

- 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)

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)