

True religion

- **Christ's Example**
- **What is the duty of the Church?**
- **Isaiah 58: 1-11**
  - 58 "Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their rebellion and to the descendants of Jacob their sins. 2 For day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God.

- They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them. 3 ‘Why have we fasted,’ they say, ‘and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?’  
“Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers. 4 Your fasting ends in quarrelling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high. 5 Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for people to humble themselves? Is it only for bowing one’s head like a reed and for lying in sackcloth and ashes?

- Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? 6 “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? 7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter— when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood? 8 Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.

- 9 Then you will call, and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I. “If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk, 10 and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. 11 The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

## ● James 1: 26-27

- 26 Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.  
27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

## James 1:26 - 27 Amp

“If anyone thinks himself to be religious (piously observant of the external duties of his faith) and does not bridle his tongue but deludes his own heart, this person's religious service is worthless (futile, barren).

External religious worship [religion as it is expressed in outward acts] that is pure and unblemished in the sight of God the Father is this: to visit and help and care for the orphans and widows in their affliction and need, and to keep oneself unspotted and uncontaminated from the world”

## ● James 2:14-23

- 14 What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? 15 Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. 16 If one of you says to them, “Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,” but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? 17 In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. 18 But someone will say, “You have faith; I have deeds.” Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by my deeds. 19 You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that—and shudder.



- 20 You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless? 21 Was not our father Abraham considered righteous for what he did when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? 22 You see that his faith and his actions were working together, and his faith was made complete by what he did. 23 And the scripture was fulfilled that says, “Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness,” and he was called God’s friend.

## ● Matthew 25: 31 – 46

- 31 “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. 34 “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, 36 I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’

- 37 “Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? 39 When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’  
40 “The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’  
41 “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. 42 For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, 43 I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.’

- 44 “They also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?’  
45 “He will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.’  
46 “Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life.”

- **What does God command?**
- **Deuteronomy 10:16- 19**
  - 6 Circumcise your hearts, therefore, and do not be stiff-necked any longer. 17 For the Lord your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who shows no partiality and accepts no bribes. 18 He defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing. 19 And you are to love those who are foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt.

## ● Micah 6:6-8

- 6 With what shall I come before the Lord and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?

7 Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

8 He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

## • Micah 6:6-7 (The Message)

- How can I stand up before God  
and show proper respect to the high God?  
Should I bring an armload of offerings topped off with  
yearling calves?  
Would God be impressed with thousands of rams, with  
buckets and barrels of olive oil? Would he be moved if I  
sacrificed my firstborn child, my precious baby, to cancel  
my sin?  
8 But he's already made it plain how to live, what to do,  
what God is looking for in men and women. It's quite  
simple: Do what is fair and just to your neighbour, be  
compassionate and loyal in your love, And don't take  
yourself too seriously— take God seriously

## The Root and the Fruit

'...A tree is known by its fruit.' [Matthew 12:33](#)

In a letter to George Whitefield, a leader of the Great Awakening, Benjamin Franklin wrote: 'I can only show my gratitude for those mercies from God, by a readiness to help His other children and my brethren. For I do not think that thanks and compliments, though repeated weekly, can discharge our real obligations to each other, and much less those to our Creator. You will see in this, my notion of good works, that I am far from expecting to merit heaven by them. By heaven we understand a state of happiness, infinite in degree and eternal in duration. I can do nothing to deserve such rewards...The faith you mention certainly has its use in the world. I do not desire to see it diminished, nor would I endeavour to lessen it in any man. But I wish it were more productive of good works than I have generally seen it; I mean real good works; works of kindness, charity, mercy and public spirit; not holiday-keeping, sermon-reading or hearing; performing church ceremonies, or making long prayers filled with flatteries and compliments...The worship of God is a duty; the hearing and reading of sermons may be useful; but if men rest in hearing and praying, as too many do, it is as if a tree should value itself for being watered and putting forth leaves, though it never produce any fruit.' In aiming to declare that salvation is by grace and not works, never forget that saving faith always produces good works! Faith is the root of salvation. But deeds of generosity and kindness are the fruit of salvation-and 'a tree is known by its fruit



- What can we do?

# The correct attitude

- NKJV Isaiah 58:10 -11:

- If you extend your soul to the hungry  
And satisfy the afflicted soul, Then your light shall dawn in  
the darkness,  
And your darkness shall be as the noonday.  
The Lord will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in  
drought,  
And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered  
garden,  
And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.

# 1 Corinthians 13: 1- 3

- If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

# Amplified:

- 1 IF I [can] speak in the tongues of men and [even] of angels, but have not love (that reasoning, intentional, spiritual devotion such as is inspired by God's love for and in us), I am only a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.
- 2 And if I have prophetic powers (the gift of interpreting the divine will and purpose), and understand all the secret truths and mysteries and possess all knowledge, and if I have [sufficient] faith so that I can remove mountains, but have not love (God's love in me) I am nothing (a useless nobody).
- 3 Even if I dole out all that I have [to the poor in providing] food, and if I surrender my body to be burned or in order that I may glory, but have not love (God's love in me), I gain nothing.

- Giving of yourself. Commitment and sacrifice
- Not for selfish gain
- With love
- Allowing God to be our source.

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## AUTHOR: Candice Towndrow

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