

# **NOW YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN**

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**VICTORY FAITH CENTRE**

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## Introduction

Once people become Christians, there are key choices to make that determine whether they will lead a victorious life in Christ that is pleasing to the Lord, or go along a path of mediocrity that is destructive. The realisation of who we are in Christ through the miracle of the new birth is a necessary start because then we can understand how to make the correct decisions to go God's way, regardless of the negative pull against this by sinners, devils or circumstances. We are to know God's will for us and this is indeed available for every Christian.

For every person who reads this booklet, we "do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding" (Colossians 1:9b). For new Christians at Victory Faith Centre, there is also a basic study course you can take on basic Biblical doctrines.

### **Christians are new creatures in Christ**

The Bible is clear that when people are born again or saved from sin they have been made new with old things of the past forgiven and washed away. Christians are now in the Kingdom of God as part of the family of God.

**"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)**

The Gospel of Christ declares that "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3b,4). When we "obeyed the gospel" (see Romans 10:16) by believing it and receiving Christ as our Saviour (see John 1:12), we experienced a spiritual rebirth (see John 3:6). We became alive to God in righteousness in contrast to when we were dead to God (i.e. separated from Him) in trespasses and sins.

A born again Christian's spirit has been made new and has new characteristics in line with holiness and truth. The spirit, not the soul (the mind, will and emotions) or the body (the flesh), must be predominant in the Christian's new life in Christ.

**“And you hath he quickened [made alive], who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.” (Ephesians 2:1,2)**

**“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” (John 3:6)**

Hence, the Bible is very clear about the stark difference between **what we were** as servants of sin (sinners) and **what we are now** as servants of righteousness (saints of God). “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.” (Romans 6:17).

The course of this fallen world (the system of fallen man) is going in the opposite direction to the way of the Kingdom of God. The world has a spiritual ruler, “that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world” (see Revelation 12:9). The Devil seeks to keep people in a fallen state in this world and fights the Gospel of the Kingdom of God because he knows that through the Gospel people are changed and liberated. This presents his greatest problem.

Clearly, the Devil cannot fight in the arena of the spirit because he is a defeated enemy, so he concentrates on the soul and body areas to keep people in subjection to his rule. The born again Christian, operating according to the faith principles of the Kingdom of God, can have victory manifested on the Earth today. This is the nature of the new creature in Christ: “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” (1 John 5:4). When we walk by faith through believing the Word of God, the Devil remains defeated and cannot gain the victory.

**“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world [the Devil] hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” (2 Corinthians 4:3,4)**

**“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son” (Colossians 1:12,13)**

### **Christians are now part of the Kingdom of God**

In the Kingdom of God there is a new way of living, which is greatly different from the old ways of sin or rebellion against God. The Kingdom of God is spiritual and has God’s words as law, by which the born again spirit can dominate in life.

**“... like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” (Romans 6:4b)**

Jesus made it very clear that His Kingdom was not of this present, evil world. Thus, there are different ways to learn of and receive because we are of the Kingdom of God and Christ now rules in our hearts.

**“Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world” (John 18:36a)**

Great confusion arises within people when they think that the world is to be valued above the things of God. This fallen world, as part of the Devil’s kingdom, has words to say, thoughts to give, ideas to push, and ways to propagate. However, all these things lead to death and the curse, and are the opposite of the things of the Kingdom of God.

One of the biggest areas of attack by the world is the Church. As such, all types of worldly ideas have developed about the Church and even some Christians believe them. There is a pure religion, which is Christianity, and this hinges on Christ as being “the head of the body, the church” (see Colossians 1:18).

**“Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.” (James 1:27).**

Thus, the world seeks to undermine the Church because it is through the Church that the Gospel of Christ is preached. When people believe the Gospel (that Christ died for sinners and they can

believe on Him as their Saviour from sin), then they come out of the world's system, which is gripped by the power of darkness, and into the Kingdom of God.

**“Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins” (Colossians 1:12-14).**

### **Christians must walk by faith**

Faith is believing what God has said and acting upon it. Christians must live by faith if they are to receive anything from God.

**“Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.” (Hebrews 10:38).**

There are many examples of faith in the Bible for us to follow (see Hebrews 11 for some). Faith is not sight-oriented but Word-oriented. This means that God's words are taken as the truth (see John 17:17), regardless of circumstances, the words of others (including devils), feelings or sight. The worldly philosophy of “believing is seeing” must be rejected, and we must line up with: “I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.” (Psalm 27:13).

**“For we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7).**

**“By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.” (Hebrews 11:7).**

**“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” (John 20:29).**

The example of Thomas shows that Jesus was not pleased with his lack of faith. In fact, He rebuked His disciples when they showed little faith (see Matthew 8:26). Faith pleases God. It

shows that we trust Him above all else. Christians must always seek to please the Master and do His will.

**“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” (Hebrews 11:6).**

Faith comes through the Word of God. Thus, it is essential for Christians to be continually in a Word environment because then faith can come and they can increase in faith as they act upon the words that God gives.

**“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17).**

Our whole approach to the Word of God must be right. We cannot be flippant about it because it is the Word of the Almighty. It is through believing what He says and having the fear of God (reverence and respect) that faith can work in our lives.

**“For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.” (Hebrews 4:2).**

**“For all those things hath mine hand made, and those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word. ... Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word” (Isaiah 66:2,5a).**

If Christians do not fear the Lord enough to reverence His Word, then they will be deficient in faith and His Word will not be established in their lives. This is a great warning if we are to please God. Churches that do not give rightful place to the Word of God will be greatly deficient in faith and produce weaklings who have no fight in them against the things of the world.

**“Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear.” (Psalm 119:38).**

**“I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.” (Psalm 138:2).**

Without love for God, His words, His people and His ways, faith will continue to be deficient. The Bible tells us that faith works by love. Love cannot be self-centred but looks for the best for others.

**“For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love.” (Galatians 5:6).**

**“... and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity [love in action], I am nothing.” (1 Corinthians 13:2b).**

The Lord Jesus Christ has been our greatest example of love and hence also of faith. He came to do God’s will, which was to demonstrate a giving type of love to mankind (see John 3:16). We must conform to the image of Christ (see Romans 8:29) in order to grow in both love and faith. The image of Christ is what God wants manifested amongst His people on Earth.

### **The importance of conforming to the image of Christ**

The world is covered in darkness and those not born again are blinded and cannot see the beauty of God and what He has done. The glorious Gospel of Christ shines forth through the Body of Christ, which is to preach it to the lost: “the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Corinthians 4:4b).

**“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:11,12).**

In this present world, Christians are to be witnesses of what God has done in them. Since the world is going in the opposite direction to the Kingdom of God, then our witness must be to the light of the Gospel. All Christians have been called to be conformed to the image of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. We cannot and should not be “conformed to this world” (see Romans 12:2).

**“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” (Romans 8:29).**

**“I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.” (John 12:46).**



To be Christ-like is to shine the light of the Word of God into the world. Christians must be Word-believing and preaching people. We deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly – this is what we have been predestined to be conformed to.

**“For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light” (Ephesians 5:8).**

**“Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.” (1 Thessalonians 5:5).**

This witness is very important and yet very neglected in our modern world. Many Christians have succumbed to the temptations of this present world and present little witness, which means that their conformity is not to Christ. Bible prophecy tells us that the Church will experience a great purging of offensive things prior to Christ’s return but this topic is a study in itself<sup>1</sup>.

### **The importance of the Church for Christians**

The Church is made up of people who have been born again. Thus, the Church universal is collectively all those who have been born again across the Earth today and throughout history. The New Testament was predominantly written to the local churches, which are the congregations of Christians in various localities. Thus, there is the book of Galatians, which was written to the local Church at Galatia, and so on. Of course, the New Testament is completely relevant for all of today’s Christians because the Holy Ghost as its divine Author transcends time and culture and the intent is for all Christians throughout time to benefit from His words.

Sadly, there are many people who devalue or undermine the Church and use a variety of reasons for doing so. However, none of these reasons are Biblical. Biblical Christians should always value the Church and its reason for being on Earth, which is to do the will of God.

**“Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (Ephesians 5:25b)**

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<sup>1</sup> For more details, see “Bible Prophecy Primer” by Matthew Verschuur; and listen to the 5-part sermon series “The victorious Church” by Pastor Craig Savige. These are available on the Victory Faith Centre website.

Since Christ loves the Church, then so should all Christians. We can take hold of the promise made by the Lord Jesus Christ with respect to His Church.

**“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock [the foundation of Christ’s words] I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” (Matthew 16:18).**

The gates of Hell, being everything of sin that leads to Hell, cannot prevail against the Church because Christ has said so. The presence of flawed men and women, sinful activities, wrong doctrines, and devilish attitudes should not be used as excuses to forsake the Church. The Bible has repeatedly warned of attacks against the Church because the world’s master, the Devil, is completely against it.

**“For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock.” (Acts 20:29).**

**“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.” (1 John 2:19).**

**“For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” (Matthew 24:24).**

Of course, even with these attacks, God’s power has been sustaining, strengthening and building up true Christians through the proper activities of churches. Hence, it is vitally important for Christians to fellowship within a Church community on a continual basis in order to partake of what Christ, as Head of the Church, is doing for His people.

**“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:24,25).**

It is impossible to exhort supposed brothers or sisters in Christ who are never available because of their absence from the Church. There is a work that God wants to do in all believers in Christ but this work cannot be done in people who are disobedient or rebellious. It is through the Word of God preached that people are built up in spiritual strength. In Acts 20:28, the elders of the local Church were told “to feed the church of God”, and this spiritual food is the written Word of God (see Matthew 4:4).

**“Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” (Acts 20:28).**

Notice that the Church has been purchased by the blood of God. This shows how important the Church is to God! Imagine how He views those who do not value the Church that He purchased! It also means that He places great value on His people getting fed properly with His words.

**“And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.” (Acts 20:32).**

**“But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach” (Romans 10:8).**

**“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17).**

The Church should be a place where the Bible is preached. Thus, the motive for going to Church should not be for fleshly reasons, such as entertainment or mere social interaction, but because God wants us to be built up in faith to please Him and to do His works upon the Earth. “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” (Hebrews 11:6). As previously mentioned, godly fellowship is where the brethren “consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works” (see Hebrews 10:24). Within the Church, there should be continual instruction on how to live a victorious life of faith because this clearly pleases God.

## **The importance of not staying under Biblically deficient ministries**

Christ builds the Church by giving ministries to it. These ministries vary but all have the one goal of equipping the saints of God to do the work of God.

**“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11-13).**

This also means that good doctrine is to be the goal of ministry. Clearly, God wants His people to be properly equipped because the Body of Christ, the Church, must be the equipped witness for Christ in the Earth. However, many are being deficiently equipped because they stay in churches that preach only certain things, neglect proper doctrine, compromise with worldly ideas and ways, or even preach against Biblical doctrines.

**“If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.” (1 Timothy 4:6).**

It is clear that words of faith and good doctrine are nourishing for the Christian believer, so good ministry is absolutely essential for Christian growth. Such ministry will use the Bible and centre the Church around the Bible, particularly in the areas of preaching and teaching.

**“For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.” (1 Corinthians 1:18).**

**“Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock” (Matthew 7:24).**

Thus, suppose a Christian stayed only in churches that preached about getting born again but neglected other vital doctrines, such as the baptism of the Holy Ghost, spiritual gifts and their use, prosperity, healing and health, how to live and walk by faith, separation from the world,

young Earth creation, Bible prophecy, and so on. Such Christians would clearly be deficient and never reach full potential in God, nor do the works that God would want using their talents for the Kingdom of God. In fact, these Christians will be answerable to God because ignorance is not an excuse.

**“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.” (Hosea 4:6).**

This Scripture indicates that Christians cannot function as priests of God if they neglect right knowledge that comes through the Word of God, which is His law. Hence, the seriousness of this behaviour (that is, staying away from correct Biblical knowledge) is great because it neglects the vital roles as kings and priests that Christians are to have whilst on the Earth. Notice in the following Scripture the price that was paid to make Christians to be kings and priests.

**“Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” (Revelation 1:5b,6).**

As kings and priests upon the Earth, we are called to “reign in life” (see Romans 5:17) and to “offer up spiritual sacrifices” (see 1 Peter 2:5). This means that Christians should not remain deficient in faith and doctrine, which means that fellowship in churches run by Biblically deficient ministries is disastrous and to be repented of. The answer is to find a Church which preaches the full Gospel and emphasizes how to live by faith. A Christian should seek God’s guidance in where to fellowship, and then follow His leading obediently.

### **Proper reasons for fellowshiping at Church**

But why do Christians stay in such churches? Fear of man, the cares of this world, compromise, love of the world, laziness, selfishness, and lack of love for God are all possible reasons. However, God is very clear about not fellowshiping for the wrong reasons.

**“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.” (Ephesians 5:11).**

## **Fellowshipping for social reasons**

Many seem not to realise it but the fear of social stigma or rejection by others is really the fear of man. And it takes spiritual boldness to fellowship for spiritual reasons rather than for social reasons. If people only “fellowship” at church for primarily social interaction above all else, then they become ensnared and the will of God is set aside in their lives.

**“The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.”  
(Proverbs 29:25).**

**“Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”  
(Psalm 37:4).**

Some Christians actually believe that they are in a great place when everything is right socially without necessarily having to make hard choices in response to the preaching of the Word of God. Yet, the Word of God requires responses of obedience and Christians are meant to be workers of righteousness, regardless of whether or not others love them.

**“Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.” (Luke 6:26).**

It is blindness to think that acceptance by others is an important component of whether to fellowship or not. The question should be asked: “Where does God want me to be?” and this may not be comfortable as many in the Scriptures can testify.

**“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.” (Revelation 3:17,18).**

## **Not wanting to be provoked to live by faith**

The cares or worries of this world are presented by the Devil to distract Christians from the things of the Kingdom of God. They are really forms of fear, which are essentially the opposite of faith. We are commanded to “Have faith in God” (see Mark 11:22). This means that Christians should be equipped to combat the Devil’s weapons of fear.

**“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.” (2 Timothy 1:7).**

**“For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.” (Romans 8:15).**

**“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” (Philippians 4:6).**

Fellowshipping at a Bible believing, faith preaching Church enables Christians to be able to stand against fear and to grow in faith, which will be demonstrated in righteous works in God. When fellowshipping at such a Church, Christians will leave behind the cares of the world and focus on the good works of faith that God wants accomplished in the Earth today (see Hebrews 10:24,25).

**“... I will shew thee my faith by my works.” (James 2:18b).**

**“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:10).**

Weak churches make it comfortable for Christians to be complacent about faith. Even though faith pleases God (see Hebrews 11:6), such churches give little to no emphasis on living by faith, walking in faith, or standing in faith. The problem with this is that spiritually weakened Christians become easy targets of the Devil, and allow the cares of this world to invade them. They fail to understand that “whatsoever is not of faith is sin” (Romans 14:23b). Christians in these non-faith churches do not demonstrate boldness or exploits for God, nor do they want to stand against the enemies of God for fear of what could happen to them.

### **Willing to dwell in an environment of compromise**

Compromise in the Church consists of settling for less than the fullness of God's words. Compromise is actually wresting God's words away from what God wants to say to people. Thus, for example, the use of modern versions, can easily sway people away from Biblical doctrines and godly positions. The example of modern versions shows the prevalence of compromise in many churches. Modern versions undermine fundamental doctrines, such as Hell, Biblical preaching, the deity of Christ, Biblical creation, and many other areas. They also severely impede stands against sodomy, the love of the world, unholy behaviour, and fornication, just to name a few.

**“As also in all his epistles, ... which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.” (2 Peter 3:16).**

Fellowship in such an environment is destructive and makes people weak, sickly and unable to fight for the Lord. God is jealous for His words but compromise rejects this and thinks that His words can be changed to suit circumstances or times. It is easy to flow along in this environment as though all will be okay but it is something the Lord hates.

**“I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name.” (Psalm 138:2).**

Even Peter was caught up in compromise in order to foster a false “unity” with certain Jewish brethren. However, Paul sought to correct this and served as an example for all who would stand up to compromise.

**“But when Peter was come to Antioch, I [Paul] withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation.” (Galatians 2:11-13).**



Christians should not fellowship in churches that compromise the Word of God (underemphasise it, deny it, gainsay it or try to change it) but should be ready to endure hardness and, if necessary, go against the flow.

**“Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.” (2 Timothy 2:3).**

It is easy to compromise because that is the nature of the world but it is much harder to stand for the truth and walk in the truth (see 3 John 3).

### **Fellowshipping for entertainment reasons**

One of the saddest things that can be witnessed in modern churches has been the emphasis on loving the world, particularly in the area of entertainment.

**“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.” (1 John 2:15).**

**“... lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.” (2 Timothy 3:4b,5).**

The words “from such turn away” means not to have fellowship in this environment. When people “fellowship” in churches to be entertained, they are completely missing the point about fellowship. The world is all about the flesh, which is the material, but the Church is all about the spirit, which is connected to the life of God through His words.

**“It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” (John 6:63).**

Thus, fellowshipping in churches that are fleshly takes away from any spiritual quality in life. In such churches, there is a great de-emphasis on teaching and preaching of the Bible, and much emphasis on seeking to be “relevant” to the world by having things of the world, such as musical entertainment, to attract people. Having a great feeling through being entertained is not evidence of God’s presence or His movement amongst people; obviously, many people in the world’s system can go to a “great” concert or performance and feel something as a result.

**“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.” (Romans 12:2).**

The renewing of the mind is through the words of God coming into a person’s heart or inner man. If churches conform to the world to fill up seats or some such reason, then the hearts of the people attending are affected in a completely negative way. Whereas God wants us to think His thoughts after him, the fleshly minded person thinks on the world and its ways.

### **Laziness and selfishness amongst church attendees**

It is a sad fact that there are many Christians hiding in congregations because they do not want to be confronted or challenged to do anything past a certain minimum amount of effort for the Lord. A Church that preaches the Bible will seek to provoke people to good works for God (see Hebrews 10:24,25). Some people will avoid being in such churches at all costs; however, this only serves to show where their heart truly is with respect to God.

**“And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.” (Matthew 25:25).**

**“And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.” (Revelation 3:14-16).**

Clearly, when we fellowship it is to give God pleasure, not ourselves (see Revelation 4:11). In doing God’s will, there is, of course, “joy and peace” (see Romans 15:13) but this is the result of dwelling in God and Him in us.

**“By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.” (1 John 5:2).**

Our love for God must be paramount in all our fellowship because pleasing Him must be the most important thing in our life (see also Matthew 6:33).

## **Conclusion**

As we have seen, Christians now have a new life in God, which is the eternal life we have through Christ the moment we are born again. It is a victorious life and full of joy and peace. It is a life that is pleasing to God.

**“Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.” (1 Timothy 6:12).**

Christians have an adversary, the Devil, that God has forewarned us about. God has equipped His people with His Word, which produces faith and can be used as “the sword of the Spirit” (see Ephesians 6:17). There is no reason for God’s people to live deficiently because God has provided everything in Christ needed for victory.

Christians should be people that value the Church, the ministry and its offices, the preaching of the Bible, and the fellowship of people of God, the brethren. Thus, fellowship in the right environment is crucial for Christians to grow and function effectively in the Kingdom of God.

Now that you are a Christian, do not settle for less than what Christ has to fully offer through His Word. Remember the following verse.

**“But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach” (Romans 10:8).**