were deceived. Well, in proper context of the whole book of 1 John, that wouldn't make any sense. Just look at 1 John 2:1. One of the main reasons that John says he wrote this book is so that believers "may not sin." Now, if John is saying that it is impossible not to sin or that we have to sin, he would seem to be contradicting himself in 1 John 2:1. Rather, this verse is talking about those who have claimed to never of sinned in their lives. Such a man is a fool. Every man and woman has sinned at some point in time. I am not by any means saying that a Christian loses the ability to sin. I am simply say that no Christian has to sin and that every believer can do "ALL THINGS through Christ who strengthens them" (Phil. 4:13). Jesus said, "Go and sin no more" to two separate people (John 5:14; 8:11). I believe he meant it, do you? When the Bible says that God never allows us to be tempted beyond what we are able, He meant that as well (1 Cor. 10:13). So, it is not a matter of whether a Christian can sin. A Christian always has the ability to sin. It is also not a matter of whether a Christian can be tempted or not. Christians will always be tempted, but temptation is not sin. What it boils down to in my mind is the mindset of a Christian. The mindset of a Christian should ALWAYS be, "I HATE sin, I don't want to sin!" A Christian MAY sin. But it should never be a matter of

“when I sin” but “IF I sin.” That is exactly what John says in the second part of [1 John 2:1](#).

3) [1 John 1:10](#), "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar and His word is not in us."

- This is pretty cut and dry. This is in the past tense and is the same issue as [1 John 1:8](#). It is just presented more clearly in this verse. If someone is not willing to admit that they have ever sinned, then they can't be a Christian. If they haven't sinned what need do they have of Christ who saves people from their sins? Christ didn't come to save the righteous, but the sinners. These people call God a liar because the Bible is very clear in that all have sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God ([Romans 3:23](#)). If you don't think that you have sinned, then go read the lists in [1 Corinthians 6:9-10](#), [Galatians 5:19-21](#) and [Revelation 21:7-8](#).

4) [1 John 2:3](#); [5:2, 3](#), "By this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments." "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. For this is the love of God: that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome."

- That's a pretty simple one as well. Do you keep His commandments? Is it a delight to obey God? Do you strive with all that is in you to obey God with your whole heart? Or are His commandments burdensome? If your life couldn't be characterized as being obedient to God and His commandments, then you need to Check Yourself. Don't say you love God unless you are willing to obey His commands. If you love God only for what He can do for you, then that is not love. That is called using someone as a means to an end. God is not a means, He IS THE END and IF you love Him, you WILL obey Him. If you don't obey Him, then you DON'T love Him.

5) [1 John 2:6](#), "The one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He (Jesus) walked."

- Is Jesus the one you look to? Do you strive to walk as He walked, no matter what the cost to you? Jesus walked in such a way that He was crucified in the end. Do you stick out as being different from the world around you? You should because Jesus did. He was persecuted, insulted, beaten, spit upon and ultimately killed. Are you willing to go through that? Are you willing to rise above temptation? Are you willing to consider yourself of no reputation? Are you willing to take up your cross daily, deny yourself daily and follow Him? Are you willing to lose friends, family members, jobs and everything else for Him? This is the way that Jesus lived and this is what it means to walk in the same manner that Jesus walked. This is why Jesus said that one must count the cost if they are going to be His follower and disciple.

6) [1 John 2:9, 11](#); [3:15](#), "The one who says he is in the Light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now." "But the one who hates his brother is in the darkness and walks in the darkness, and does not know where he is going because the darkness has

blinded his eyes..." "Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him."

- Do you hate anyone? Anyone at all? God sees hatred as murder! We are called to love everyone. Jesus told us to even love our enemies and pray for them. We should love everyone to the point where we desire the greatest good for them, no matter the cost to us. And I think the greatest good you could ever want for someone is to want them to have eternal life. To not care if someone goes to Hell or not is the worst kind of "hatred" you could have for someone. Think about it, they will be in torment forever. In a place where the worm never dies and the fire is not quenched. They will be in a place where they will weep and gnash their teeth forever. We must share the Gospel with all if we truly love them! Jesus said that the greatest love someone could show was to lay his life down for another. Are you willing to lay aside your fears, your reputation and what people will think of you to share the Glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ with them? Then you TRULY do NOT love them. Love is not mere empty words. Love is ACTION!

7) 1 John 2:15, "If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

- We are strangers and aliens in this world. We are just passing through, for this is not our resting place. Are you caught up in "things" and entertainment? Do you find yourself enthralled in and with the world? We are called to be in the world, but not of it. Beware of the 10th commandment-covetousness. You can know what you love the most by what you spend your most time with or what you spend your most time doing. Do you spend most of your time watching TV, involved in sports, on the phone, on the computer, being entertained, or do you spend most of your time getting to know the Lord and doing His work? Do you spend most of your time at work, at the movies, shopping or having fun, or do you spend most of your time in prayer, reading the Bible and seeking to save that which is lost. Be real with yourself! James 4:4 says, "Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend with the world makes himself an enemy of God." Are YOU a friend of God or an Enemy of God? Do you love the world or do you love God? There is no in between friends!

8) 1 John 2:17, "The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever."

- Doing the will of God is living in complete obedience to Him in every area of your life. Listen to what Jesus said in John 4:34: "My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to accomplish His work." Are you more concerned about Your Dreams or about what God's will is for your life? Are you pursuing a certain educational degree or career just because you like doing it or just because you will make lots of money doing it? Those are the wrong reasons for pursuing something. Everything we pursue in life should come from knowing that we are doing what God wants us to do or from a sincere belief that we are doing God's will. You find out God's general will for your life or anyone's life by reading the Bible, God's Word. You find out God's specific will for your life through prayer and simply by doing God's general will for your life (Matthew 6:33).

As you Trust the Lord with ALL your heart, He will lead you to where He wants you to be (Proverbs 3:5, 6).

9) 1 John 2:19, "They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us."

- Are you someone who says that you are a Christian, but doesn't fellowship together with other believers at a local Church? True believers will want to fellowship with other believers because they are like-minded. The one who says that the Church is filled with hypocrites shows their misunderstanding of the word "Church." The Church is not the building or even every person who goes to meet at the building. The Church is the True Children of God. They are not hypocrites, because a hypocrite is a pretender. There will be hypocrites who meet at the Church building, so if you find a local Church that is filled with them, then find a new local Church or witness to them. Finding hypocrites that meet at the Church building shouldn't make you give up on the Church altogether. If it does, then you probably aren't a Christian yourself, because True believers persevere to the end and love the Church as Christ loved the Church.

10) 1 John 2:23, "Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father."

- If someone doesn't know Christ or denies that He is the only way to the Father, then they aren't a Christian. Such a person shows they don't even understand the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They may have "accepted" Christ, but they have done so for the wrong reasons. Christ was the only one who died for our sins and is therefore the only one who can save us from them. Anything else is works righteousness which saves no one. We sinned and went astray, but God offers us forgiveness, pardon and reconciliation through Jesus Christ perfect sacrifice. You really only have two options: go to Hell or trust in the shed blood of Jesus Christ, who atoned for our sins on the cross. Those are your only two options. No amount of good you do can ever make up for the bad you do. Present or future obedience doesn't atone or wash away present or past disobedience. That would be like a rapist murderer trying to get out of going to jail by helping old ladies across the street, joining the Boy Scouts as a leader and giving all his money away to the poor. It doesn't matter how much good he does, he still needs to be punished for his crimes. If Jesus is not your Lord and Savior or if you don't think He is the ONLY way to be forgiven and reconciled to the Father, then you aren't a Christian.

11) 1 John 2:29; 3:7, 10, "If you know that He is righteous, you know that everyone also who practices righteousness is born of Him." "Little children, make sure no one deceives you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous." "By this the children of God and the children of the devil are obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God..."

- Do you practice righteousness? As with anything in life, "practice makes perfect." As you practice something, you get better at it. You can know if you are practicing righteousness or not by taking a look at your life. Have you become more holy, more

righteous since you claimed to have become a Christian? Have you become better at living a life of holiness and righteousness? If you haven't, then you aren't practicing righteousness. And if you aren't practicing righteousness, then you aren't a child of God. Many people claim that righteous standing with God or that they are righteous positionally. But [1 John 3:7](#) makes it clear that it is only those who practice righteousness that are righteous. Am I saying that you earn your salvation? Of course not! What I am saying is that those who Truly are saved, who have a right standing with God (stand righteous before Him) because of their faith in Christ, will have a lived-out righteousness as well. For someone to say that they are a Christian and yet they are not practicing righteousness is for them to be deceived. [Hebrews 12:14](#) says that without holiness, no man will see the Lord! [Hebrews 5:9](#) says that Jesus became the author of eternal life to all those who obey Him. Are you obeying everything that you know to obey? If not, you need to Repent and practice righteousness!

12) [1 John 3:8, 9](#), "The one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil. No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

- The opposite of practicing righteousness would be practicing sin. You are either practicing one or the other. There is no in-between. You may think there is, but idleness is sin as well. You show who you are of (God or the devil) by what you practice with your life. [Verse 9](#) also makes it quite clear why a True Christian won't practice sin. It says that the seed of God abides in him. What or should I say who is the seed? It is the Holy Spirit. And because each Christian has the Holy Spirit living inside of them, they won't continue on in sin or practice sin. The Holy Spirit convicts them of sin and helps them to resist temptation so they can become more like Christ everyday. For a Christian to continue in sin is to be under the judgment and wrath of God once again. Sin was once the natural thing to do it is now unnatural to the person who has become a Born Again Christian. It is appalling to them. The Christian should think the same about sin that God does: they should hate it. And when you hate something, you want nothing to do with it. The Bible says that we are to cut our hands off if they cause us to sin ([Matthew 5:30](#)). Jesus isn't endorsing mutilation, but simply saying that we should do everything we can to get all the sin out of our lives. Don't give the devil a foothold! What sin are you playing around with or entertaining in your mind? Stop! Take that thought captive unto the obedience of Christ ([2 Corinthians 10:5](#)). Think back to the last time you sinned. What were the events or thoughts that led up to that sin? Don't walk that path or think those thoughts again! And if you find yourself involved in the thoughts or events that lead up to sin again, stop yourself before you sin! [James 4:7](#) says, "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." [1 Corinthians 10:13](#) says, "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it." [Philippians 4:8](#) says, "Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." [Philippians 4:13](#)

says, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." Do you really not want to sin? You can. Repent of your sins, put your faith in Jesus Christ, read the Bible daily and treasure it, "How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to your word. With all my heart I have sought you; do not let me wander from Your commandments. Your word have I treasured in my heart that I might not sin against you." (Psalm 119:9-11)

13) 1 John 3:14; 4:20, "We know that we have passed out of death into life because we love the brethren." "If someone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God who he has not seen."

- God loves people and if we are His, we will be just like Him. The second greatest commandment is to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31). If we are Christians, then we will love people as well. If we say we love God, then we will love what He loves and hate what He hates. If we don't love who or what we do see, then we can't love Him whom we don't see! Do you love other Christians? How? Do you serve them and fellowship with them? How can you say you love someone if won't spend time with them. Could I really say that I love my wife or children if I never spent anytime with them? I don't think so and neither can you say that you love other Christians if you don't spend any time with them. And neither can you say that you love the lost if you don't spend anytime trying to reach out to them with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As the Christian band D.C. Talk has said, Love is a verb! For someone to say that they possess love (noun), yet don't live out love (verb) is a total contradiction! Once again, LOVE IS ACTION!

14) 1 John 3:18, 19, "Little children, let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth. We will know by this that we are of the truth, and will assure our heart before Him."

- True Christians don't just love with words, but also in action. You may do the religious things such as going to Church, praying, etc., but do you live out the truth? James 2:14 says, "What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can such faith save him?" And then verse 17 says, "Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself." A faith that has no works is a dead faith. Such faith cannot save someone. It will only damn them in the end, showing them that they are deceived.

15) 1 John 4:6, "We are from God; he who knows God listens to us; he who is not from God does not listen to us."

- The "we" in this verse is the Apostles. They were from God and had the very teaching of God. They were taught by Jesus for three years and had a special revelation from God that makes their writings inspired and Scripture. They were sent by Jesus Himself. And because they were sent by Jesus and Jesus was sent by God, they were from God. So, whoever disagreed with their teaching or did not obey their teaching showed that they were not from God. What is their teaching? The Bible is their teaching. It must be

followed and obeyed and if you are a Christian you will do so. True Christians don't pick and choose which verses to obey and which ones not to obey. They know the Bible is God's Word and they want to follow it wholeheartedly.

16) 1 John 4:13, "By this we know that we abide in Him and He is us, because He has given us of His Spirit."

- This agrees with **Romans 8:16, "The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God..."** If you are a child of God, you have the Holy Spirit. If you have the Holy Spirit, you will KNOW IT. There will be no doubt about it. If you aren't sure if you have the Holy Spirit or not, then chances are you don't have Him.

Conclusion

In the end, YOU must examine yourself. I don't offer up my opinion, for it means nothing. All I offer up is the Word of God. There are many people who say they are Christians, who say they are saved, but are they saved according to God's Word? Are you saved according to God's Word? Are YOU a Biblical Christian? Would God call you one of His Children according to what you have read here? Friend, don't be deceived. The Bible makes it clear that there are MANY who ARE deceived. **Matthew 7:21-23** says, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of Heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in Heaven will enter. MANY will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, you who PRACTICE lawlessness (sin).'"

Those three verses confirm what the book of **1 John** says. Why won't these people who will say "Lord, Lord" enter the Kingdom of Heaven? Two reasons: they practice sin (lawlessness) and the Lord doesn't know them and has never known them. We already know what practicing sin is, but what does the Lord not knowing us mean? It doesn't mean that Christ doesn't know about us, for He knows all about all. If it meant that, the Greek word *oida* would have been used. The Greek word used for "know" in this verse is the Greek word *ginosko*. It means to know someone experientially or intimately. It is the same Greek word used in the Septuagint in **Genesis 4:1**, where it says that Adam "knew" his wife. It is talking about intimately knowing someone by experience. Do you intimately know Christ? Does He intimately know you? That is what being Born Again means, to know Christ. I mean, what is eternal life anyway? **John 17:3** says, "This is eternal life that they may know you, the Only True God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." Or maybe you are like one of the foolish virgins who were at one time going to marry the bridegroom. But, because you were foolish and didn't persevere until the end, Jesus will say to you, "I don't know you" (**Matthew 25:12**). Don't think for a second that if you had a past moment of genuine faith that you are secure in Christ if you turn back to your sin! Friend Check Yourself Today! One thing you don't want to mess with is where you will spend eternity. Find out today friend because you may not have tomorrow! If you have any questions, feel free to email me at: Kerrigan@pinpointevangelism.com. God Bless...