

About basic teachings of Christian faith :: Christians

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By Christians

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<http://christians.what.cc>

We grew up in various denominations or in atheistic surroundings but we have all come to realise, that different paths do not lead to one and the same destination. There are so many ways out there to choose from, so many people offering answers; Protestants, Catholics, Jehovah's Witnesses, Adventists, Methodists, Pentecostals, Buddhists, Moslems, atheists, ... The question is:

What is the right way, what is truth?

The answer you often hear is "Everybody has his own truth", or "No one can really know it". In our opinion, such statements contradict the fact that there is a reality. Either the earth is round or it is flat. It cannot be both. The one reality remains absolute and unchanged regardless of the way you look at it. It is the same with religious questions. When it comes down to it, it is not possible for two opposing and contradictory alternatives to exist simultaneously, one for you and one for me. If the reality is that there is a resurrection after death then there cannot be reincarnation. You cannot have both eternal life after death and annihilation of the soul. If matter was created by God it cannot have existed from eternity. Or let us consider some other questions to which contradictory answers cannot both be right: Is Jesus God, or is he not? Does God predestine people to condemnation, or does he not? Can a man fall away from God, or can he not? Is man sinful by nature, or is he not? Does hell exist, or does it not?

Do not such questions and others like them inspire everybody who wants to get to know God's nature to have a standpoint? Can we remain indifferent to these questions if we are interested in finding out how to live according to God's will?

To find answers to these questions we think that we need neither a new revelation nor a new special method of interpreting the Bible. Nor do we think that we are the source of the truth – we are far from being arrogant or from being perfect – but we believe that truth is accessible, because Jesus revealed it to the mankind.

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The majority of people hold the opinion that there is no absolute truth. In our society, the view that the truth is relative is the predominating ideology. Many people have become accustomed to this stream of thought and think that one's idea of truth is relative and has no validity for others, "What seems good to me is what is right!" However, if everything has the same validity, then in the end nothing matters; the standard according to which good and bad, right and wrong are measured, is completely missing. Everyone can find something to suit his own personal taste and needs. People paint their own picture of heaven, choosing the colours from a palette of their own desires and wishes, creating their own religion, which seems to fit well enough for the time being... In fact, religion is widely treated as yet another branch of the arts, like the world of fashion in which people shape trends and trends, in turn shape people.

However, God's way is different:

So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, {then} you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." (John 8:31–32)

In God's eyes, all people who do not seek the truth are captives. He wants to set us free from selfish desires and sexual sins, from vanity and envy, from the feeling of inferiority and pride, from arrogance and the urge to win the favour of other people. He wants to set us free from misleading teachings, which lead people to concentrate on themselves even more in the effort to save themselves. But he also wants to set us free from wrong ideas which people call Christianity, where people devote vast amounts of time and energy in striving for social justice but neglect the spiritual fight against sin. He wants to free us from teachings, which provide an assurance of God's forgiveness but forget that discipleship means to follow Jesus. He wants to liberate us from doctrines, which promise God's grace, but renounce obedience as legalistic. For this reason, we seek the truth, searching for God's will in both our lives and teaching.

This search for God's will led us to the question:

How does God want me to use my life? What should Christian community look like?

In the case of the first Christians in Jerusalem, it looked like this:

They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer... Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart,... (Acts 2:42 and 46)

For Christians in that time it was natural to meet and to deal with the teaching every day. It was a testimony of their great interest in, and love for God and their brothers and sisters. We too have this great wish to share our lives with our sisters and brothers in faith, to read the Bible together, and to take part in the joys and sorrows and spiritual fights with each other. We are very thankful that we can live in a time in which good transport and convenient working hours make daily community possible. Daily community is for us an expression of love and a result of the wish to live out what we believe, to devote our time to God and our brothers and sisters in faith. We use our time for what is important for

us.

If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. 1 John 4:21 And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also. (1 John 4:20–21)

This intensive fellowship helps us much to be able to strengthen one another in our struggles and practice the principle expressed in the Bible:

But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is {still} called "Today," so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin. (Hebrews 3:13)

We do not want to build superficial relationships or put on a good front for one another and by doing so avoid revealing the reality about ourselves. Instead, we confess our sins and weaknesses to one another in order to help one another in the fight for holiness according to Jesus' example.

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. (John 13:34)

This is the kind of love we want to live – not just on Sundays or at celebrations but every day alike; not only with particular friends but with anyone who wants to live in the truth.

See our homepage: <http://christians.what.cc>

We are people who got inspired about the life of the first Christians. We are writing about basic teachings of Christian faith.

Christian Debt Management

By Talbert Williams

Many Christians are uncomfortable with the idea of having debt, and having debt that is out of control makes the situation even worse. Many Christians feel that it is simply unacceptable to owe money, even for something as fundamental as a mortgage or an automobile. Other Christians feel that debt for living expenses is acceptable, provided that such debt is not "excessive."

Each individual's beliefs are their own, but no one enjoys being indebted to anyone else. A relatively recent development in the financial assistance industry is the introduction of debt consolidation and credit counseling firms that specialize in helping Christians with manage their problem debt.

Agencies that specialize in helping Christians with their problem debt are aware of these concerns, since such agencies are usually founded and operated by people who are Christians themselves.

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These agencies can assist with debt consolidation, and help their clients establish a schedule for debt repayment while still taking into consideration issues such as tithing.

In addition, some agencies can also provide spiritual counseling that may help their clients work through various issues relating to problem debt. All of this is done in a way that tries to be consistent with the teachings and precepts established in the Bible.

Most creditors are aware that debtors who enter a debt consolidation or credit counseling program are doing so in good faith and fully intend to pay their debts. Many creditors become more willing to negotiate more favorable repayment terms to such clients in hopes of avoiding the significant expenses of turning delinquent accounts over to collection agencies or waiting out the often drawn-out process of bankruptcy filings.

Those agencies that are experienced in assisting Christians with their problem debt are aware of these things and they have experience negotiating with creditors in order to work out a favorable settlement for their clients. They can help renegotiate loans, reduce interest rates, establish a more favorable repayment schedule or perhaps help you obtain a debt consolidation or home equity loan.

Many, if not most, of these firms work as nonprofit agencies; they are in business for the sole purpose of assisting other Christians to get their lives back in order.

If you are a Christian with a debt problem and you would feel more comfortable doing business with others who share your faith, you may wish to consult with a debt agency that specializes in helping other Christians.

Talbert Williams offers debt consolidation, debt reduction, credit card debt referrals and advice. For more information, articles, news, tools and valuable resources on debt solutions, visit this site:



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