

The Compromising Christian

Many people who call themselves Christians find themselves straddling the fence when it comes to Christian ethics. They may go to church and say they believe in Christ but they find it difficult to let go of worldly ways. They continue to hang on to old habits and worldly pleasures. They try to have the best of both worlds. They want the security of an eternal life with Jesus but they want to “enjoy” the sins of this world while still living in it.

The following from the book What Controls Your Life? by Kenneth Reed from Youth In Action, Inc. talks about the “Christian” who is straddling the fence.

Some people have enough sin in their lives to keep them from being happy as Christians and just enough “Christianity” to keep them from really enjoying sin. Talk about frustration and unhappy. Such a person has dethroned Christ and placed self on the throne. He is controlled by self-will, rather than Christ’s ruling and governing. He has deceived himself into believing that he can do as he pleases and listen to Christ when it suits him (p. 43).

Selfishness, or self-pleasing, is the very essence of sin (Self-Ish-Ness). The selfish Christian has poor prayer life and Bible study habits (p. 44). He only calls on Christ in times of need, when he is out of control (p. 45). He keeps back some part of his life. He just cannot bring himself to give up some pleasurable sin or trait of character such as stinginess or pride. Otherwise he acts like a true Christian. He is unhappy since he lets something less than Christ be his lord (p.46). He operates out of fear - afraid not to have Christ as his Savior but he cannot bring himself to let Christ be his Lord. He is a premeditated sinner - hanging on to a few deliberate sins as lying and cheating. One sin is as bad as many to Christ. No sin is small in the presence of an infinite Lord. A grain of sand may be a small thing but not if it gets into the mechanism of a watch (p. 47).

A habitual sinner of a certain sin or sins, becomes hardened to that sin, and begins to lose his ability to feel the sting of sin. He begins to have no regret, no guilt, no conscience and feels no need for repentance for such sin (p.49). [People who habitually sin and have no conscience of doing wrong are severing their relationship with God. Actually there is much doubt as to whether these people are even “saved.” God gave us two warning systems in our body to tell us when something is wrong and going to harm us. The first warning system is physical pain which lets us know when something is causing physical damage to us. The second is our conscience which lets us know when something is hurting our spirit.] There are few things that can make a person more miserable than the feeling of being guilty. Guilt is a signal that there is a “spiritual malfunction” somewhere (p. 55).

Faith comes from being taught the faith and our willingness to accept it. This faith, or trust, will cause us to go still further. We will want to repent. Repentance is not just being sorry, it’s being sorry enough to quit, accompanied with the attitude that “I don’t

want to ever sin again!” When we become a Christian, we make up our minds that we are going to get out of the sinning business and turn our lives over completely to Jesus Christ (p. 21). When you truly repent, you don’t pick and choose which sins you are willing to give up and which ones you will drag along with you as a Christian! You quit; you throw in the towel; you get out of the sinning business altogether - forever. *All* sin is a transgression of God’s will (p. 22).

There is a great difference between being sinless or perfect and being dead to sin and free from the domination of sin. 1 John 3:4 tells us that a Christian “doeth no sin.” What does this mean? Well, literally it means that a child of God “does not *practice* sin.” In verse 7, John uses the expression, “doeth righteousness,” and this means literally to “make a practice (or habit) of doing what is right.” Thus, a person who has really repented is a person to whom sin has become distasteful - who no longer makes a habit of feeding a sinful appetite (p. 23).

God will not forgive *any* sin until we are willing to repent of (quit) *all* sin (p. 24). But you might ask, “How can I live apart from sin for the rest of my life?” Start each day with the prayer, “Lord, help me not to sin this day,” and with God’s help you can make it! If you supply the willingness, He will supply the way. Just break your *Christian life* down into *Christian days* and live one day at a time for the Lord (p. 24-25).

Jesus is not only our Savior, Jesus is also our Lord. It is not enough to just accept Jesus as our Savior, we must accept Jesus as our Master and let Him control our lives (p. 12-14). It is a frustrating experience to try to live in the Lord’s kingdom and try at the same time not to live under His Lordship or control. When we miss this, we miss it all. When one does permit Christ to sit on the throne of his life, peace overcomes frustration, purpose replaces meaninglessness, and one can do all things through Christ who gives him strength (p. 13-14).

Christ will not come into our lives as some temporary guest to be invited only when we desire His company. No, He comes in (moves in) as the new owner to convert what was our house into His abode (p. 31).

Once you remove sin through repentance, you must replace the emptiness with Christ or sin will return. Christ is the only one who is strong enough to replace sin and keep it from regaining control over our lives (p. 34). (Early Christians) had in mind that they actually became the voluntary slaves of their master or lord or ruler - Jesus Christ, who was once a servant Himself - a bond servant of God’s will (p. 35-36).

This is what it means to be truly converted - to become a voluntary slave, surrendering your whole life to Christ as Lord and Master (p.37). There is no part-time discipleship. It is all of the time (daily) or none of the time. He will not be the Lord of any part of our lives if He cannot be the Lord of every part of our lives (p.38).