

# ARE YOU A SUNDAY CHRISTIAN?

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## INTRODUCTION

“O yes I’m a Christian. I go to Church nearly every Sunday. In fact the only times I miss is when there’s a Titan game in town and I have to go and tailgate with my buddies.” How often have you heard this statement from somebody you know? How many times have you heard it from somebody at work who is the first to take a 2 hour lunch, leave early and make a sale to somebody they know cannot afford it, or use their position to manipulate others? We all know people who are like this. What we have to examine is why they attend Church and what their view of being a Christian is. We also need to examine our own reasons for attending church and what our lives project to the outside world about our commitment to Christ.

In this study we will look at the role of the Church in our lives and what it means to claim we are a Christian or better yet a disciple of Christ.

## WHY DO YOU ATTEND CHURCH?

To begin with we need to consider why we go to Church. Do you go just because it is something you have always done since your parents took you when you were a child? Do you go because it would upset your spouse if you didn’t? Do you go because you think it is the right thing to do? Do you go because you think you will attain salvation by attending church regularly? Do you go because it’s a great place to meet with friends and have good fellowship and pot-lucks? Do you go to have fellowship with other Christians and grow in your life as a disciple of Jesus Christ? Search your own heart and look for the reason you come to church.

## ARE YOU A 24/7/365 CHRISTIAN?

The next thing we will explore is what it means to be a 24/7/365 Christian. Just attending church on Sunday does not make us a true Christian who follows the teachings of Jesus Christ. Our whole life must be an example of who we are as a child of Christ. We must be a practicing Christian 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year. We shouldn’t need to have a fish symbol on our car, wear a T-shirt declaring our belief in Christ or other paraphernalia sold by Christian Book stores. The way we act and treat others should make us stand out from the crowd and want people to ask why we are different. Sunday is not the only time we should be a Christian we must become a 7/24/365 Christian. We need to ask ourselves what it is God wants us to do and how much of us does he want?

## NOOMA VIDEO

We will again look at a **Nomma Video** with Rob Bell. This one is called **Sunday**.

*Why do we do the things we do? Why do we go to church or give money away? Because we're supposed to or because we think God needs it? Do we honestly put on our best clothes for an hour once a week, stand and sit at all the right times, and sing all the appropriate songs for God's sake, or because it'll make us look better to the world around us? We're tired of all the empty rituals and routines. And so is God. God hates it when we call ourselves Christians but ignore all the things he really cares about. He hates it when we go through hollow religious routines out of some feeling of duty or obligation. God doesn't want the meaningless rituals. God wants our hearts.*

## DISCUSSION

Although you have not seen the video yet, consider the follow questions that Rob Bell will raise during the video.

- When it comes to Church what do you think God has in mind?
- Does God need us to attend a Church service at least once a week?
- What issues in the world do you think God cares about?
- What does it mean for our hearts to beat more and more like God's?

## SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

The Bible can be considered as a manual for life. There many references in it on how to and how not to worship. The Bible is full of instruction of how God expects us to live our lives and what he wants from us. If we turn to the Gospels we have the example of Jesus life. This shows us what it means to live our lives for God. Jesus was the greatest Rabbi, or teacher, the world has known and his life and teachings give us clear directions for daily living.

In our study we will look at three Scripture passages that address how we should worship and what God expects from us.

*Read through these before the study as we will not have time to look at them in much detail.*

## ISAIAH 1:11-17

In this first chapter of Isaiah we see a condemnation of false religion and so-called worship of God. Read this passage carefully and look for the issues that were wrong with the way the Israelites worshipped and went about their daily lives.

- What was wrong with the worship of the Israelites?
- Do you see some of these things in your life or in the way we worship?
- What does Isaiah say about what true worship is and what God looks for in us?

## AMOS CHAPTER 5

The Book of Amos is a condemnation of the way of life of the Israelites. This was a prosperous time in Israel's history. Things were good for many of the people and they lived in luxury. The problem was they were living life well and had turned away from the way of God. They were building themselves up and becoming more prosperous at the expense of the poor. They were ignoring the "widows, orphans and needy" as God had commanded them. Chapter 5 looks at the way they worshipped and points out what God considers true worship.

### DISCUSSION

- What is wrong with the way the people are living?
- What is wrong with the way people are worshipping?
- What do we read God wants from us in worship in Chapter 5?

## MATTHEW CHAPTER 23

There are many passages we could use in the Gospels that show what Jesus thought of the religious practices of the day and the Pharisee leaders. We will use the one example that Rob Bell will use in the video, Matthew 23. In this passage Jesus is addressing the Pharisees and what they have done to the practice of life and worship. Life under worship has become a burden under the man-made laws. He goes on to point out that worship that is grand-standing or done for show is fraud. Read this chapter carefully and see if there are any personal admonishments in the words of Jesus.

### DISCUSSION

- How much time do you spend worrying about what other people think of you?
- Is it possible to be interested in Christian faith but turned off by Christianity?
- In our worship do you truly worship or just go through the motions?
- How do we know that God has our hearts and that we're not just going through the motions?

## ROMANS CHAPTER 12:1-8

Romans is Paul's statement on his theology and how to live out that theology. There are many great passages in this book. In Chapter 12 Paul gives us some of the greatest words on living a life as a disciple of Jesus Christ. This passage is also the Lectionary text for this week. What we will consider here is what Paul is telling us about our life and our life within our community of faith. Read this chapter carefully and consider what your role in the church and in the world should be.

### DISCUSSION

- What does Paul mean by "offer yourself as a living sacrifice?" How do we do this?
- In verse 2 what does Paul tell us about worship?
- What is Paul telling us to do in the community we worship in?

This passage is the well known story of Jesus meeting with the Samaritan woman at the well. There are several background issues to this story we should consider. Samaritans were hated by the Jews and a Jew would do everything to avoid contact in any way with a Samaritan. The law stated that if a Samaritan's shadow crossed a Jew they were unclean until nightfall. Jews, travelling between Jerusalem and Galilee would go many miles out of their way through rough and dangerous territory rather than travel through Samaria. Samaritans were despised people. Now read this passage of Jesus encounter with the Samaritan woman and the fact she was probably an outcast in her own society because of her life style

### DISCUSSION

- How did Jesus treat this woman?
- What was Jesus approach to her? One degrading her or one building her up?
- In light of what we have looked at do you consider what Jesus did an act of worship?

### CONCLUSIONS

God's wants us to come together regularly to worship and have fellowship. As Paul tells us we are part of the body of Christ and all have a part to play. We must find what part of the body we are and perform the function God calls us to have. The important message though is that worship is not something we do for an hour every Sunday. We are not called to be a Sunday Christian but a 24/7/365 Christian. This means that all of our life, all of what we do should be holy and acceptable to God.

My prayer for you is that you look at your life and see how you are living it. Is your religion confined to one hour on Sunday? Is your religion something you forget about when you go to work Monday morning? Or, is your religion something you live second-by-second, minute-by-minute, hour-by-hour, day-by-day? God wants your best and looks to be a partner in your life as you go about your daily chores. God will use you wherever you are. Do not be a Sunday Christian but be a Christian that when you meet others they wonder why you are different and want what you have.