

The Doctrine of Christ no 26
“What it means to be a Christian”

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Wednesday night we began to look at what it means to be a Christian but ended up spending most of our time showing what William Branham said he would rather have or rather see in the church. Now, my reason for focusing on this is because I believe William Branham was the greatest example of Christianity we have seen in this age, and I thought it would be for you to hear what it was that he would rather see in a church and God’s people.

Now, this morning we will continue in this mini series on what it means to be a real Christian, and to begin let us turn in our Bibles to **Hebrews 6:1** where we read, *“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, 2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3 And this will we do, if God permit.”*

Now, notice the Apostle Paul is telling us that in order to move on unto perfection or maturity in our Christian walk, we must leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ. Now, the word principle means the commencement which is the beginning, and we must move further and further into the doctrine of Christ.

Now, this does not mean as some say that we must leave or lay aside the doctrine, but it means that we must not stop at the corner in which we have turned when we came into the doctrine, but we must move further and further into it until we become one with it.

Now, the problem I see is that most people are happy just to see the doctrine, or to know it, or be able to talk about it. But that is not what God gave us the wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Himself for.

Now, remember, Brother Branham said we must have another Ephesians. Alpha must repeat in Omega. And so we see that the Ephesians church had come up to the doctrine of Christ. They had the Faith or revelation of Jesus Christ. And Paul was excited about this, but he also knew that there was more to come, but the people had to come to the Faith of Jesus Christ before the other promises could be fulfilled in the Elect.

Ephesians 1:1 *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,* (now, that is the most important thing, because you can be an apostle, but if it is not by the will of God, you could be an apostle of men, and not even know it. But he was an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and his ministry was not for himself, but) *to the saints which are at Ephesus, and* (not only to those saints at Ephesus but also) *to the faithful* (which means those who are full of faith) *in Christ Jesus: 2 Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Now, after Paul is finished with his greetings, he begins to get right down to business. He says, *3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:*

So this is already a done deal, he has already blessed you, and what God has blessed let no man can curse. Then Paul says, *4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him.* Now, this word “before” was translated from the Greek word “*katenopion*” which means in front of or in the sight of, or in the presence of. So you see the destiny is for each of us who has been chosen before the foundations of the world, we were also foreordained to come to the place where we are holy and without blame.

Now, I know Calvinist’s will say, our holiness and being without blame is because of what he has already done. And that is true. But there is also a mindset within the Believer that wants to be that way as well. It’s *God working in you to will and to do.*

God does not force anyone to believe and forced religion is of the devil. God never forces anyone, He just revealed Himself to them and that revelation moves men to do great things they never would have even dreamed of. God reveals Himself to the believer and through this revelation which we call “faith”, for faith is something that has been revealed, and through this revelation, God imparts His own desires for us in how to live.

The apostle Peter said, in *2 Peter 1:3 According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue:*

So we see this holiness and blamelessness condition that Paul spoke of is also spoken of by the apostle Peter and we are told here that we are to receive it through His Divine Power.

So this is not an intellectual movement that takes place here, but he is speaks of the dynamics of God in the life of the believer, the elect foreordained to come to this nature or condition in his or her character. And this Divine power we are told by the Apostle Paul is the Word of God. *Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it (what? It the Gospel of Christ, the Word of God) is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 17 For therein is the righteousness of God (the right-wise-ness of God) revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*

So the just shall live by faith, by revelation. Therefore then the revelation of Jesus Christ is your life, and it is that which gives you life. *The just shall live by faith.* That means the revelation of Jesus Christ is what you live by, what you have come alive to and live for. Your life is quickened, that means your life has come alive by the word of God. And that is what we will find in chapter 2 of Ephesians if we ever get that far today. Paul said in, *Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;*

And the apostle Paul also tells us this same thing in *Colossians 2:13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;* Notice our quickening is together with Him. That is what the revelation of Jesus Christ is to do to you, it is to join you to Christ through the revelation of Jesus Christ where His Life lives out through your life, and every time your heart beats His is beating right in unison with your own.

That is when the dynamics and mechanics come together and quickens the believer to His destiny.

Notice the Apostle Peter tells us in verse 4 *“Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these promises you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.”*

So we see the sole purpose and plan of God is to make us partakers of His Divine Nature. And how does this take place in our lives? He said *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these promises you might be partakers of the divine nature*,. So what are these promises? Well, a promise is when you give your Word. And so God has given us in his Word and by His word certain promises that bring with it His divine nature that is ordained to be released into the believer. And when we receive these promises by receiving the revelation of Jesus Christ, we are not only receiving Words, but the divine nature that indwells those words.

So you see the importance of the doctrine? It is not to be received only for the mind. God did not come down with a Shout in this hour just so we would have right doctrine.

He came down and gave us His Word, His Doctrine, His promises, because He injected His own Life into His word, and when we truly receive that Word, it will bring with it the Life and nature of the giver of Life, God Himself.

That is why I say the doctrine is not to be taught as a theological treatise. If we teach theology then that is what the people receive, and that is all they expect. But Paul said we must go beyond the principles of the doctrine right into the Life that the doctrine promises us if we will receive it.

Martin Luther said in his book, *“a study on Romans” Faith is not that human notion and dream that some hold for faith, where because they simply say “I believe” that they hold true faith.*

To put that into twentieth century English, he is saying, that to say you believe is not faith at all. Faith is far more than just to believe. And brother Branham said, in *Questions and answers COD 64-0823M P:141 270. Now, Brother Branham, are we missing out on something? These people claim to believe every word that you say to be true. (But they don't. They don't believe it. Their own actions prove that they don't.)*

And again he said in his message *The Token 63-0901M 103 Don't just come this far, say, “I believe the message.” You obey the message. Come into Christ. You say, “Oh, I believe every word you said, Brother Branham. “That's good. But that is just being able to read. Take the Message; take it into your heart, that you must have the Token, the very Life that was in Christ, be in you. “When I see that, I will pass over you.”*

And from *Only one way provided by God 63-0731 P:41* brother Branham said, *It's like people reading the prescription on a medicine bottle and won't take the medicine. What good does it do to read the prescription? Well, they go away to seminaries, and learn church history, and we learn ethics of the church, and learn what the Bible says, and all the Greek words, and we can tell you what it means; but that's just telling you what the bottle*

says, what the directions says. I can tell you what Peter said on the day of Pentecost; I can tell that the promise is unto you, but you say, "**I believe That.**" I can believe this medicine setting here for the disease is right, but **until I take it...** I got to take it. See, the sincerity of it doesn't... Now, you say, "**I sincerely believe that. That's true.**" But you've got to take it. And when you take it, it shows the effects upon the patient. And when you take God's Word, it shows genuine Holy Ghost effects, by faith, Abraham's Seed. **It does something to you. It takes a-hold of you. It shakes the unbelief out of you, sets your affections on things above.**

Listen, if there is any church in this world that should understand the doctrine it should be brother Vayle's church and those churches who have aligned themselves with his teaching. But Brother Vayle has told me on more than one occasion, "**Brian there are people here who've got it but don't got it**". And that's true for just about everywhere. They have it up here (mentally), but they don't have it in there heart. And brother Branham said in his sermon,

GETTING IN THE SPIRIT 61-0428 47 *I don't care if the man's wrong. If he's wrong and sincere in his heart and you're right in your belief and you're wrong in acting the way you're acting. I'd rather be in his place than be in yours. That's right. I'd rather be wrong in my doctrine and right in my heart. God will respect it more. So if a man is wrong, what of it? Help him. He needs help. Love him. If you can't love your enemy the same as you love those who love you, you're no better off than the publicans. That's right. That's what the Church has failed to get. I hope you get it tonight. I hope you see what I'm talking about.*

And Martin Luther spoke more on about Faith saying, "**Faith, however, is a Divine work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God. It kills the old Adam and makes us altogether different men, in heart and spirit and mind and powers, and it brings with it the Holy Spirit. Oh, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith; and so it is impossible for it not to do good works incessantly. It does not ask whether there are good works to do, but before the question rises; it has already done them, and is always at the doing of them. Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's Grace, so sure and certain that a man would stake his life on it a thousand times. It fills a man's heart with joy and makes a man happy in dealing with God and all His Creation.**

Now, if you do not have this in your life, you do not have the right Faith. You might have your own ideas and call that faith, but Faith true Faith is alive, and active.

Martin Luther said, **Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's Grace, Faith, is a divine work in us. It changes us and makes altogether different men, in heart and spirit and mind and powers, and it brings with it the Holy Ghost.**

Now, in getting back to the book of Ephesians lets pick up at verse 5 where Paul says, **In love Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 To the praise of the glory (doxa) To the praise of the opinion of God, To the praise of the values of God, To the praise of the judgments of God, and of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.**

7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; 8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; 9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: 10 That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: 11 In whom (in Jesus) also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: 12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, (that we, our lives should be to the praise of His values, His opinions, and His judgments) who first trusted in Christ. 13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, (So just believing doesn't seal you in, it happens after that you have believed.) 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory, (His doxa, his values, his opinions, His judgments). 15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, 16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, (the Father of Values, the Father whose opinion and judgments) may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: (then it's not all about you, it's all about Him.) 18 That the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory (values, opinions and judgments) of his inheritance in the saints, (now. let's not stop here. He told us this wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him is to open your eyes to His understanding of your inheritance and His calling, but he doesn't stop there and say now that is it, it is all about knowing and understanding. No he does not stop there. Then why do so many stop with a knowing, when as brother Branham said, it is not about a knowing or an understanding but about applying what you do know, and making it come alive in you. See?) 19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,...

So it is not about what we know, but what we do with what we know.

Brother Branham said in his message, **Christ is the Mystery 63-072837-4** *The new birth is Christ, is a revelation. God has revealed to you this great mystery, and that's the new birth. Now, what are you going to do when you get all that group together, where the revelation is perfectly in harmony, and God expressing it through His Word by the same actions, the same things that He did, making the Word manifest? Oh, if the Church only knew its position. It will one day. Then, the rapture will go when it knows what it is.*

And from **Christ is the Mystery 63-0728 45-1** *God is not known by education; He's not known by how to explain it. God is known by simplicity and of revelation of Jesus Christ in the most illiterate person. See? Not your theology; it's a revelation of Jesus Christ. "Upon this rock, I'll build My Church." No other rock's accepted; no other thing's accepted; no other Roman rock; no other Protestant rock; no other school; no other nothing; but on exactly the revelation of Jesus Christ in a new birth. He is born in there and injects His own Life, and your life is gone, and the Life of Christ is projecting Itself through you*

with the preeminences to the people that they see the very Life, and works, and signs and wonders that He did is doing the same thing through you. Outside of that, the rest of it's not even called to at all.

That is what Christianity is all about. The early church were called Christians because they were Christ-Like. But just look at the so called church today. They are no more Christ like than the man on the moon. There is just as much sinful living in the Message churches today as there is in the dead denominational churches.

Christian, Christ Like. Can you honestly look into the mirror and say I am in the image of Christ? Can you honestly look at your home and say it lines up with the Message of the prophet? Is your home a place where the holy Spirit is welcome to every room? Is there a welcoming spirit that longs to have him come into your home? Or are you yet hoping that the Message one day will begin to work its work into you?

Listen friends, brother Branham said hope and Faith are not the same thing. **Conferences 63-0608 P:22** *There's a lot of difference between hope and faith. A hope just hopes for it--faith knows it's done. That's the difference.*

And in his message, **Sirs we would see Jesus 57-1211 P:55** *One of the managers,... and I was arguing that for an hour and a half the other day. He tried to say hope and faith is the same thing. I said, "No, hope is what you're looking for, and faith is what you got by hoping." That's right. Certainly. It's not a hope any longer when you've got it. It's yours. It's in possession; you got it just as happy as you can be, for it is the substance of things hoped for.*

Hebrews 11:1 *Now faith is **the substance** of things hoped for, **the evidence** of things not seen.* So faith is the evidence. The evidence of what? That which you hoped for.

And if an evidence then that means something is there that is an expression or in an expressed form. For faith produces something, it just doesn't talk it, it walks it.

Notice all the examples of what Faith produces.

Verse 3 *Through faith we understand that **the worlds were framed***

Verse 4 *By faith Abel **offered** unto God.*

Verse 5 *By faith Enoch was **translated***

Verse 7 *By faith Noah moved with fear, and prepared an ark*

Verse 8 *By faith Abraham went out, not knowing whither he went*

Verse 9 *Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age*

Verse 24 *By faith Moses forsook Egypt kept the passover passed through the Red sea as by dry land*

Verse 32 *And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of **Gedeon**, and of **Barak**, and of **Samson**, and of **Jephthae**; of **David** also, and **Samuel**, and of the prophets:³³ **Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions,**³⁴ **Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight***

the armies of the aliens. 35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: 36 And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: 37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; 38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. 39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: 40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

They without us could not be made complete, finished off, equipped, come to maturity.

Look brothers and sisters, faith is an active thing. A Passive faith without anything coming from you in response is a dead faith. It all begins with a passive faith, but if that passive faith just sits there and does nothing, no response to what it has seen it is no faith at all. William Branham preached the sermon, "hearing, recognizing and acting upon the Word of God. Passive Faith alone is the hearing and receiving, but if there is no acting as he said, then you have nothing, no more than the millions who came to William Branham's meetings and saw but nothing took place in their soul. Two million people left Egypt because of what they saw and Jesus said they are everyone of them dead, and Br. Branham said that means they were eternally separated from God.

In each of these examples that the apostle Paul mentioned we see action, not just people getting together to talk about it, they did something about it. Not because they knew more than others, or were smarter than others, but they put their belief's into action, that is what it means to be a Christian. It is not just to believe something, but to take that Word into you until that Word comes alive in you and the same actions, the same nature, the same works that were in the original seed will be in you. That is Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today and forever.

In closing brother Branham said from his message, *Hebrews Chapter 6 57-0908E P:52 But a real, genuine Christian presses towards perfection until the world is dead and you become a new creature in Christ Jesus. Then it's impossible for that man to ever fall. That's what the Bible says. See how that compares with the rest of the Scripture? See how it lays it right in there to its place?*

And don't think that just because you go through the motions of being a Christian that is the end of it. Br. Branham said in his message *Inter veil 56-0121 P:55 We know we got a lot of impersonation, a lot of fanatics, but that don't mean a thing but prove that there is a real Holy Spirit. We have a lot of impersonations in church that act like Christians, and try to impersonate Christians, but that don't mean nothing. That means that there is a real genuine Christian.*

But if you are a real Christian you don't have to go through the motions, you live out the Word because it is your life. You are alive to the Word and it is alive in you. Paul said, When Christ Who is our Life shall appear then you shall appear with him in the same doxa.

Manifestation of the spirit 51-0717 P:11 *So when you see somebody who doesn't live like a Christian, yet profess to be a Christian, and doesn't act like a Christian, but just simply claims to be, and live that kind of a way, you know that back behind there somewhere **there's a real genuine Christian somewhere.** See? Well now, there's many things that's put in the act of Divine healing which it is not God doing it. But behind all of it, proves that there's a real genuine God that really, a fountain open of Divine healing.*

God's only provided place of worship 65-1128M P:99 *My action, and the vindication of God's Word in my life shows whether I'm a child of God or not. Now, there's God's only place. See it? The only place that God will receive your sacrifice (I don't care how sincere you are.) is in Christ. And remember... You say, "Well, I believed; I come in too." Remember, the Bible says... You say, "Well, the Bible said, 'Whosoever believeth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, is saved, shall be saved.'" It says that, but remember it also is written, also is written, "No man can call Jesus the Christ, only by the Holy Ghost." See? You might say he is, but he isn't until the Holy Spirit Itself, which gives Life to the Word, proves it **by vindication that you are the son of God** then. That's the Scripture.*

Let us bow our heads and close in a word of prayer.