



## *Great Commission Coalition*

### **The Results of Salvation**

"Of what value is the grace I profess to receive if it does not dramatically change the way that I live? If it doesn't change the way that I live, it will never change my eternal destiny." —C.H. Spurgeon

We have all seen those who "start with a bang" in what appears to be their salvation experience, only to "bail out" a short time later. We then grapple with the question, "Did they lose their salvation?" Perhaps we should really ask, "Were these people truly saved to begin with? For when a person has truly met Jesus Christ, there will be changes in his or her life:

"For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people. And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with self-control, right conduct, and devotion to God, while we look forward to that wonderful event when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed. He gave His life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us His very own people, totally committed to doing what is right" (Titus 2:11-14, NLB).

Some think that because they have "prayed to receive Christ," they can pretty much live as they please. They think that since they have "taken care of heaven," they can now "live like hell." But this isn't an option for the true believer. Jesus tells us that He wants us to be "hot" or "cold" (Revelation 3:15-16).

### **How Do We Know If Someone Is Truly a Christian?**

The only real way for us, as humans, to know if someone has truly become a Christian is to observe that person's life on the outside. Since we cannot see the interior of the human heart as God does, we have to look for some result or earmark of their faith.

- "Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that and shudder. You foolish man, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?" (James 2:18-20).

- Jesus said, "Therefore by their fruits you will know them. Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven" (Matthew 7:20-21, KJV).

If a person does not show any fruit—any visible evidence of the change that has taken place in his heart since receiving Jesus Christ as his personal Savior—then that individual is not a Christian. Time will tell if a person who comes forward at a crusade, a church invitation or responds to an invitation by an individual to make a profession of faith has actually gone through a conversion.

**Works don't save a person, but they are good evidence that the person is saved.**

### **A Result of Salvation is a Truly Changed Life: Portrait of a True Believer**

The book of 1 John identifies what could be called "birthmarks" of someone who is truly saved or born again.

#### **1. Do you confess Jesus as Lord?**

"If anyone acknowledges [confesses] that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in Him and He in God" (1John 4:15).

#### **2. Do you obey Christ's commands?**

"This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith" (1 John 5:3).

#### **3. Do you love and obey God's Word?**

"But if anyone obeys His Word, God's love is truly made complete in Him. This is how we know we are in Him" (1John 2:5).

#### **4. Are you unhappy or miserable when you are sinning?**

"No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God" (1 John 3:9). In the expanded Greek translation, the verse says, "Every one who has been born of God does not habitually sin because His seed remains in him. And he is not able habitually to sin, because out of God he has been born. In this is apparent who are the born ones of God and the born ones of the Devil. Everyone who is not habitually doing righteousness is not of God and also the one who is not

habitually loving his brother" (Wuest Translation). This does not mean that a Christian will be sinless; but he will sin less and less and less.

## **5. Have you overcome the Devil?**

"We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God keeps himself, and the wicked one does not touch him" (1 John 5:18). When John wrote that the child of God "keeps himself," he wasn't suggesting that Christians keep themselves "saved," because that is the work of the Holy Spirit who has sealed us (Ephesians 1:13-14) and Jesus Christ who intercedes for us (Romans 8:31-39). Scripture clearly tells us that God will keep us (1Peter 1:5).

While we don't keep ourselves saved, we do need to keep ourselves safe! Scripture tells us, "Keep yourselves in the love of God..." (Jude 21). Some people, places, and activities make it easier for the Devil to tempt us. Now that we have been delivered from the kingdom of Satan, we should have no desire to deliberately get back into his clutches. When we pray (as Jesus taught us), "Lead us not into temptation," we are asking the Father to help us so that we will not tempt ourselves by deliberately putting ourselves into volatile situations.

## **6. Do you love other Christians?**

"Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the Father loves his child as well" (1 John 5:1).

## **B. A Result of Salvation Is a Desire to Follow God's Purpose for Your Life**

God put us on this earth for two primary reasons: to know, walk with, and glorify God, and to bring forth fruit. The second is really an outgrowth of the first.

### **1. We are put here to know, walk with, and glorify God.**

"We were [saved]...in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ might be for the praise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:11-12).

Thousands of years ago, God spoke to the rebellious King Belshazzar by writing an inscription on the wall of the royal palace (see Daniel 5). The prophet Daniel interpreted the writing on the wall and said that it read, "You have been weighed in the balances and found lacking" (Daniel 5:27). Preceding that interpretation, Daniel gave the reason for that waste of life: "And you have lifted yourself up against the Lord of heaven. They have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, wives and your concubines, have drunk from them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, bronze and iron, wood and

stone, which do not see or hear or know; and the God who holds your breath in His hand and owns all your ways, you have not glorified" (Daniel 5:23).

The root of his problem was that he had failed to glorify God. His rebellion—as evidenced in his worship of false gods—was merely the outgrowth of that neglect.

To glorify God means that you try to honor Him whenever you can. When you succeed in your endeavors—be they in ministry, business, sports, and or family—you do not take personal credit but give the glory to God, "in whose hand your very breath is."

## **2. We are to "bear much fruit."**

"This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be My disciples" (John 15:8).

The concept of bearing fruit is used often in Scripture to describe the results of someone who truly has a relationship with Jesus Christ (see Mark 4:20; Colossians 1:10). According to Jesus, bearing fruit is not an option, but a mandate. He considers this aspect of the Christian life so important that He says, "[God] cuts off every branch in Me that bears no fruit..." (John 15:2).

A vine has very little use outside of bearing fruit. You cannot build houses or furniture with the wood of a vine. It is even of little use as fuel, for when it is cast into the fire, it flames up for a moment or two, then it is gone. In other words, if it does not bear fruit, it is basically worthless.

In the book of Hosea, God describes Israel as a vine that "brought forth fruit for himself" (Hosea 10:1). How this is true of so many today even among professing Christians! They are far more interested in what God can do for them than in what they can do for God. The secret to living the Christian life to its fullest is to bear fruit.

**God did not create you, and Christ did not die for you that you might go through life getting; God created you and Christ purchased you that you might know Him and invest your life in giving.**

What is this spiritual fruit that Jesus is seeking from our lives?

## **1. Winning others to Jesus Christ and helping them to grow spiritually is fruit.**

- "Often I have planned to come to you...in order that I might obtain some fruit among you, even as among the rest of the Gentiles" (Romans 1:13).
- "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise" (Proverbs 11:30).

Sometimes God gives us the privilege of personally leading someone to Christ, while at other times He simply allows us to "sow a seed." It is and always will be God that gives the increase—but we certainly have a part to play.

## **2. Sharing what God has blessed us with is fruit.**

When Paul gathered an offering from the Gentiles for the poor saints in Jerusalem, he called the offering "fruit": "When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain" (Romans 15:28).

Not only is our gift considered "fruit," but more of the same is placed in our account as a result of our generosity: "Not because I desire a gift, but desire fruit that may abound to your account"(Philippians 4:17).

## **3. Praising and thanking God is fruit.**

Paul writes, "By Him let us offer the sacrifice of prayers to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving praise unto His name" (Hebrews 13:15).

## **4. Our change in conduct and character is fruit.**

Scripture tells us, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (Galatians 5:22).

**May God help each one of us to fulfill the purpose for which we were put on this very earth: to love, walk with, and glorify God by living fruitful and effective lives.**

Keep Looking To Jesus,

Dennis Robinson