

The Cost of Following Christ

The Bible makes it very clear that those who are truly Christians live differently than the world. And while true Christians mature at different rates, Scripture makes it clear that there will be evidence of a changed life when a person has been born again. As we are all called to examine our lives to ensure that we are truly children of God (2 Corinthians 13:5), our only source for that examination is the Bible because God's Word is absolute truth and we can trust what He says. For that examination, read through the following passages and prayerfully compare your life to the words of Scripture. For each passage, note how your life is consistent with the evidences of faith and how it is consistent with the works of the flesh. Ask God to give you wisdom as you consider these passages.

1. The cost of following Christ – Luke 14:25-33

What does it cost to follow Christ according to His own words? What does/should that look like in your life?

2. Dead faith vs. living faith – James 2:14-26

What does James say is the principal evidence of saving faith? What outward fruit does your life exhibit as evidence of being born again (be specific)?

3. Growing faith is self-evident – 2 Peter 1:3-11

What does Peter say is evidence of partaking in the "divine nature"? Which of these evidences can you say has been "added" to your faith?

4. Walking away from the world – Ephesians 5:1-12; Colossians 3:5-11; Galatians 5:19-21

What are some of the consistent things in these passages that Paul urges us to leave behind? Which of these things continue to be evident in your life today?

5. Walking in the Spirit – Colossians 3:12-17; Galatians 5:16-18, 22-26

What are the characteristics of a life surrendered to God? Which of these characteristics do you see genuine evidence of in your life? Where do you see the greatest contrast between your life before Christ and your life now?

6. The deception of false faith – James 1:22-27; Matthew 7:21-23

What are the characteristics of a false professor in Christ? In what areas of your life are you a “doer of the word” and in what areas are you merely a “hearer”?

7. Our only hope – James 4:6-10; Acts 3:19; Revelation 3:18-19

If you are a believer living a life of disobedience, what should you do? If you are still in your sins, what does God call you to do?