

Obama Helps Clarify What True Christianity Really Is

One of my friends in Scotland commented that Christianity in America is a mile wide and an inch deep. After returning to America from living overseas twice as an adult, I would say this is a fair assessment.

The majority of Americans identify as Christians. However, their response to Gallup and Barna polls reveals there's a disconnect, even a contradiction, between what self-ascribing Christians actually believe and claim. Sadly, poll results indicate that most self-ascribing American Christians, while they state they would like to read the Bible more, are unfamiliar with fundamental biblical facts, they misunderstand or have no knowledge about what Jesus says about Himself, salvation, heaven, hell or death.

Some self-ascribing Christians claim that, "born-again Christians are disturbing." (Such a claim either represents ignorance or the rejection of Jesus Christ's teachings recorded in the four gospels as true. Clearly explained in John 3:1-21 and elsewhere, Jesus Himself declared that salvation from sin/separation from God is that one "must be born again.")

Some self-ascribing Christians either support abortion now, or had the opportunity to prevent it or did nothing after the U.S. Supreme Court's final ruling in 1973. Some self-ascribing Christians have expressed "horror" over abortion practices (like Kermit Gosnell's) but voted for and continue to justify their support of leaders who advocate for infanticide and sex-selective abortions.

Still others, support same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue, unable to understand its spiritual and biblical origin,

while also whining about religious rights issues. Such claims, that completely ignore, reject and/or misinterpret biblical truth clearly articulated by the God they claim to worship, obviously mislead and confuse non-Christians.

To be sure, many Christians make mistakes, misunderstand and/or disagree about scriptural interpretation. Not all Christians are saints. Some have committed crimes.

But straightforward falsehood guised as Christianity is dangerous. If one does not know what is true, it will be exceedingly difficult to identify what is false.

This is truth: a genuine born-again, Bible-believing and following Christian is first known by their confession, witness and testimony that Jesus Christ is Lord, is the only son of God, and that he and the father are one. Jesus claimed that only through him can anyone can know God and that through him alone can one have eternal life. Either Jesus is who he says he is or he isn't.

True Christian belief is evidenced in the out-workings of one's faith: repentance, obedience, sacrifice, service and evangelism (highlighted in Acts 2; 1 Cor. 15; 2 Cor. 5; Gal. 5; Heb. 11; James 2; 1 John 1:3; Luke 10, 15; Matt. 28, Rom.).

Those who claim to be a Christian and yet persecute Christians and shield persecutors from justice are what Jesus' disciple Peter describes as: "springs without water and mists driven by a storm, for whom the black darkness has been reserved. For speaking out arrogant words of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error, promising them freedom while they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by what a man is overcome, by this he is enslaved" (2 Pet. 2:12-19).

Paul also clarifies: "If anyone advocates a different doctrine and does not agree with sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness, he is

conceited and understands nothing; but he has a morbid interest in controversial questions and disputes about words, out of which arise envy, strife, abusive language, evil suspicions, and constant friction between men of depraved mind and deprived of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain" (1 Tim. 6:3-5).

As is the consequence for those who make false claims. Jesus said of them, "I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" (Matt. 7:21-23). He also warned, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven."

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