
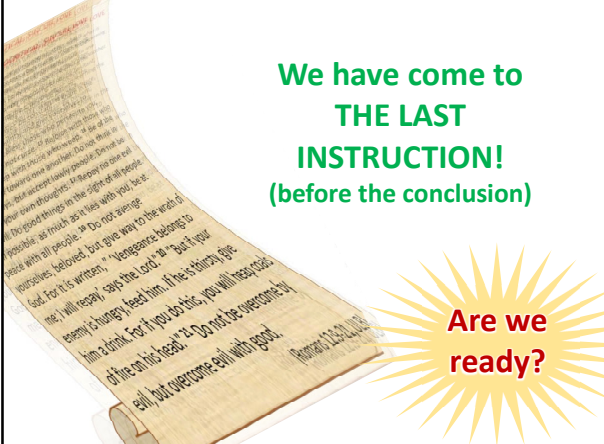


**LOVE**  
**Without Hypocrisy**  
 (in the book of Romans)

**62 – Are you ready?**

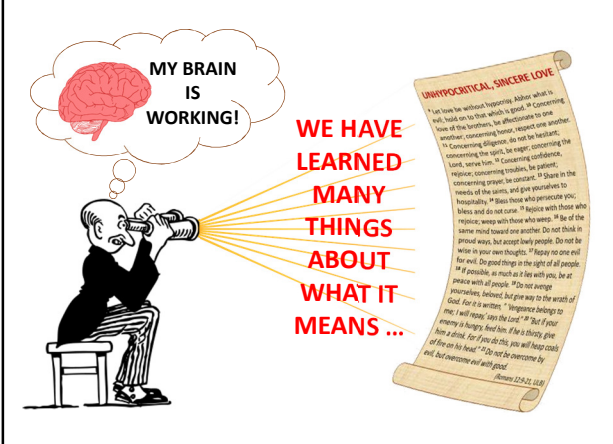


**In our study of  
 UNHYPOCRITICAL,  
 SINCERE  
 LOVE ...**



**We have come to  
 THE LAST  
 INSTRUCTION!**  
 (before the conclusion)

**Are we  
 ready?**



**MY BRAIN  
 IS  
 WORKING!**

**WE HAVE  
 LEARNED  
 MANY  
 THINGS  
 ABOUT  
 WHAT IT  
 MEANS ...**

**BUT DOES IT  
 MEAN  
 ANYTHING TO  
 US?**

- ✓ The issue isn't whether or not we *liked* the presentations
- ✓ Rather, it's this: Have the presentations had any effect on our conduct?

- ✓ Have we (and our love for God and people) changed any?
- ✓ Have we put forth the necessary effort that is needed for change?
- ✓ Do we think this is all for someone else, who "needs it"?
- ✓ Do we even care?

★ **Are we like the people of Ezekiel's day?** ★

[Talking together, and ] ... saying to each other, 'Come and hear the message that has come from the Lord.'

My people come to you, as they usually do, and sit before you to listen to your words, ...

Ezekiel 33:30b-31a (NIV)

... but they do not put them into practice. With their mouths they express devotion, ... Indeed, to them you are nothing more than one who sings love songs with a beautiful voice and plays an instrument well, for they hear your words but do not put them into practice.

Ezekiel 33:31b-32 (NIV)

**IT IS** →

**IMPOSSIBLE**

- ✓ NOT POSSIBLE
- ✓ CANNOT BE DONE
- ✓ UNOBTAINABLE GOAL
- ✓ WILL NEVER HAPPEN
- ✓ CONTRARY TO REALITY
- ✓ NO ABILITY
- ✓ NO POTENTIAL
- ✓ INCAPABLE

⇒ **FOR THIS PASSAGE ABOUT LOVE TO HAVE ANY EFFECT ON US...**

**UNLESS**

**UNLESS** We are willing to allow those effects to occur:

By putting forth the **TIME** and **EFFORT** that are necessary for changing:

- ✓ Our values and priorities.
- ✓ The way we use our time (especially our "free" time).
- ✓ The types of things we choose (when we have "freedom of choice").

★ This is the ONLY way we can grow in unhypercritical, sincere love. ★

**SO...** After all these verses...

**ARE YOU DIFFERENT?**

And if you claim to be different...

**SO...** After all these verses...

**ARE YOU DIFFERENT?**

And if you claim to be different...

↓

➤ Or is it change that others can **SEE**?

YOUR WORD, O LORD, HAS FOUND A PLACE IN MY HEART!

AND IT CHANGES THE WAY I LIVE!

YES, I SEE IT IN HIS LIFE!

**UNHYPOCRITICAL, SINCERE LOVE**

- ✓ Hating evil, loving good.
  - ✓ A great love for other Christians.
- ✓ Valuing other Christians above yourself.
  - ✓ Rejoicing in hope.
  - ✓ Eager to pray.
- ✓ Solidarity (oneness) with other Christians.
  - ✓ Sharing in the joys and sorrows of others.
- ✓ Paying back with goodness.
  - ✓ Not lazy, but eager to serve God in all you do.
  - ✓ Patient when going through trials.
  - ✓ Blessing those who persecute you.
  - ✓ Associating with the lowly.
  - ✓ Equality with others, not superior to them.
  - ✓ Kindness that people can recognize.
  - ✓ Peace-making.
  - ✓ Leaving injustice for God to deal with.
- ✓ (One more command, plus the conclusion.)

**NEXT TIME:** We begin with the last instruction (other than the concluding statement).

**MOST LIKELY:** Your response will be the same as before.

**IN OTHER WORDS**

**IF...** you repented previously...

HELP ME TO BE MORE LIKE YOU!

You will have a spirit of repentance with this last instruction.

**IF...** you did not repent previously...

It will be "business as usual."

You might as well bring a pillow.

I'M GETTING A CRAMP IN MY NECK!

**Your Mission...**

**IF YOU HAVE NOT REPENTED PREVIOUSLY:**

- You have one more opportunity to repent in preparation for the final instruction.

★ **TURN AROUND!** ★

We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn ... to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them.

Acts 14:15b (NIV)

### IF YOU HAVE REPENTED PREVIOUSLY:

- You already know that repentance was made possible by the power of God (who you relied on for strength).
- You can look forward to what's coming, knowing that God will use it to bring even more repentance into your life!

★ **BECOME MORE FOCUSED ON THE  
"STRAIGHT AND NARROW"!** ★

But small is the gate and narrow the road that  
leads to life, and only a few find it.

Matthew 7:14 (NIV)

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# Your Mission...

**God does not want us to "guess" about our salvation. He has given us everything we need in Scripture, to know for certain whether or not we are saved.**

**But we must be willing to pay attention to what he says!**

## ***ARE YOU A CHRISTIAN?***

The characteristics mentioned below have to do with "lifestyle" - what your life is characterized by. It is possible for a Christian to temporarily act like a non-Christian, just as it is possible for a non-Christian to temporarily act like a Christian. But in the long run, each will be recognized by his "fruit" - the characteristics of his normal day-to-day living.

### **Things that prove *nothing*.**

- You can be "enlightened" to the truth, and can "taste" how good God's Word is ... and still not be a Christian. (Hebrews 6:4-6)
- You can experience (at least in part) many of the blessings that a Christian would experience - God's gifts and an awareness of the Spirit's presence ... and still not be a Christian. (Hebrews 6:4-6)
- You can be "bought" by the Lord (at least in some sense of the word); you can be influenced by "the way of righteousness," so that you are on the "straight way," escaping the "world's

corruption," and "clean" ... and still not be a Christian. (2 Peter 2)

- You can listen to the Word of God, be very "religious," and even claim to have "faith" and "wisdom" ... and still not be a Christian. (James 1-3)
- You can claim that you know God and that you have fellowship with him, love him, and are in the "light" ... and still not be a Christian. (1 John 1:6, 2:5, 9, 11; 4:20)
- You can claim that Jesus is "Lord," and even perform many spectacular works ... and still not be a Christian. (Matthew 7:21-23)
- You can look "righteous" to others ... and still not be a Christian. (Matthew 5:20, 23:28)
- You can have love for your friends ... and still not be a Christian. (Matthew 5:43-47)

### **Things that prove you have *no basis* for calling yourself a "Christian" - though you may be a fake and *think* you are saved.**

- If your life is characterized by "fruitlessness" ("thorns and thistles") ... you have no basis for claiming you are a Christian. (Hebrews 6:7-8)
- If you are lazy (instead of diligent) in following the examples of godly people of the past (such as the examples in Hebrews 11) ... you have no basis for claiming you are a Christian. (Hebrews 6:12)
- If your life is characterized by "shrinking back" when you experience trials (so as to avoid them) ... you have no basis for claiming you are a Christian. (Hebrews 10:39 + context)
- If your life is characterized by the absence of discipline (from God) ... you have no basis for claiming you are a Christian. (Hebrews 12:8 + context)

- If your life is characterized by religious activities and rituals, but not by obedience to God, self-sacrifice and love for neighbor (including "neighbors" you don't like) ... you have no basis for claiming you are a Christian. (1 Samuel 15:22; Psalm 51:16-17; Isaiah 58, etc.)
- If your life is characterized by the absence of growth in the Christian character traits (listed in 2 Peter 1:5-7) ... you have no basis for claiming you are a Christian. (2 Peter 1:5-11)

### Things that prove you *are* a Christian.

- If your life is characterized by "fruit" that pleases God ("a good crop") ... you are a genuine Christian. (Hebrews 6:7; also Luke 8:15, etc.)
- If your life is characterized by a type of love toward God that expresses itself in a love toward other Christians (and you are "diligent" in expressing that love) ... you are a genuine Christian. (Hebrews 6:9-11; 1 John 2:10; 5:1-3)
- If your life is characterized by genuine love for your enemies (a love that expresses itself in what you do) ... you are a genuine Christian. (Matthew 5:43-47)
- If your life is characterized by faith (trust in God) and patience, especially when you experience trials ... you are a genuine Christian. (Hebrews 6:12; Hebrews 10:39 + context)
- If your life is characterized by the presence of discipline (from God) and you interpret "hardship" (when it is present) as one aspect of that discipline ... you are a genuine Christian. (Hebrews 12:7 + context)
- If your life is characterized by the desire to obey God (in other words, if his laws have been "imprinted" on your heart and mind) ... you are a genuine Christian. (Hebrews 8:10-12)
- If your life is characterized by an increase or growth in the Christian character traits (listed in 2 Peter 1:5-7) ... you are a genuine Christian. (2 Peter 1:5-11)
- If your life is characterized by not only hearing the Word, but by obeying it ... you are a genuine Christian. (James 1:22, Luke 11:28)
- If your "religion" and your "faith" result in a change in your conduct - an increase in holiness and love toward others - and in obedience to God ... you are a genuine Christian. (James 1 and 2)
- If your "wisdom" results in a humble expression of love and goodness to others ... you are a genuine Christian. (James 3:13-18)
- If your life is characterized by "light," by obedience to God, and by "remaining in the truth" ... you are a genuine Christian. (1 John 1:7, 2:3, 6)
- If your life is characterized by doing what is right, by purifying yourself, and by not continuing in a lifestyle of sin ... you are a genuine Christian. (1 John 2:29, 3:3, 7, 9)
- If your faith results in obedience, if it is associated with a repentance that expresses itself in godly actions ... you are a genuine Christian. (Romans 1:5; 16:26; Acts 26:20b, etc.)
- If your life is characterized by learning to turn away from ungodliness and worldly passions, so that you live (increasingly) in a self-controlled, upright and godly manner ... you are a genuine Christian. (Titus 2:11-12)
- If your life is characterized by fighting the impulses of the "flesh" (or "corrupt nature") rather than by giving-in to those impulses ... you are a genuine Christian. (Romans 7 and 8)