



BEING LIKE CHRIST

The true heart of Christian living is found in a Christian learning to be like Jesus. A Christian can attend worship and can study his Bible and still not be a successful Christian. No Christian is a successful Christian until he tries to have the way of Jesus in his own life.

The word "Christian" means "Christ-like." The true meaning of being "Christian" is learning to live and act like Christ. If you cannot see Christ in a Christian's life, that Christian is a spiritual failure. Paul expressed deep sorrow and great pain for some Christians in Galatia because Christ was not yet formed in them (*Galatians 4:19*).

The way a Christian becomes like Christ is by letting Christ live in him. Scripture tells of the importance of Christ living in Christians in many ways. The Philippian Christians were told to have the same mind in them that was in Christ (*Philippians 2:5*). That mind was the mind of humility and obedience. Paul said Christ lives in him so completely that he no longer lives but Christ lives in him (*Galatians 2:20*). Paul meant that he no longer followed his own desires or his own way; he gave himself completely to the desires and way of Christ. The Colossian Christians were told that in everything they did - both in words and in deeds - they should act in the name of the Lord Jesus (*Colossians 3:17*). They were to belong to Christ so completely that they would never talk or act in a way Christ would not approve.

The foundation reason Christ must live in the Christian and the Christian must be Christ-like is found in *Colossians 1:27*. Before Christ came, God's plan to save the Gentiles was a mystery - an unrevealed plan. The beginning of the Christian age revealed that plan. That plan is stated in the words, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." Everyone becomes a Christian because of his hope of glory. People obey God in the hope of eternal life. What gives the Christian the assurance he will receive that hope? Assurance is having Christ in us. If a Christian expects to receive eternal life, he must allow Christ to live in him. Christ must rule that person's life so completely the person lives and acts like Jesus.

In what ways should a Christian be Christ-like? (1) He should learn to think and reason as Christ thought (*Ephesians 4:21-24*). (2) He should learn to love and obey God as Christ loved and obeyed God (*Philippians 2:5-8*). (3) He should learn to love and to help people as Christ did (all

gospels). (4) He should seek to make his life pure as Christ was pure (*1 John 3:2-3*). (5) He should seek to be holy (to belong to God only) as Christ was holy (*1 Peter 1:13-16*).

Are you trying to be Christ-like? Can others see Christ living in you?

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is the true heart of Christian living?
2. What makes a Christian a successful Christian?
3. What does the word "Christian" mean?
4. How can a Christian become like Christ?
5. What were the Philippians told in *Philippians 2:5*? What is the meaning?
6. What did Paul say in *Galatians 2:20*? What is the meaning?
7. What were the Colossians told in *Colossians 3:17*? What is the meaning?
8. What is the meaning of *Colossians 1:27*?
9. Give 5 ways a Christian should learn to be like Christ.