

## Sermon Study - a True Father - Titus 1a

### Problem -

This sermon introduced the problem of discerning the difference between real and fake Christians. How do you tell them apart and who is a good example?

- Read the following article and discuss: <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/13-culture/268-casual-christians-and-the-future-of-america>

### Main Idea -

Real Christianity is not based on cliché  
Real Christianity is not built for comfort  
Real Christianity is not motivated by culture  
Real Christianity is not practiced casually

#### - Cliche Christianity (Titus 1:1a)

- The faith of the elect is not a trite thing. It is something meant to be nourished and bear fruit (Titus 1:10-16).- Paul was made a slave and an apostle for this very subject. Genuine faith will flourish not flounder. Christianity that is based on cliché is no Christianity at all.
  - Genuine faith is about the right object. Genuine faith is for genuine believers and is a gift from God (Ephesians 2:8-9; Matthew 16:17; Acts 13:48). Genuine faith works.
  - Read Titus 1:10-16. What demonstrated to Paul that the faith of the false teachers was indeed false?
  - Read James 2:14-19. What does this imply about the faith of the elect?
- Read the following article and discuss:
  - <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2012/julyweb-only/greear-ask-jesus-into-your-heart.html?start=4>

#### - Comfortable Christianity (Titus 1:1b)

- The knowledge of the elect is not built for comfort. It is a knowledge that is to lead to godliness (1 Timothy 4:7-8; 6:3-11). Truth is not meant to tickle but transform. Comfortable Christianity is no Christianity at all.
  - Read James 1:19-25. This is the situation of our time we are challenged but not changed and we are convicted but not converted.
  - Charles Spurgeon: "Perhaps some of you can claim a sort of negative purity, because you do not walk in the way of the ungodly; but let me ask you — is your delight in the law of God? Do you study God's Word? Do you make it the man of your right hand, your best companion and hourly guide? If not, the blessing of Psalm 1 does not belong to you."
  - C.S. Lewis: "It is hard; but the sort of compromise we're hankering after is harder — in fact, it is impossible. We are like eggs at present. And we cannot go on indefinitely being just an ordinary, decent egg. We must be hatched or go bad."
- Read the following article and discuss:
  - <http://crossleadership.com/five-telltale-signs-of-complacency/>

#### - Cultural Christianity (Titus 1:2-3)

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- The motivating hope of Paul was the living and sure hope of eternal life. He actually believed and was motivated by his firm and experienced expectation of eternal life. Eternal life is not meant to be an enigma but an experienced expectation that motivates us. A Cultural Christianity, motivated only by the here and now, is no Christianity at all.
  - Contrast these two verses: 1 Corinthians 15:12-19 and 1 Peter 1:1-5.
  - Read 1 John 1:1-4; 5:11-12; John 5:24, 39; 10:10; 17:3. What is eternal life?
  - Read Ephesians 1. Why should we be so sure and expect eternal life?
- Read the following article and discuss:
  - <http://www.clayjones.net/2010/08/let-s-kill-so-heavenly-minded-no-earthly-good/>
- Casual Christianity (Titus 1:4)
  - Paul's fellowship with his fellow believer was not formal nor was it casual. Paul saw Titus as his true child in a common faith. This fellowship is not extraordinary but normative for true believers. Fellowship is not meant to be formal but familial. A casual Christianity based on formal fickle acquaintances is no Christianity at all.
    - Read Mark 10:23-31. What do we gain right now b being a Christian in terms of family?
    - Read Acts 2:42. Is this your group?
  - How Shallow Christian Relationships work
    - They consist of meetings where it is expected that you will arrive, but if you don't show, nobody will care, nor will you call to say why you missed (No accountability)
    - They consist of gatherings where we may pray, but rarely do and if so, not for long. (Christian Lite)
    - They consist of meetings that have continued for at least a few months, but the participants have never done ministry together. Nor served one another.
    - They include groups that treat relationships in such a shallow manner that no one will correct or discuss weighty subjects for fear of "upsetting the apple cart."
    - Name a few more and then discuss ways to open up with each other and some ways to do ministry together.

### Application -

2 Peter 1:3-15 calls for believers to confirm their calling and election. Based on these foundational truths in Paul's introduction ask yourself if this is the Christianity you possess.

Finally read Matthew 13:24-30 - wheat and tares (weeds) look identical.

You believe but so do the demons - does your faith flounder or does it flourish and produce fruit?

You enjoy the truth but is it only to let it entertain you or does it transform you?

You have hope but is it in this life or is it a hope that is alive having been resurrected from the dead? What motivates your life for real?

You have a relationship with other believers but are they formal and fickle or are they familial and authentic?

You can fake us all out but God knows the wheat. Discuss how to more specifically apply this message starting tonight. Be real with each other.