

You and Jesus Christ

The most important question you will answer in life is, "What must I do to be saved?" The most important decision you will make in life is whether or not you will become a Christian. What is your relationship with Jesus Christ right now? The apostle Paul says you have four choices.

First, you can be "without Christ" if you want (Ephesians 2:12). This is the state of death. In this state, you are serving Satan (Colossians 1:14), dead in sin (Ephesians 2:1-4), and a child of God's wrath (Romans 2:4-8; Colossians 1:21).

Second, you can be "in Christ" if you want (2 Corinthians 5:7). This is the state of grace. In this state, you are redeemed (Romans 3:24), sanctified (1 Corinthians 1:2), and forgiven (Ephesians 1:7).

Third, you can be "severed from Christ" if you want (Galatians 5:4). This is the state of apostasy. In this state, Christ profits you nothing and you are fallen from God's grace (Galatians 5:2-4).

Finally, you can be "with Christ" if you want when you die (Philippians 1:23). This is the state of glory. In this state, you are reigning with Christ in heaven (Revelation 14:13; 20:4, 6)

What state or relationship with Jesus do you want right now? Do you want to get "in Christ"? Friend, I encourage you to be baptized into Christ and put him on today (Galatians 3:26-27)! - *Chris Reeves*

Up-Coming Events

- We are studying 2 Corinthians in February. We have great Bible classes. Come check them out!
- Next Sunday's Sermons: The House of Mourning (AM) and Who Should I Marry? (PM).

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Clarksville, TN 37043

Website
WBCOC.org

Assembly Times
Sunday: 9:30 am, 10:30 am, 6 pm
Wednesday: 7 pm

Everyone Is Welcome!
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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

Does It Make A Difference What One Believes?

In last week's bulletin, we answered the question: "Does everyone have a right to his own belief?" Today, I want to answer a similar question: "Does it make a difference what one believes?"

There is no question that the religious world is grossly divided. There are literally thousands of religious groups all teaching different doctrines and engaged in different practices. This is all contrary to what Jesus prayed for in John 17. Right before going to the cross, Jesus prayed that his followers would be united (John 17:20-21). Jesus' followers today are definitely not unified; they are hopelessly divided.

One popular idea that many people have that contributes to this division is this: "It doesn't make any difference what you believe as long as you are sincere." This popular idea keeps many people from studying the Bible on such subjects as salvation, the worship of the church, the organization of the church, etc.

This popular idea is an effective tool of the devil both in and out of the Lord's church! But, we must ask ourselves, "Where did this idea come from?" Who said, "It doesn't make any difference what you believe as long as you are sincere"? Is this idea coming from man, or is it coming from the Bible?

Think about this popular idea for a moment. Is it really the case that it doesn't make a difference what you believe as long

as you are sincere? Do people really think that and practice that? Let's test that idea with a few examples.

Does it make a difference what one believes about your spouse and children? If your sincere neighbor believes that your spouse and children now belong to him, is that ok?

Does it make a difference what one believes about your bank account? If your sincere banker believes that you have only \$500 in your account when you really have \$5000, is that ok?

Does it make a difference what one believes about your health? If your sincere doctor believes that you are healthy when you actually have cancer, is that ok?

Does it make a difference what one believes about your job? If your sincere employer believes that you have stolen from the business when you have not, is that ok?

Does it make a difference what one believes about your citizenship? If your sincere government believes that you are illegal when in fact you are legal, is that ok?

We could go on and on with these examples, but you get the point. It actually does make a difference what one believes, doesn't it? Whether a person is sincere or not is beside the point. What he believes makes a difference.

Turning now to God's word, we find that it indeed does make a difference what one believes in matters of religion. For example,

we must believe that God is (Hebrews 11:6) and that Jesus is the Christ (John 8:21, 24) to be saved. This is something we must believe and if there is just one thing that we must believe, then it makes a difference whether or not we believe it.

We are taught in God's word that we have one objective standard of what we must believe. We must believe the truth of God's word in the Bible if we want to be saved (John 8:32; 17:17). It makes a big difference if we believe the truth of God's word or if we believe a lie (2 Thessalonians 2:10-12).

If you are still not convinced that it makes a difference what one believes, then I suggest that you ask a couple of men in the Bible about it. For example, ask the young man who believed a lie from the old prophet and was killed by a lion for believing that lie (1 Kings 13:7-25). Ask Saul of Tarsus (Paul) and he will tell you that he was sincere in his beliefs before he became a Christian (Acts 26:9). He will also tell you that he was sincerely wrong in his beliefs and changed (Philippians 3:5-9).

Yes, it makes a difference what we believe in matters of religion. We must base our beliefs upon the truth of God's word (John 20:31), we must examine our beliefs with God's word (Acts 17:11-12), we must act upon our beliefs from God's word (Mark 16:15-16), and we must unite upon our beliefs in God's word (Acts 4:32). - Chris Reeves