

Let Your Light Shine

“In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.” (Matthew 5:16)

How can you recognize a policeman? Is it by the clothes he is wearing? How about a doctor, by his white coat and his stethoscope? And how can you also determine a prisoner? Is it by the shackles that are on his hands and feet? To recognize the army officials there are ranks labeled on their uniforms that describe their awards and the position they occupy. In offices, banks, hotels, restaurant, hospitals, malls, agencies and shops you find the staffs wearing uniforms and nametags with their job descriptions. And certain people you can recognize their jobs and what they do from what they speak and how they act.

But, how can you recognize a Christian? Is it by wearing a chain with the cross of Jesus, carrying a Holy Bible or by his identity card? By no means these criteria can determine the person to be a true Christian.

A Christian is a person who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. He believes that Jesus came from heaven, took away his sin and died for him on the cross to give him eternal life. A Christian accepts Jesus and allows Him to be the Lord of his life. He renounces the life of sin and he commits himself to follow the life example of Jesus by reading the word of God, obeying it and applying it in his daily life. A Christian is transformed by the Spirit of God and becomes a new creation. His old life of sin and disobedience to God is replaced by a new life of humility and obedience to follow God’s ways.

The Spirit of God renews the mind of men when they accept Jesus as their Lord and God. He works in them to manifest the fruit of love, joy and peace. They show patience and perseverance; they show kindness and goodness to the people around them. The spirit of God makes them the true disciples of Jesus who live, speak and act similar to Jesus. **“The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.” (Acts 11:26)** *Christian* means to carry the character of Jesus Christ. Christians must live like Christ and to serve Christ through the people. The people in the world and around the disciples they don’t know Jesus. They don’t see Him but they see the disciples, the followers of Jesus Christ. Only through the character, behavior, attitude and action of a true believer of Christ that the people in the world can perceive the true impression of who Jesus Christ is, and what Christianity is all about.

Scheme 1: “Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, His body, of which He is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.” (Ephesians 5:22-25) This is what the Bible says about how the relationship between the husband and wife should be.

The word of God speaks to the wife to be under the care of her husband; listening to him and gladly obeying his instructions. The word of God instructs the husband to love and care for his wife. ***“In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.” (Ephesians 5:28)*** This is the true image of the husband and wife in the Christian family. Through such image of reciprocal sincerity between husband and wife people can see Jesus Christ. But what if the wife is a quarrelsome, hardly listens and doesn’t obey her husband and don’t accept to be under his care and supervision? And what if a man is selfish and his only concern is himself and he is careless to his wife showing no concern and not sensitive to her needs? In such a figure of a family, disturbed by disobedience of the husband and wife to the word of God, the people around them cannot see or identify Jesus Christ and they cannot recognize Christianity in the family. A Christian family must portray Christ in their home by obeying God’s word: ***“However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.” (Ephesians 5:33)***

Scheme 2: “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.” (Colossians 3:23) The disciples of Jesus receive grace with power from God to be patient in hardship, thankful in all circumstances and persevering in doing good work even if they are ill-treated. The word of God instructs every believers of Christ to work efficiently and effectively so that the people will see Jesus through them. But what if they are grumblers, trouble-makers, lazy, not obedient to their superiors and resentful to every injustice they receive? Do such kind of workers reflect the people of Jesus Christ? Christians must always be pleasant, having good behavior and attitude; reflecting the good, faithful and loving God – the Creator and Jesus Christ – the Saviour who died on the cross.

Scheme 3: “But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who ill-treat you.” (Luke 6:27-28) The disciples are called to be peacemakers, avoiding fights and strikes. They are called to forgive their enemies, forgetting what offences are done against them. They are called to bless their enemies in their prayers and not to curse them. Such a figure is unique to Jesus. It is difficult to follow but profound in reflecting Jesus Christ to the people around; it shows genuine Christianity. ***“In the same way let the light of Jesus shine in your personal life as you live with the people around you.”*** The people in the world around will see through you, Christian, the light of Jesus. By observing the word of God in the Bible and by following the ways of Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, you will be a good example for other believers in speech, in life, in love and in purity. They will be blessed with your presence and they will recognize you as a child of God and praise your Father in heaven.

“Heavenly Father, I come before You in the name of Jesus. I thank You for the blood that was shed on the cross for me. Thank You for your word that gives me light and directs my life. Help me, Lord, to follow You and to become a good example to other people around me. So they may see your light through me and they will draw near to You and glorify You. In the name of Jesus’, Amen.”