

A vibrant garden of orange and yellow flowers in front of a red barn under a blue sky.

A Christian ?
where is the
Evidence ?

Evidence of life in Christ

The way the world is going, one day it might be an offence to be a Christian; so if charged, what evidence could be bought to commit us?

We must also look for some evidence of spiritual life if someone claims to be a Christian so we can assist in their Christian maturity. And the first evidence of conversion must be a conviction we are unworthy of mercy because of our disobedience and indifference to the almighty God of mercy.

Convicting evidence begins when the seeker is willing to deny themselves and take up their cross daily, (Luke 9:23) then God regenerates His life in the believer; for there must be a death to self rule if God is to live and rule in us. Then once their burden of guilt has been lifted, the mind will be illuminated by the Spirit, and with the heart changed, a new perspective on life is given, and they are moved from death unto life, indifference to God is replaced with a holy fear of God, and

spiritual apathy gives way to a heart that hungers and thirsts for God. So the second evidence is seen in those who will submit absolutely to His authority as our Lord and God and obey Him. (John 3:36) By this we either confirm or contradict our claim to conversion by our conduct in seeking to please self or God.

When we respond to the call of Jesus Christ to follow Him, we do so in the knowledge that He is both Lord and God. *‘Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”* All authority on earth means there can be no other way of doing things but His way. There is no other time to do things but when He says to do them. There can be no other reason for life but His life. For He has also said *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”* John 14:6

Jesus also spoke these words: *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the*

nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

Matt 28:18-20

As a result, we see Jesus didn't come to call religious people who would follow the old ways of life while observing some spiritual practices. Jesus came to make disciples who die to that old life they lived in the world, leaving behind all that the world offers in order to follow Him; to live the way He lived and do all He taught and commanded us to do as His chosen people. So we must remember as His disciple we are to become like our master Jesus in all aspects of life on earth.

Jesus has come that we may have an abundance of His life when we live in His truth, when we follow His way, and live the life He gives us through the Spirit. We don't naturally have the Spirit of God in us to enable us to live this life; we must rely on

God to work in us when we willingly surrender to His authority and dominion. So we must be born again of God's Spirit to have the life only God can give.

The follower of Christ must be born again

Those who come obediently to follow Jesus Christ are to be cleansed of their sin by His death on the cross. This prepares them so they can be born again with the divine life of God by the Spirit with God's DNA, as they are baptised into the death of Christ by the symbolic death of their previous life, so they can be raised up by the Spirit (Rom 6:4-6) who will indwell them as the power of God so they can be holy as He is holy. As a consequence of the Spirit's presence dwelling in them, they can live as the children of God in His Kingdom, for they will be the brethren of Christ. They will be known as those who are in Christ. At this time, all that God desires for us according to His divine nature has been birthed into us who believe. 1 John 3:2

If we want to know what we should look like so we can grow, we need to look no further than to Jesus Christ Himself. As He is we will be. The apostle John wrote: *'By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world.'* 1 John 4:17

The apostle Peter gives us this understanding. *'He has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.'* 2 Pet 1:4

So we must see the making of disciples begins with a new spiritual birth. The Lord Jesus said; *"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."* (John3:3) This new birth is not a physical birth but a spiritual birth. *Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and 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. Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'

John 3:5-7

The new life in Christ is not just a retread of the old life we lived before we knew Him. The new life in the spirit is a completely new existence. *'Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.'* 2 Cor 5:17

Christ's followers will live in submission to the Spirit

With the Spirit of God in residence in us, He will stir up an interest to obey all that concerns the work of God. Therefore if the Spirit is present we should see evidence of His indwelling life, and a growing motivation to work out the will of God.

The Spirit is the one who leads us as God's children and teaches us all things. Jesus spoke of the Spirit as our guardian. *'I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the*

Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. "I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you will see Me; because I live, you will live also. In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him." " (John 14:16-20) *So therefore "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him. He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me. These things I have spoken to you while abiding with you. But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring*

to your remembrance all that I said to you.”

John 14:23-26

The Spirit leads us into all righteousness

'However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.' Rom 8:9-11

'Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness

of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin.'

Rom 6:3-7

The evidence of the Spirit's life is referred to as the fruit of the Spirit. *'The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.'*

Gal 5:22-23

There will also be evidence of our working with God to work out what He has worked in us; *'So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.'* (Phil 2:12-13) This is the work of sanctification which is highlighted by Paul this way. *'If by the Spirit*

we are putting to death that which is earthly in us we will live. 'So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.'

Rom 8:12-14

Being a new creation means a changed life

The truly converted are not spiritually stationary; they are constantly moving in God's direction desiring a deeper, richer relationship with him. There is a variety of extraordinary ways the Bible speaks of conversion to the Lord Jesus Christ. "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Cor 5:17) "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." (Eph 2:12) "You are sons of God." (Gal 3:26) "Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ."

(Rom 8:17) *“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price.”*

1 Cor 6:19-20

It is God’s will that spiritual growth is necessary in all His children, so there must be a hunger for the word of God, since knowledge of His word is necessary for spiritual growth. Otherwise how will we know what Jesus commanded us to do as His disciples? There should also be a passion for making disciples. *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven land on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”* (Matt 28:18-20) If the work of disciplining is inadequate or missing, then the development and maturity of the believer will be restricted,

if not severely limited so that they never become the teacher they need to be in making disciples themselves.

Evidence of the Spirit's working in the believer affects every part of life. Spiritual growth also affects our emotions as we find we no longer "*love the world or the things of the world.*" (1 John 2:15) But we "*delight to do God's will.*" (Psalm 40:8) There will be evidence of a new life in our spirit. '*Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.*' (2 Cor 7:1) Further evidence will reveal God's promise that we shall be increasingly "*confirmed to the image of His Son.*" (Rom 8:29) There will be sincere fellowship with the brethren of Christ. '*That which we have seen and heard we proclaim also to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us; and indeed our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ.*' (1 John 1:3) There will be evidence of our love for one another. "*A new*

commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.” (John 13:34) This love follows God’s nature, ‘Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends.’

1 Cor 13:4-8

Evidence of this new life taking hold of the believer means attention will be given to meditating on God's word (Matt 4:4, John 17:17) to prayer (Eph 6:18, Phil 4:6) to spiritual worship (Eph 5:18-20) in witnessing to Christ (Acts 1:8) in Christian fellowship (Heb 10:24-25) and in self discipline and self control. Gal 5:23, Titus 1:8

In the Church, all those who are in Christ will know there is one body, and one life, His life in them. *‘For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with*

Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.’ (Cor 12:13-14) ‘God has so composed the body, giving greater honour to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.’

1 Cor 12:24-27

Evidence of our ongoing spiritual relationships is of utmost importance in the new life in Christ. When Jesus told those who called on Him as Lord that they should depart from Him, it was on the basis that He never knew them. "*I never knew you; DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.*" (Matt 7:23) The indwelling Spirit of Christ is the basis for our intimate relationship with the Father, the Son and the Spirit. '*Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God*

dwells in you?' (1 Cor 3:16) 'However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.'

Rom 8:9

Because of poor teaching in the Church and bad examples, there has never been a shortage of those who claim to be converted to Jesus, but their life tells a different story. The Apostle John is quite merciless in his comments to those who say one thing and practice another. *"The man who says, 'I know him,' but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him."* (1John 2:4) *"Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did."* (1 John 2:6) *"Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness."*(1 John 2:9) Jesus said *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter."*

Matt 7:21

In order to make sure we are on the right path, we need to obey the Lord and seek to abide in His love through a relationship that will endure when we do all things according to His grace and power. We need to head His words written for our guidance. *"Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love."* (John 15:9-19) *"I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you."*

John 14:16-17

The Lord our God works for our highest good to see us transformed into His likeness through an intimate spiritual relationship, both individually and collectively as His body on earth. He wants us to know what it is like to mature as His disciples so that many can be

delivered from the darkness into the glory of the Son of God. *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."* (John 13:34-35) *"The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me."*

John 17:22-23

In the end, if we don't have the Spirit of Christ in us, motivating our life, we are not in Christ, and we are still dead in our sin.

A determined soul may be able to fake some evidence of the born again life; but closer examination will expose weeds where there should be wheat, lemons instead of oranges, self interest where there should be devotion to God. But a spiritual soul will find life rising up in their hearts as rivers of living water

(John 7:38-39) bringing joy and peace overflowing into all aspects of their life in the world. Even though the real believer will be able to look back over their life with a feeling of loathing for the way they lived before God did His work in them. Ezekiel 36:31

An absence of the evidence of the indwelling Christ will mean those who are against Christ will leave us alone, you are off their hock. So if I am not completely devoted to God and His purpose of calling people out of the darkness of the world into the light of the Kingdom of God, and their transformation into the likeness of His Son; then if I claim to be a Christian, I have probably not understood what that really means from God's point of view.

But if there is an absence of evidence to convict you of the Christian life, and you want to be saved, it's not too late.

Today is the day of salvation, come to Jesus and take up your cross daily so you can be born of the Spirit and walk with God. Amen



*Living Water Resources
Come to the River*

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