

True Christians are Called, Chosen and Faithful

It is quite clear from God's Word that many who believe themselves to be Christians will nevertheless find that when Christ returns, they're counted as quite unprepared, and so fail to go in with Christ to the marriage in heaven, Matthew 25:10, *'And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut.'* Revelation 19:7-8, *'Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure'—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.'*

Those unsuccessful are Christians who have been called and chosen but who still failed to qualify as a fitting Bride for Christ, because they were *not faithful* to their calling.

The fact is that millions are called through the Bible. Thousands are chosen by our Father, but even fewer, may be only hundreds at any one time, are actually faithful, especially at the End time. Luke 18:8, *'Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?'*

It is this lack of faith to their calling that prevents many from entering into the marriage with Christ, which takes place on the Sea of glass before His Father's throne in heaven. Revelation 14:1, 4, *'And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.'* *'These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.'* We see that we must remain virgins. We must follow in Christ's footsteps. We must remain faithful to our calling.

Let us understand that God has called all men reached through His word, 1 Timothy 2:4, *'who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.'* God then looks upon our hearts to see our response. Will we take that heartfelt calling seriously enough? 1 Thessalonians 2:4, *'but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who examines our hearts.'* If we do, then, and only then, does God grant us repentance, 2 Timothy 2:25, *'In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.'*

It appears that God the Father is putting us through a process, and that He is very selective indeed, Matthew 22:14, *'For many are called, but few are chosen.'* When we look around the world, there are huge numbers claiming to be Christians but who fail to carefully and diligently study His word. If they did, they would see that they need to keep His Commandments, but very few do. Revelation 22:14, *'Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.'* These 'Christians' appear to be enthusiastic, claim to possess God's Holy Spirit, but in fact they don't, Acts 5:32, *'And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.'* To possess the Holy Spirit, they need to obey, but have been deceived into thinking that God's Law has been done away, despite

Romans 2:13, *'For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified,'* and despite Christ's words in Matthew 5:18, *'For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.'* NIV.

So it is that, if called and the chosen by God, we are led to repentance and baptism, and then receive God's Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands, by one who has already undergone this process.

The question is then, how can we be called and chosen by God the Father, receive His Holy Spirit, and still be unprepared and unqualified when Christ returns for His Bride? Matthew 25:10, *And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut,'* and 1 Thessalonians 5:19, *'Quench not the Spirit.'*

We find the answer in Revelation 17:14, where Christ returns, accompanied by His Bride. *'These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.'*

These Christians remained faithful, and we saw that they are also counted as virgins, and follow in Christ's footsteps. What do these requirements mean?

First let's deal with the word 'virgins'. It is used here for the first time as a masculine word. The exaltation of virginity is a counterpoint to the false doctrine Christ condemned so strongly in Revelation 2:6, *'But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.'* The thing Christ hated about them was their deeds.

The name 'Nicolaitans' is derived from the Greek word 'nikolaos', a compound of the words 'nikos' and 'laos'. The Greek word 'nicos', means 'to conquer' or 'subdue'. The word 'laos' is Greek for 'the people'. It is the word that provides us with 'laity'. Compounded, these two words form the word 'nikolaos', which means, 'one who conquers and subdues the people'.

In Revelation 2:14 + we find the word 'Balaam', which has a very similar meaning. 'Balaam' is derived from two Hebrew words: 'bala (he swallows) and 'am' (people), thus 'swallowers of the people'.

Balaam, the prophet hired by the Moabite king Balaak (Numbers 22:5, Deuteronomy 23:4) counselled that Israel could be drawn into God's disfavour by luring them into sexual relationships with the women of Moab (Numbers 25:1, 31:16) which would entice them into idolatry, Numbers 25:2, *'These women invited them to attend sacrifices to their gods, so the Israelites feasted with them and worshiped the gods of Moab.'* NLT.

Both the words 'Nicolaitans' and 'Balaam' then, together reveal that God's people can be lured into idolatry by being enticed to look to those who conquer, swallow, or rule over them rather than directly to their saviour Jesus Christ. A 'virgin' in this context, on the other hand, is one who refuses to be part of this false doctrine, which both Jesus Christ and the Apostle Peter clearly condemned. Matthew 20:25-27, *'But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; And*

whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:’ 1 Peter 5:3, ‘not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.’

Christ requires His Bride-to-be to be completely faithful to Him alone, not polluted by the teaching of those who have refused to acknowledge His words by substituting a false doctrine which provides them with the excuse to rule over and abuse the people of God. As a result, *any* of their teaching becomes unreliable and likely to depart from the truth. One only has to look at the history of ‘Christianity’ to see that this is plainly evident, from the Roman Catholic Church onwards. (See our article, ‘The Results of Idolatry.’)

But faith, actually being faithful, means acting out Christ’s instructions. It is about our behaviour, and following in his footsteps, (1 Peter 2:21). The question is, do we have conviction enough to follow through on Christ’s instructions? Hebrews 11:1, *‘Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.’*

By believing and obeying God’s instructions, our elders displayed faith, verse 2, *‘This is what the ancients were commended for,’* NIV. Faith is a spirit substance from God based on our conviction of things not seen, verse 3, *‘By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible,’* ESV.

Faith requires a process of experience in our relationship with God, Romans 5:1-5, *‘Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.’* We learn to trust Him as He answers our prayers during our trials.

Grace and faith then are gifts from God, and that faith is revealed by our actions, James 2:14, 17, *‘What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him?’ ‘So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.’*

One of Christ’s most important commandments to His people was His specific instruction to us to pass on the gospel we have received, Mark 16:15-16, *‘And he said to them, “Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned .’* Matthew 28:20, *‘teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’* This is our Great Commission and each of us must find our own way of carrying it out, for if we were to fail, Christianity would perish from the earth, Isaiah 43:10, *‘You are my witnesses,” declares the Lord, “and my servant whom I have chosen....’*

In the past, some of us have ‘paid and prayed’, allowing others to preach the gospel for us, but they preached a false gospel, and now we know that we have a responsibility to carry forth the Truth ourselves, 1Peter 2:5, *‘you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.’* So, departing from apostate churches, those faithful to God’s word have often ended up in small groups, or alone.

Some have found it easy to witness personally. Others do so publicly in groups. Widely scattered as we are, others promote the true gospel by publishing tracts, creating their own website, or maybe even by advertising the existence of one that proclaims the truth.

Websites that proclaim the truth often do not copyright their material so that others may pass it on. They don't feel the need for copyright because it is not *their* truth, but God's. Matthew 10:8, *'freely ye have received, freely give.'* Such websites would welcome your support, and if you advertise one in your area, you may no longer remain alone.

Whichever way you choose, you must be zealous and active in fulfilling Christ's Commission, for you have been called and chosen to serve others just as did Jesus Christ. Remember that when Christ returns with His bride she will have been, not just called or chosen, but also faithful. If we hope to be there with Him then, we cannot afford to remain silent with that precious gift we have been given, James 2:26, *'For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.'*

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