

### **WHAT IS TRUE CHRISTIANITY?**

- Who is a Christian in the Eyes of the Jewish People?
- What did Jesus teach about the Jews and False "Christians?"

#### **I. JESUS' TEACHINGS VS FALSE CHRISTIANITY**

"The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart... And the second is like, namely this, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." – Jesus (Mark 12:29-31)

Were those who perpetrated the Crusades, Inquisition, and others, actually following the teachings of the New Testament? Were they Christians?

#### **DID JESUS EVER SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THIS?**

When your ear hears the word "Christianity", do the Spanish Inquisition, the Crusades, "Blood Libels", Ghettos, forced conversions, and other such atrocities come to mind? Sadly, there are many who think of these things when they hear the word "Christian." This is a horrible occurrence that should never be. However, many who have called themselves "Christian" throughout the centuries have not only ignored the teachings of Jesus, but have made themselves His enemies in willingly and utterly destroying all that he taught and stands for, in committing such acts "in His name".

Did you know that Jesus Himself had something to say about these saboteurs of his character and teachings?

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits (what they produce). Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

**WHO IS A CHRISTIAN ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE?**  
**DID THE CONCEPTS BEHIND TRUE CHRISTIANITY ORIGINATE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?**

First, before we can examine the word Christian, we must come to understand the origin of the term Christ. Christ is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word Messiah (מָשִׁיחַ). Due in part to the Greco-Roman culture that had saturated the Middle-East, the main spoken language in Israel in the 1st century was Greek, much like the main spoken language of a Jewish American is English today. "Christ" was not Jesus' last name, nor is it a curse word, but rather a title - one that those who followed him believed in, as well as one that he himself claimed - the Anointed One of the Hebrew Scriptures. So what then, is a Christian? Webster defines a Christian as "*a person who believes in the teachings of Jesus Christ.*"

What are the teachings of Christ? Jesus taught such things as "*Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy*", "*Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God*", and "*Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.*"

Jesus taught humility, servant hood, and kindness. This is not at all what has characterized the majority of the history of the Roman Catholic Church. Am I saying that there are not Roman Catholics who do embody these teachings? No, I am surely not saying that. I am simply attempting to prove from the pages of the New Testament, as well as the pages of history, that the Roman Catholic movement's teachings and actions are far from "Christian", and are in many cases directly opposed to what Jesus taught.

The first mention of the word "Christian" in the Bible is in Acts 11:26, which simply states that "*...the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.*"

The original context of the name "Christian" denotes that it was a name given to the followers of Jesus from an outside source. The disciples did not go through a list of names, nor draw one from a pile of suggestions, but rather it was a title given to them by those who did not follow Christ. This name was given because the disciples evidenced particular characteristics of the one who was called the "Christ". They were called "Christian" because they were "Christ-like". The word in Greek (the original language of the New Testament) is Χριστιανούς (Christianos) which literally means "little Christs or followers of Christ". From an unbiased eye, this can hardly be said about the majority of the R.C.C.'s history (and that doesn't even take into account what it teaches).

There are many groups today that classify themselves as "Christian." Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, Greek and Russian Orthodox, Catholics, and countless other denominations place themselves under this banner. We must measure the creeds and deeds of such groups against the teachings of Jesus, if we are to actually gain an accurate picture of whether or not a group is truly Christian.

In reading through the unaltered history of the Roman Church, we find corruption, deceit, murder, incest, promiscuity, bribery, hatred, greed, and a host of countless other vile and treacherous acts which could most accurately be labeled as anti-Christ, not Christian! How could this possibly be if these people were "Christians?"

A true Christian, or follower of Jesus has a new heart. Let me explain. Throughout the Hebrew Scriptures, we find references to "a new heart" or "a circumcised heart."

Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked. - Deuteronomy 10:16

Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire,

and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings. - Jeremiah 4:4

And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh: That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God.

But as for them whose heart walketh after the heart of their detestable things and their abominations, I will recompense their way upon their own heads, saith the Lord GOD. - Ezekiel 11:19-21

Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. -

Ezekiel 36:25-27

## **II. AN EXAMINATION OF JOHN CHAPTER 3**

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again...

## **III. CHURCH TEACHINGS COMPARED WITH SCRIPTURE**

- If one were to scour the pages of the New Testament in order to find any teachings of a "Pope" or a church hierarchy, they would come up empty handed. The New Testament speaks of "bishops" and "elders". Both of which are synonymous with each other, and with the term "pastor". Calling any religious teacher "Father" is actually scripturally forbidden. At its inception, the Church consisted primarily of Jewish men and women who believed that Jesus was the Messiah. It was only after that "Christianity" became the official state religion of the Roman empire in the fourth century under the rule of Constantine, that these new heretical teachings were formulated. Matthew 23:9

In his book, *Constantine's Sword*, James Carrol (a Roman Catholic Priest) tells the story of the Church and the Jews. He is obviously biased in his perspective on Church history. He at regular intervals interjects statements that attempt to paint the early Church in the likeness of Roman Catholicism. He states that:

*"...the early Jesus movement had developed, probably by the mid to late second century, into something we can call the Church. It had intimidated the highly efficient political system of the empire, dividing itself into dioceses and provinces, with local bishops serving as ecclesiastical equivalents of regional governors. The Church had redefined Rome as its administrative seat - a decision tied as much to organizational as to religious demands, even if the ancient connection to Peter was always emphasized."*

The "*ancient connection to Peter*" that Carroll mentions is an absolute fallacy, and is promoted for the sole purpose of validating the office of "Pope". We will examine this idea in greater detail in the pages ahead. In the first century, there was a group of people known as the "*Nicolaitans*". They held to a form of church hierarchy that Jesus specifically condemned in the book of Revelation. That movement, as well as what became the Roman Catholic Church in the fourth century, both put more authority on sinful man, than on a literal interpretation of scripture. Prayers for the dead, infant baptism, sacraments, indulgences, the exaltation of Mary as "immaculately conceived", the title "Mother of God", prayers to saints, the sacrifice of the Mass, the designation of clergy as "priests", and the "Church's" power to grant sainthood are only a few of the countless doctrines of the Roman Church that have no origin in the pages of the New Testament. We will examine some of these doctrines in the following lessons.

I would like to quote a rather lengthy passage, once again from Carroll's *Constantine's Sword*. It very well summarizes the event that basically created the Roman Catholic Church. I do find error however with a statement Carroll makes within it, which I will explain after the quote.

*"...the night before the battle at the Milvan Bridge, on the Tiber, Constantine saw a cross in the sky, above the legend 'In Hoc Signo Vinces' ('In This Sign Conquer'). With the news of this vision, a signal of favor from the Christian God, Constantine's troops rallied, went firmly into battle the next day, and won. Constantine himself threw Maxentius (Constantine's competition for the throne) off the bridge into the Tiber, where he drowned. On the strength of that vision, and it's fulfillment, the emperor became a Christian, so did his army, and ultimately, so did the empire... In a way, this is the second-greatest story ever told, at least concerning what we think of as Western civilization. After the death and Resurrection of Jesus, the conversion of Constantine may have been the most implication laden event in Western history. If we rarely think so, that is because we take utterly for granted the*

*structures of culture, mind , politics, spirituality, and even calendar (Sunday as holiday) to which it led. None of those structures was foreordained, and, indeed to grasp the epoch-shaping significance of Constantine's embrace of Jesus, his sponsorship of Jesus' cause, imagine how the history we trace in this book would have unfolded had the young emperor been converted to Judaism instead. It is a nearly unthinkable turn in the story, imagined in retrospect, but in prospect, such a conversion would have been no more unlikely than what happened, and to entertain the idea is to wonder how Judaism ,instead of Catholicism , would have fared as the locus of political and religious dominance. When the power of the empire became joined to the ideology of the Church, the empire was immediately recast and reenergized, and the Church became an entity so different from what had preceded it as to be almost unrecognizable. It goes without saying that the conversion of Constantine for Church and empire both, led to consequences better and worse - although not for Jews, for whom, from this, nothing good would come."*

In his book, *When the Cross Became a Sword*, Merrill Bolender describes this transition, "Constantine's burgeoning Church State, with Augustine providing the intellectual support, completely severed the Church from its Jewish roots. Christian Rome ended the usage of the Jewish Calendar, including Jewish Sabbaths and festivals. The Roman calendar we still use today was the result. Scripture was filtered almost exclusively through a Greco-Roman paradigm."

*The following is the actual profession from the Church of Constantinople, which was required of all Jews who accepted Jesus as their Messiah and wished to join the Church. This would later be forced upon them:*

*"I renounce all customs, rites, legalisms, unleavened breads and sacrifice of lambs of the Hebrews, and all the other feasts of the Hebrews, sacrifices, prayers, aspersions, purifications, sanctifications and propitiations, and facts, and new moons, and Sabbaths, and superstitions, and hymns and chants and observances and synagogues, and the food and drink of the Hebrews.*

*In one word, I renounce absolutely everything Jewish, every law, every rite and custom - and if afterwards I shall wish to deny and return to Jewish superstition, or shall be found feasting with Jews, or secretly conversing and condemning the Christian religion instead of openly confuting them and condemning their vain faith, then let the trembling of Cain and the leprosy of Gehazi cleave to me, as well as the legal punishments to which I acknowledge myself liable. And may I be anathema in the world to come, and may my soul be set down with Satan and the devils."*