

Lesson Notes:

Are you a believer or a Christian?

Jesus promises us that believers are saved through his grace. However, in **1 Peter 4:18**, Peter talks about the difficulty of salvation even for the righteous. We have all met people that profess to be believers yet they live with little or no regard to the commandments of God. Our Lord, Jesus Christ urges us in the New Testament to seek the Kingdom of God and his righteousness. Paul tells the Philippians how to live and “inherit the Kingdom of God”.

Some contemporary Christian authors believe that while our salvation is by God’s grace a person has not totally received God’s Gift of salvation until it is reflected in his or her lifestyle. While we all sin and fall short of the glory of Jesus Christ you can tell a committed Christian by his or her daily actions, thoughts and deeds.

I want to be more than just a believer; I want to be a Christian.

Scriptural Principles

- 1) **Call upon the Name of the Lord for Salvation** – Paul tells us in **Acts 2:21; Acts 16:31** and **Romans 10:9** that anyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.
- 2) **Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom** – In **1 Corinthians 6:9-10** and **Ephesians 5:5** Paul describes in vivid detail the life styles of the unholy and tells us that the unrighteous will not inherit the Kingdom of God. 1.2 billion people of the world describe themselves as believers yet many partake regularly in the sins that Paul describes in **1 Corinthians 6:9-10**.
- 3) **Righteous may be scarcely saved** – Peter tells us in **1 Peter 4:17-19** that many of the righteous may be “scarcely saved”. If that is true than what will heaven be like for those indicating their belief in Christ yet refusing to conform to Christ’s example for us.
- 4) **Seek the Kingdom and his Righteousness** – In **Matthew 6:33** Jesus implores us to put away our desires for earthly pleasures and seek the Kingdom of God and his righteousness.
- 5) **He saved us for a purpose** – In **2 Timothy 1:9** Paul tells the believers in Ephesus that they have been saved for a purpose and he encourages them to seek to fulfill the purpose that God has preordained for them.
- 6) **Lay up Treasures in Heaven** – Jesus encourages believers in **Matthew 6:19** to lay up treasure and reward in heaven and not to concern ourselves with the cares of this world.

- 7) **Your treasure is where your heart is** – In **Matthew 6:21** Jesus tells us that our heart will be where our treasure is.

Paul defined Christians to the Philippians as:

- 8) **Be of good conduct, striving and suffering for Christ** – Paul clearly loved the church at Philippi and the commitment of the believers there for their service to the Lord. In **Philippians 1:27; 29** Paul encourages them to continue their efforts in the face of suffering and persecution.
- 9) **Preoccupation with the welfare of others** – In **Philippians 2:3-4** Paul indicates that true believers will have a concern for the welfare of others.
- 10) **Serve without complaining and disputing** – In **Philippians 2:14-16** Paul indicates that the true believer and servant of the Lord, serves without regard to personal recognition or gain and in good cheer without disputes.
- 11) **Stand fast in the Lord** – Finally in **Philippians 4:1** Paul encourages the believer to stand fast in the Lord and not to succumb to the evils of this world.