

1. Fundamental Christianity.

A mouse brought up in a biscuit tin is not a biscuit. And never can be. Neither is a person a Christian who is brought up in a Christian home or in a Christian country. Christianity can NOT be inherited. God has no grandchildren. Christianity is a one-on-one relationship between one human being and Jesus Christ.

Christianity is a RELATIONSHIP. It is NOT a RELIGION.

RELIGION is man trying to find God or please Him. CHRISTIANITY is God coming down to find man. It is the only one available in the universe, which I will explain in a moment.

See this: you are unique in the history of the universe. Your body is unique. Your character is unique. Your personality is unique. Your looks are unique. Your soul signature is unique. Your DNA is unique. You cannot duplicate anyone else. No one can duplicate you. Your pathway through life is unique. You are a one-off. You are one-of-a-kind. You are eternal. Your body will die, but you will not. Jesus loves you just as you are. He came down from heaven especially for you, to rescue you. To save you. From what? From the isolation and appalling pain of hell, which you deserve because of your sin. Jesus died in your place. Now He wants to make a personal relationship with you. Surrender to His LOVE.

There are millions of people throughout this world who make Christianity into a religion. That is, they do all sorts of things that they think pleases God. And there are many Christian denominations, all of which have their own genre, their own ethos or doctrine. But I want to get to the root – the bottom line. CHRISTIANITY IS A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP of each individual with Jesus Christ. I John 5:11-12 *“And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.”*¹² *Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”*

If a Christian denomination does not include that, it is, basically, not Christian. You can call it a religion, but it will have been created and engineered – or changed - by man, not by God. But it is NOT what the Bible says.

See, anyone can be religious. We can be religious Moslem, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian, Shinto, Rastafarian or any of the side-lines, branches, of any of those. Anyone can dress up in special clothes and impress the population. That never finds God. **THE MOST RELIGIOUS** people the world has ever known were the Scribes and Pharisees of Jesus’ day. And he said to them, “Woe to you Scribes and Pharisees, Hypocrites.” (Matt 23). It is no good being religious. Especially without a relationship.

But NO ONE can duplicate a living relationship with Jesus Christ. That is the hub, the reality, the core of Christianity.

See this: Jesus is the perfect complement to every one of us. He matches every human personality in the universe. He is our mirror image. So, He satisfies the human soul like no one else in the universe can. We are all empty without Him. Some men think that they will find that complement in their wife or partner. Some women think they will find it in their man. NEVER. Only Jesus can fill that emptiness inside.

He is kind. Gracious. Forgiving. Gentle. Never condemnatory. Always the same. Perfect Friend. Always good. Always right. Never judgemental. Humble (He who runs the universe is perfectly appropriate to you inside). Only suggesting. Never dominant. Brings Peace in all things at all times. And, at times, fills you with joy and reconciliation. It is a relationship no one can take away. Not even death. Indeed, death removes all earthly hassles and difficulties, and Jesus will take to you His heaven for ever. You cannot get there without Him. With Him, all unselfish things are possible.

Of course, a Christian will join a local Church, with all its limitations. But never lose sight of your intimate relationship with Jesus. Wherever you are on earth, whatever you are doing, Jesus can steer you right because He lives inside you. He will never leave you or abandon you.

Being brought up in a Christian home DOES NOT MAKE YOU A CHRISTIAN. Joining a local Church DOES NOT MAKE YOU A CHRISTIAN. Becoming religious DOES NOT MAKE YOU A CHRISTIAN. Doing good, being kind, being compassionate DOES NOT MAKE YOU A CHRISTIAN. Only a personal intimate relationship with Jesus Christ makes a person a Christian. Then heaven is all yours.

How does one get this relationship?

The first and critical thing is REPENTANCE. We have to say sorry for all our stupidities – in word and deed. We have to repent of our complete way of life. None of it pleases God. Not even our good deeds. Especially not our good deeds. *“There is none righteous, no, not one.”* (Rom 3:10).

We need to bow before Jesus Christ and ask for His FORGIVENESS. *“Please, Lord, forgive me.” “Please God, help.”* We MUST come to the end of ourselves. Archbishop William Temple said, *“The only thing we can contribute to our salvation is the sin from which we need to be saved.”*

The thing is this: Jesus Christ has done EVERYthing that is needed to forgive you and get you to heaven. Ask Him. Jer 29:13, *“You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.”*. Rev 3:20, *“Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.”*

See this: EVERY Christian Church and denomination has a genre, an ethos. Roman Catholics. Anglicans. Methodists. United Reformed. Baptists. Pentecostals. And so on. I am not trying to destroy those denominations. But most of them clutter themselves up in their genre, and you can miss the base line – the real, the fundamental relationship with Jesus.

I am giving you the real.

For many centuries there has been a lie going round some of the Christian denominations. That lie is that a baby who has been christened (baptised) is now a child of God, is born again and is going to heaven. That is never in the Bible. Water Baptism is for BELIEVERS – of any age. A baby cannot ever be a believer. That is part of the unbiblical genre of some Christian denominations. Don't believe it. It never brings anyone into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Without Him inside, your sins cannot be forgiven.

Jesus is God the Son. He humbled Himself, and came from heaven to earth to die on a Roman Cross just to forgive you – any of you – for your sins and stupidities.

God sent Him. I tell you, THERE IS NO OTHER WAY TO HEAVEN THAN THROUGH JESUS. He is the ONLY way. He said, *“I am the way, the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”* (John 14:6). None of the world's religions will get you to God the Father. Most of the Christian denominations might even prove to be unhelpful – especially when they keep telling you to “BE GOOD”. No one can be good enough. Only Jesus. Jesus only. Him alone. God loves Him. He is the best human being who has ever graced this earth – perfect in every respect. Only His goodness inside will work.

Bow before Him. Thank Him. Serve Him. Give up your whole life to Him.

He will forgive. He will bless. He will fill your heart with joy, reconciliation, and wonderful peace. He will take all your burdens away. He will begin heaven in your heart, and you will never be the same again.

(Dick Bell).