

Marks of a Biblical Christian Part2

Acts 2:42

If you missed it or haven't listened to it yet on line. Two weeks ago we talked about what it means to be a Christian in the biblical sense. In our society is hard to distinguish true Christians from those who are only Christians by name. Researchers have placed the Christian tribe in two categories:

George Barba research: The Seven faith tribes. Copyrighted 2009

A large majority of American are **Casual Christians**: people who profess to be Christians but are notably lax in their beliefs and practices. 2/3 of American adults.

Captive Christians: people whose consistently biblical beliefs and Christ-like behavior validate their commitment to being followers of Christ. 1/6 of the adult population.

The research indicates that we have more casual Christian in our society. It also indicates that the captive Christians are those who represent the Biblical definition of what a Christian is supposed to be.

As individuals, what we do or choose not to do sends messages to people regarding our passion, values and commitment.

This is why we read in the Bible we must be careful how we live. ***Ephe.5:15 Be very careful, then how you live-not as unwise but wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.***

The Bible highlights marks or signs that identify those who were true followers of Jesus. **The first one we talked about two weeks ago is brotherly love, love among your church family.** Jesus said the world will know you are my disciples if you love one another. **John 13:35**

Today we will look at other marks of a Biblical Christian. But we must define what a Christian is in the Biblical sense first.

Christians: *the name given to the disciples of Jesus Acts 11:26*

Disciples: *learners, followers of Jesus.*

In the Bible they are also known as (AKA)

-They were known as **Believers** (those who had believed) (Acts 2:44, 5:12, 9:41)

-**Church** (their gathering): Acts 8:1-3; 9:1, 12:5, 13:1; 15:3

-**Disciples** (acts 6:1-2, 7; 9:10, 26; 11:29)

-**Saints** (Rom.1:7; 1 Cor.1:2; 2 Cor.1:1, Eph.1:1; Php.1:1, Col.1:2

-**Elect, strangers in the world** (1Pet.1:1-2)

The church started at the preaching of the apostles in Jerusalem, there were a number of about 120 disciples including here the 11 apostles, Jesus' mother and other women. **Acts 1:12-15**

By the time we read in chapter two of the book of Acts, the number of disciples began to increase by the thousands.

Acts 2:41 those who accepted the gospel were baptized and added to the number of disciples in Jerusalem.

In Acts 2:42-47 we find marks of these disciples.

They.... Who are these "they"? These are the believers (disciples, followers, Christians)

Biblical Christians are known for their devotion to God's word. They devoted to the apostles teaching. These disciples were committed to listening to the word of God being taught by the apostles. They listened and studied.

In fact the text where we find the word Christian for the first time **Acts 11:25-26** Paul and Barnabas taught the believers in Antioch and it was here that the disciples were given the name Christians. **True followers of Jesus are devoted to learning God's word and to teaching others.** Part of the Great Commission is to teach people everything of Jesus' teaching. *How will you teach when you are not persisting in learning the content in the Bible?* A disciples is a student, a learner. In our culture today there are people who call themselves Christians but you don't see them making an effort to learn the content of the Bible; there is a lack of zeal or devotion for reading the word of God, or studying it or listening to it being preached.

Biblical Christians continually devote to the fellowship (to one another). They are devoted to other disciples. Fellowship is their communion, their sharing together. (v.44) **All the believers were together and had everything in common.**

Biblical fellowship is deeper than having coffee and donut or attend a church activity. Biblical fellowship is sharing a mutual relationship with one another-we are all one in Christ. It means to belong to each other in a relationship that was made possible by Jesus. In this relationship we share common bond, convictions, beliefs, values.

Fellowship is sharing; the first century Christians shared their lives together. They ate together and shared their possessions. They had everything in common (they were of one mind regarding their convictions, beliefs, the teachings of Jesus, the gospel, the church).

Biblical Christian is not a lone ranger; he must be part of a community. There are people today who call themselves Christians but don't belong or attend any church or community; they don't belong to any fellowship.

Hebrews 10:24-25 **And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good**

works, 25not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near. ESV

Romans 12:9-13

Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. **10**Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. **11**Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. **12**Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. **13**Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

1 Cor.12:12-27 the body is one and it's made up of many members. Connected to each other.

True believers in the biblical times were characterized by their devotion to the teaching of God's word and they had this zeal to be connected to each other. **This passion and commitment to learning and teaching God's word was evident.** Their sharing within their community was contagious.

(47) Praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

What took place in their gathering was unbelievably amazing; people noticed it.

Biblical Christians are known for their love for each other, for their devotion for learning and teaching God's word and for their commitment to the relationship they share with other believers. In other words, being in fellowship with others, not doing fellowship (fellowship)