True Or False Christianity

By Don MacIntyre

"Thomas said unto Him…how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by Me" (John 14:5-6).

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matt. 7:13-14).

It seems there is an unwritten law in this world that for every true and original thing, man has to try and make a copy of it. As we all know, imitation anything never tastes, looks, or works nearly as good as the real thing. Incredibly, man has even carried this same preoccupation into the realm of the Christian religion. There is Christianity and there are the man-made copies.

Genuine Christianity is not the modern-day religion calling itself Christianity, composed of Sunday morning bench warming, leading a life of lethargic emptiness. That is a copy, and a poor one at that.

True Christianity is the following of Christ which transforms drunkards into men of stature; which melts the hearts of social and corporate climbers and causes them to give their life a sacrifice for the poor and needy; the kind of Christianity which causes that storekeeper to run a keen eye over his shelves asking himself if each of his products is pleasing to God, and it not, then removing them, placing a higher value on pleasing God than pleasing the wallet.

It is the Christianity that challenges men and women to search their lives candidly and look at themselves through God's eyes, making whatever changes His Word demands. The Christianity that probes and prods, that exposes the hidden things of the heart, uncovering sin and error, leading people to confess the truth of their condition so God can deliver them from the power of sin to live a new life full and free.

This is Christianity! This is the powerful salvation Jesus brought. This is the Gospel that was preached by Jesus, Peter, John, Wesley, Spurgeon, Moody, Finney and countless others. It is real, it has depth, it has substance. It is not mere lip service. It is a living-Bible-life.

Real Christianity is by definition radical, powerful, constantly demanding our response. It runs contrary to popular opinion. It refuses popular fashions and popular trends, preferring simplicity. It does not cover up error, either in itself, or in others, but is compelled to seek the truth about itself and to speak the truth equally to all, out of love for the truth, for God, and for mankind, upholding the impoverished and defenseless, convicting the selfish and the hypocrite.

These are some of the things true Christianity is. It all starts with a conviction and shame followed by sorrowful repentance and humility, asking an all-powerful God to forgive and deliver

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us from our sins, which He does for Christ's sake. He then floods with overwhelming joy that born-again soul as he realizes God is real and has miraculously, instantly changed him and given him a new life here and an eternal home in heaven.

The man-made copy leaves out the conviction, the shame, the repentance, and the humility. Failing to deliver that soul from the sins that plague him, it attempts to convince him that Jesus has not the power to deliver His people from all sin, so he is bound to sin more or less each day just as he always has. It tells him he should accept Jesus as his Savior anyhow, and that signing a card or a membership register, doing some good works, attending church, giving a tenth of his money and going through ceremonies will usher him into heaven.

As I said at the beginning, imitation anything never tastes, looks or works nearly as good as the real thing. The only way to the real Heaven is by the real born-again salvation experience, followed by the real Christian life through the grace of the real Jesus Christ. The man-made copy leads to that other horrible place. Where are you headed?

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