

INTRODUCTORY LESSON

THE MEANING OF CHRISTIANITY

Christianity has been popularly classified as one of the religions of the world. Though this definition fits various purposes, yet for an understanding of what Christianity really is, it does not suffice. For, in many ways, Christianity is more than just a religion. In many religions the most important thing is a system of rules and regulations, or a pattern of socially evolved ceremonies and rituals, or a progressively developed code of ethics and morals. But Christianity is more than this. This is because Christianity involves a personal relationship between a person and Christ Himself.

Thus the question, what is Christianity, is a very important one. And though people tend to answer the question with facts and figures and statistics, the real answer can only be found by searching out the meaning of Christianity at its very heart. Thereby we could find out what makes it a moving force among men. We can do this by exploring Christianity in three avenues, as a Way of Belief, a Way of Worship and Way of Life.

WAY OF BELIEF: Christianity is definitely a way of belief, for faith or belief plays a pivotal role in its existence. Belief or faith, is extremely important because it is first required before a person could be found acceptable in the sight of God. Without faith it is impossible to please God. The basis beliefs are in the facts that God created the world and sustains and orders it: that His Son, Jesus Christ came and dwelt among men; that He lived on earth, died and rose again that the sin of man might be removed; and that He lives today and reigns with God the Father. We also believe that God's Holy Spirit moves among men today as a guide and helper to Christians. This belief in the three personalities of God is necessary to enable a man to truly say, "I believe in God."

Further, Christians also believe that knowledge of God is possible since God has revealed Himself to mankind. That is, we cannot know all there is to know about God, but we can know all that is necessary to lead us to Him. He revealed Himself to us partly through His wonderful Creation of all the world: more through His recorded Word of the Scriptures that we term the Bible; and finally through the coming of His Son Jesus Christ.

As a way of belief, then, Christianity is reasonable, since these basic foundation facts are based on historical record. And further faith in things yet unseen is possible as man studies more about God through His word. And most important of all it is possible to gain salvation from sin through faith and obedience in Him.

WAY OF WORSHIP: Christianity is also a way of worship. This really ties in with it being a way of life. For all of life is to be lived as a way of worship, that is adoration of God. God expects us to worship Him and Him alone. In man himself is an innate need to worship or look up to something beyond him. This need is best fulfilled when we worship the living God.

Christian worship, whether through individual living, or corporate acts, is composed of hope. We live to please God in the hope of an eternity with Him. We look to the future as a God ordained future, where eventually the will of God will overrule the will of man. Thereby, Christianity, as a way of worship, shifts the focus from man towards God.

WAY OF LIFE: Finally, as a way of life, Christianity, in its essence is the life lived by those who have surrendered their lives and wills to God. They live only to please Him. Not as a hermit or a recluse, but rather as a person within the realms of today's world, whose life is ordered by submission to the will of God.

The best motivation of living a life surrendered to God is love of God. The way of life then becomes a way of love. When we truly love God we will strive to live for Him.

But love for God also means love for fellowmen. Since our love for God must, of a necessity, result in obedience to Him, even so we must love our fellowmen, as the dual command of love enjoins. We love God and our fellowmen. Thereby Christianity becomes a moving force as love for God is translated into love for men and as we endeavour to share His Word and Will amongst all mankind.

We now have a comprehensive answer to the question, what is Christianity. Christianity is a way of life based upon belief in God the Father, His Son Jesus Christ and His Holy Spirit. This faith leads man to obey Him for without obedience we cannot truly love Him. Consequently, all of life, for the Christian, is a way of adoration of God.

Naturally there are other questions. How did Christ die for men? What is the Bible? How can man be saved? What is the church? And what about eternity? Such questions will be answered in the lessons to come. This introductory lesson is just a basic and concise statement of the meaning of Christianity. As a study, further questions could be answered and many doubts cleared.

Name:.....

Student No:.....

Grade:.....

QUESTIONS ON INTRODUCTORY LESSON

THE MEANING OF CHRISTIANITY

Note: All answers to the questions below are found in the lesson material. Read the lesson carefully before answering. Try to answer in your own words, as much as possible. Wherever necessary, just fill in the blanks, or choose the correct word. Print out this page if you like. If you wish to send in the answers or to write further comments, or ask any questions yourself, you may cut and paste the question/answers into an e-mail, or e-mail your questions and comments to:

1. Why is Christianity more than just an ordinary religion?
2. Give three ways of defining Christianity?
3. How important is faith in Christianity?
4. If you truly believed in God, what are some of the Facts about God you would believe in?

5. Why is a knowledge of God possible?

6. Why is Christianity reasonable?

7. Basically, how could you gain salvation?

8. All of life is to be lived in of God.

9. Christian worship is mainly composed of

10. What should be the best motive for living a life surrendered to God?

11. Comprehensively answer, what is Christianity?

Send answer sheets to:

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