

## Quasi Christian-Mix and Match

Review-What does “Quasi” mean? What does Christian mean?

Last week we talked about a “Borrowed Faith”—Why is it important that your faith not be borrowed, that it is your own?

This week we are talking about another symptom of being a Quasi Christian

This lesson is called Mix and Match

How many of you remember this? *Build-a-bear pic*

What about these? *Buffet pics*

What do they have in common?

What are some ways we might treat out faith like one of these?

Listen to this song...pay close attention to the words and I want to discuss some of the concepts brought up here. (Chris Tomlin-Who You Are To Me)

What is this song talking about? Is there anything that bothers you about this song?

I think this song brings up a key point for our lesson today...**Who is God/Jesus? To you?**

If someone asked you this, what would you say? What if someone asked a non-believer? What would they say? How would your actions answer this question? Can others tell who Jesus is to you without you literally telling them?

To be honest, this song really bothered me when I first heard it. I know it’s catchy and fun to sing along with but lyrics matter and the lyrics didn’t quite sit right with me. Now I’m okay with the song now but only when I make sure that I look at it from a particular perspective.

There are two sides of the coin here: 1) As we discussed last week, it is very important to have a personal experience with Christ, one in which you place your faith and trust in Him. I also think it is important to recognize God working in your life and around you, as this song points out. However, there are two words that have bugged me in this song since I first heard it...to me. 2) The other side to this coin is what concerns me and is primarily what we are talking about today. I believe there is a danger in saying, “this is what Jesus is to me” or “this is what God is to me.” In following this train of thought, we can begin to build our own definition of who God is, who Jesus is, even how the Holy Spirit works. We begin to define God based on our experiences. As sinful humans, we have a tendency to leave out things that are uncomfortable, difficult, different than us.

Take a look at these pictures.

What does the bible say about what Jesus looked like? Not much but we do find in **Isaiah 53:2** that He was not an attractive man, not ugly but just plain, unnoticeable. We can assume from this that He looked like every other Jewish man, probably more like the latter three pictures. Did He have long hair? Probably not. Long hair was not common among Jewish men.

Why are the first three way more common than the second three? Maybe, we are uncomfortable at the thought that Jesus didn’t look like us. So, what happens is, Jesus becomes a version of me, based on the things that I prefer and find attractive.

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I use this as a simple example of how our thoughts of what Jesus was/is can drastically differ from what the Bible says Jesus was/is. As Christians, we often extend this thought process through all scripture. We can pick and choose, mix and match, what parts of scripture we are comfortable with. We then ignore the parts that are challenging to us, the ones that convict us. In doing this, we kind of become our own Jesus. Our own version at least. We ignore the sin that Jesus gave His life for. We begin to believe we have a better way. The Bible tells us where this thought process leads.

**Proverbs 14:12** *There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.*

What else does the Bible say leads to death?

**Romans 6:23** *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

What is the fatal flaw in mixing and matching the parts of scripture we like or are comfortable with? What would cause us to do that? **Because our priorities are mixed up.** What should be number one in our lives? How about number two? Number three?

**Matthew 22:37-40** <sup>37</sup> *Jesus said to him, “ ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ <sup>38</sup> This is the first and great commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ <sup>40</sup> On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”*

The problem with mixing and matching is our priorities become ME-OTHERS-GOD, completely opposite from God's plan for us. We must change our thought process.

**Colossians 3:2** *Set your affection on things above, not on things on earth.*

It boils down to one question...Who do you trust? God? Yourself?

**Matthew 6:33** *But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be given to you.*

This statement comes after Jesus is telling His followers not to worry about food or clothing or any other need. Get your priorities straight and God will take care of the rest. He is telling us where our trust should be placed.

Let me ask this another way, because as teenagers, most of you don't have to worry about your daily needs anyway, your parents or guardians or someone takes care of those for you...**Who's a bigger deal? God or you?** How do your actions show either?

**Exodus 15:11** *“Who is like You, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like You, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?”*

**Romans 3:10-12** <sup>10</sup> *As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one; <sup>11</sup> there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks after God. <sup>12</sup> They have all turned aside; together they have become worthless; there is no one who does good, no, not one.”*

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Which one of us sounds like a bigger deal according to scripture? God, of course. It would benefit us greatly to remember that. If we truly believe that, it will show in our lives.

***Philippians 2:12-13**<sup>12</sup> Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but so much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. <sup>13</sup> For God is the One working in you, both to will and to do His good pleasure.*

What do you think “work out your own salvation” means?

When you go to a gym to “workout”, do they give you a set of muscles? No, you are there to grow and develop the muscles you already have. The same concept applies to this passage. Some will use this as support for works based salvation but that is not what it is saying. This is talking about how you live your life as a saved person. This is telling you how to be a real Christian (definition #2). This is telling you where your priorities should be.

On the surface, picking and choosing the parts of scripture that you like might not seem like that big of a deal. Some may say, “as long as you have the important parts right, you should be good.” So, what are the important parts? The parts about not cheating, lying, or murdering? The parts about loving God and loving others as yourself? The parts about not stealing? The parts about how Jesus loves you? How Jesus loves everyone? Most people are onboard with these parts. But what about the parts about giving? Some of you have jobs. Are you giving at least 10% of what you earn to God? The Bible doesn’t say if you are under 18 and living at home that you are excluded from tithing and giving an offering. What about the parts that talk about gossip and how they are just as bad as murder or homosexuality? It’s acceptable in our culture so we ignore that it’s not acceptable to God. What about the parts that talk about a woman’s role in the church? Or a man’s responsibility in the home? Or your responsibility as a young Christian? Are those important parts? How do we know?

We know because of what the Bible says about itself...

***2 Timothy 3:16** All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness,*

All scripture, not just the warm fuzzy parts...

***Hebrews 4:12** For the word of God is alive, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

Does that sound comfortable, easy, painless? No. We must understand that following Christ will not be easy or comfortable or painless. In fact, Jesus describes it in **Luke 9:23** as taking up our cross daily. He compares being a Christian to dying every day. We can’t choose the parts of the Word that are convenient for us, that don’t cause conflict, that don’t challenge or convict us.

A Quasi Christian floats along on the surface, never going deeper with their relationship with Christ, avoiding things that challenge their selfish actions. They have learned to pretend, and some, quite convincingly.

Are you pretending? Are you playing church? Are you playing Christian? Are you a Quasi Christian?

Don’t be a Quasi Christian!