

Top 10 Reasons Not to Be a Christian

I Corinthians 4:10-13

I. INTRODUCTION: I

1. **2** You may recall last Sunday evening's lesson was: ***What's So Great About Being a Christian?***
 - A. If you remember there were seven points in that lesson.
 - B. Each point was something good about being a Christian:
 - ☛ Christians are the recipients of God's love,
 - ☛ Christ died to save us,
 - ☛ Jesus is our great High Priest,
 - ☛ Christians find the true purpose and meaning of life,
 - ☛ Christians have fellowship with other Christians,
 - ☛ Christians find true peace in this life and in the life to come,
 - ☛ Christians alone have the assurance of heaven.
2. **3** The Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which, among many things, makes the rules for radio and television broadcasters.
 - A. The FCC has a rule called the "equal time rule."
 - B. The "equal time rule" is designed to maintain a fair playing field in the political realm.
 - C. "The equal time rule specifies that U.S. radio and television broadcast stations must provide an equivalent opportunity to any opposing political candidates who request it. This means, for example, that if a station gives a given amount of time to a candidate in prime time, it must do the same for another candidate who requests it, at the same price if applicable."
(Source: *Wikipedia*)
3. In last week's lesson we talked about reasons why one should be a Christian.
4. **4** So, applying the "equal time rule," this week's lesson will consider the opposite viewpoint: ***Top 10 Reasons Not to Be a Christian***

II. DISCUSSION:

1. **5** *A lot of Christians are hypocrites:*
 - A. This is a true statement: Many Christians are hypocrites.
 - B. This shouldn't be too surprising, because there are bad apples in every barrel.
 - C. The standard to which God calls us should not be judged by a few bad apples (e.g., politicians that abuse the Constitution).
 - (1) Jesus didn't like hypocrites any more than you and me (Matt. 23).
 - (2) Jesus called the "scribes and Pharisees" "hypocrites" seven times in Matthew 23.
 - (3) He also called them "blind guides" (vv. 16 & 24), "Fools and blind!" (vv. 17 & 19), "Serpents, brood of vipers!" (v. 33).
 - D. That there are hypocrites in the church is not a good reason to not become a Christian.
 - (1) To hide behind something requires that you are smaller than the thing you hide behind.

(2) Therefore, if one hides behind hypocrites as an excuse not to become a Christian he/she is smaller than the hypocrite!

E. Would you rather spend a few years putting up with a few hypocrites in church, or spend eternity with all of them in hell? Matt. 13:24-43 (parable of the wheat & tares)

2. **6** I am not good enough:

A. When one becomes a Christian, it is not because he, or she is good.

(1) In fact, we become Christians because we recognize that we are not good!

(2) That is what's wrong with a lot of preaching today: We can't feel "good" about ourselves until we first feel "bad" about ourselves (**Matt. 5:3**: "*Blessed are the poor in spirit*"; **Matt. 5:4**: "*Blessed are those who mourn...*").

B. We are all sinners; the redemption of the Christian is based on grace and faith, not one's own righteousness (**Rom. 3:21-28**).

C. If salvation was based on our own righteousness (i.e., we were good enough), nobody would be a Christian, much less be saved (Rom. 3:23; Jas. 2:10-11; **Isa. 64:6**: "...*all our righteousness are like filthy rags*;").

D. "I am not good enough" is thus a poor excuse; for no one will ever be good enough! That's the very point in becoming a Christian!

3. **7** I do not know enough:

A. Do you believe there is a God? Heb. 11:6

B. Do you believe that Jesus is His Son, who died on the cross to save us from our sins, and was resurrected to give us the hope of eternal life? **Jn. 8:24**: "*Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins.*"

C. Are you willing to accept Him as your Lord and Savior, to follow Him wherever He leads you? Acts 8:35, 37: "*Then Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart, you may.'* And he answered and said, '*I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*'"

D. His commands are simple: After hearing the gospel, you must believe, repent from your sins, confess Him, and be immersed in water (Rom. 10:8-18; Acts 2:38, 47; Gal. 3:26-27).

E. The rest will come with time and diligence (2 Pet. 1:5-11; Heb. 5:12-14: babes, milk, "*But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.*"). Spiritual growth is a life-long process.

F. Trust Him: Matt. 11:28-30

4. **8** It is too hard:

A. There's no doubt that being a Christian is hard work (Phil. 2:12).

B. Jesus warns us before becoming a Christian one should count the cost before committing themselves to Christ (Lk. 14:25-33; Why? **v. 33**: "...*whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.*").

C. But the rewards of being a Christian are more than worth the cost! **Rom. 6:23**: "...*the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*"

(1) However, you should know that choosing not to be a Christian will produce a life that is even harder (Matt. 11:28-30).

- (2) To help us, God has provided spiritual tools that enable us to grow as a Christian and overcome this life (2 Cor. 10:3-5; Eph. 6:10-18).
- (3) These tools are only available to Christians (Eph. 1:3).
- D. If we run away from the difficulties of being a Christian, we will run straight into a trapped life of misery and ruin, which will bring insurmountable and eternal difficulties (Matt. 7:13-14).

5. **9** I am too wicked, God could not forgive me:

A. What have you done?

- (1) Have you persecuted Christians?
- (2) Have you forced them to blaspheme their own Savior through slow and painful torture?
- (3) Have you persecuted them to the point of death?
- (4) If God can accept Saul, the persecutor of Jesus and Christians (1 Tim. 1:13-16; Acts 8:1-3; 9:1-22), and if He can forgive those who crucified His own Son (Lk. 23:33-34; Acts 2:36-47), then will He not readily accept you? Lk. 15:1-32

Mk. 2:17: *“Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”*

Lk. 19:10: *“for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”*

B. Jesus died for the sins of the whole world, including yours:

1 Jn. 2:2: *“And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.”*

1 Tim. 2:5-6: *“For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all...”*

6. **10** It means my family is going to hell:

A. Once someone realizes the truth of his condemned state, it does not take long before he considers the fate of his loved ones (Jn. 14:6; 8:24; Acts 4:12).

- (1) This realization often produces much worry and heartache.
- (2) Such a person may allow this concern to overpower his desire to save himself.
- (3) However, denying the truth will not change their true state before God (2 Cor. 5:10).

B. The only real hope of saving your loved ones is to first become a Christian, and then you can reach out to them with the gospel (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

(1) Ignoring the judgment to come does not make it go away (**Rom. 14:12:** *“So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.”*).

(2) Turning a blind eye only makes condemnation inevitable (Rom. 11:7-10).

C. One day everyone will confess that Jesus is the Lord and Savior (**Phil. 2:9-11:** *“Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*).

7. **11** God loves me, He won't condemn me:

A. Without doubt, God truly is merciful; He doesn't want any to be lost (2 Pet. 3:9; 1 Tim. 2:4).

- B. That is why He gave His Son to be sacrificed upon the cross, thereby giving us an opportunity to be saved (Jn. 3:16).
 - C. However, the Lord is also just, and He will one day return unexpectedly, as a “*thief in the night*” (1 Thess. 5:1-3; Acts 17:30-31: “...[God] now commands all men everywhere to repent, 31 because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”).
 - D. The door of opportunity will then be closed, and only those who are prepared will be saved (Matt. 25:1-13: parable of the ten virgins, 5 prepared, 5 unprepared; v. 12: “Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.”).
 - E. At that time, He will be “*revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” (2 Thess. 1:7-8).
 - F. This is God’s promise and warning. Will you ignore the warning? He “*cannot lie*”! Titus 1:2
8. **12** *I am a good, moral person; God would not condemn me:*
- A. On that last great day, there will be many surprised people, whom everyone would consider good, moral people.
 - B. Many might have even acknowledged Him as Lord.
 - (1) They may have even been baptized and be members of “the Lord’s church.”
 - (2) Some might have gone so far as to have performed many great things in His name.
 - (3) But notice what Jesus says about these folks: **Matt. 7:21-23**
 - C. But, those that have not obeyed and performed the Lord’s commands (His Word), Jesus will not recognize them, and they will be eternally condemned (Lk. 13:23-30).
 - D. Are you obeying the Lord’s commands? **Matt. 28:19-20:** “*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.*”
 - E. There were several good moral people in the book of Acts, but they all needed to obey the gospel to be saved!
 - (1) Ethiopian eunuch: **Acts 8:35:** “...*Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him.*” Why? Rom. 10:17; Jn. 8:24
 - (2) Cornelius the Roman centurion: **Acts 11:14:** He was told by God in a dream to call for the apostle Peter “*who will tell you words by which you and all your household will be saved.*”
9. **13** *I’m not ready, maybe tomorrow:*
- A. Some people know they should obey the gospel and become a Christian, but for various reasons they put it off.
 - (1) Felix, the Roman governor who heard Paul’s case procrastinated (**Acts 24:25:** “*And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee.*”).
 - (2) Some people want to finish sowing their wild oats; once they have had their fill of sin and its pleasures, then they plan to offer their ragged life to God.

(3) Such people underestimate God; He will not be tricked, or mocked (**Gal. 6:7-8**: “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”). We will reap what we sow.

B. In reality, the race is not to become a Christian before you die, but to repent before your heart becomes hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, unable to hear the word and repent (**Heb. 3:13**: “but exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘Today,’ lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”; Rom. 1:24, 26, 28; Lk. 8:4-15).

C. Procrastination is “playing chicken” with one’s soul and is a poor bargain! Matt. 16:26

10. **14** Me, myself and I:

A. Few, if any, would readily admit this is the real reason for delaying their conversion.

(1) They don’t want someone telling them how to live their life.

(2) They are so self-centered that they don’t have any room in their life for God.

B. At some point, all nine of the above reasons cease to be barriers, and they become excuses, masking their own selfish, stubborn rebellion as the true reason (Rom. 1:18-32).

C. However, such people will one day find themselves surrounded by all the selfish beings that ever lived, angels and people (Matt. 25:31-46).

D. How effectively will you be able to serve yourself and find happiness in that realm of eternal evil, darkness, and suffering, where nothing good dwells?

E. If you procrastinate, you will eternally regret it! Lk. 16:19-31

III. CONCLUSION: 15

1. If you are delaying becoming a Christian, then please answer the question: “Why?”

A. What stands in your way between you and the Lord?

B. Why will you not do what you know to be right?

2. How do you know this is not your last chance before you either die or your conscience becomes so hardened that it can no longer be pricked by the truth?

3. If something still stands in your way, please talk to me, or any Christian, about it.

4. There is nothing worth losing your one and only eternal soul (**Mk. 8:36-37**: “For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? 37 Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”).