

IS CHRIST LIMITED TO CHRISTIANITY?

Any thinking Christian must come to grips with the fact that many people of different religions and no religion lead satisfying, productive, Love-filled lives and are happy with themselves. The world would be so simple to understand if all Christians were “good” and all non-Christians were “bad”, but this is obviously not the case.

Now let me say before going further that I had a genuine born-again experience with Jesus Christ, and I believe that He rose from the dead and is the King of all creation.

But it didn't take me long to realize that if God is Love (1 John 4:8) and Christ is One with God (John 10:30), then anywhere Love is, so is Christ! And unless we are narrow-minded enough to believe that only Christians are capable of “agape” (the Greek word for sacrificial Love), we have a dilemma. How can Christ be present in people's lives that are not professing Christians?

I propose that the answer can be found in the Scriptures. Take, for instance, John 5:26, where Jesus is recorded in the King James version as saying “For as the Father hath Life in Himself, so hath he given to the Son to have Life in Himself.”

But what does it mean to have Life in yourself? What exactly does it mean? The only answer that satisfies me is that God Loves Himself, and this Love of Self is complete in Itself, not needing anything external to complete It. Further, I believe that this Love of Self is God Himself, the same God that has every hair on our heads numbered (!) (Luke 12:7), set the universe in motion (Genesis chapter one), knows all things (1 John 3:20) and controls everything that goes on in the world (Ephesians 1:11).

Now let's pause for a minute and consider this, because if this is true, then that means when we Love our True Self we have the power of the universe inside of

us! Further, if anyone, from any religion or no religion Loves Himself, then this person has found Christ, but simply calls Him by another name or no name at all!

For verification, look at what Paul said in Ephesians 3:20: "Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us!" Yes! The same power that created the universe is in us when we simply Love Ourselves, so much so that It can accomplish exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think! We can become anything that we imagine!

Praise God!

One thing that always puzzled me was when Jesus said, "Love your neighbor as yourself"(Matthew 19:19). The reason this puzzled me was that I thought, "well, that's all well and good and everything, but what if a person doesn't Love Himself? How then is he supposed to treat his neighbor?" And the answer of course is what we all know by living life, that you can't Love others unless you Love your Self.

But I was dismayed that precious little is said in the Bible about Loving Ourselves. If this is as all-important as this paper is saying, shouldn't it be prominent in the Bible? After all, Jesus never mentioned it!

I have two answers for this that satisfy me, and I hope they satisfy you. The first is that indeed it is in the Bible, albeit obscurely. It is in Ephesians 5:28, where Paul says "...he that Loveth his wife Loveth Himself". The second is that maybe this powerful Truth is, like many of Jesus's parables, not going to be easily explained in the Bible, because it is something we must figure out for ourselves!

I close this article by stating the interesting and important fact that the word "Christianity" is not to be found in the Bible. The word "Christians" is (Acts 11:26), but not Christianity. What are we to make of this? The obvious answer is that Christianity is just another religion that by doctrine, dogma, rules and regulations tries to become close to God (and it has worked for countless people over the centuries!). But since Christ is "above all" (Ephesians 4:6), this must include any religion, and therefore Christ is not limited to Christianity.

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