

The Marks or Evidences of a True, Born-Again Christian

See II Corinthians 5:17; 13:5; Galatians 5:22-25; Ephesians 2:8-10; 4:17-24; I John 5:13.

We often say that Christianity is not a religion. It is a relationship. There is much religion in the world that uses the name Christian. Being a true Christian (i.e. a true believer and follower of Christ) does not depend on any denominational affiliation. Church is an important part of a Christian's life, but the life of the Christian depends on the reality of personally knowing God through His Son Jesus Christ. Fire may destroy my birth certificate, but the proof that I was born and am alive today is the evidence that resides within me and comes out of my life into the world. Even so, we must not depend on church sacraments, ordinances, and certificates. Who we are and what we are like demonstrate Christ, living His life through us. So, let's highlight the statements in the book of I John that identify and clarify the marks of a true, born-again Christian.

Relationship with Scripture

- Fellowship in the Gospel – the doctrine of the Apostles: I John 1:3; 4:1-6,14-15.
- Fulness of Joy and assurance of salvation from the Word of God: I John 1:4;5:10-13,

Responsible Attitude and Actions about Sin and Obedience

- Walking in the Light: I John 1:5-7.
- Confession of Sin: I John 1:8-10.
- Keeping His Commandments: I John 2:1-5; 3:22-24; 5:1-3. [*Not sinless perfection, but rather taking heed to the commands of God.*]
- Attempting to Walk as Christ Walked: I John 2:6.

Realities of Your Love Life

- Not Hating Your Brother & Loving Your Brother – two sides of the same coin. We must focus on both aspects: I John 2:8-11 (cp. John 13:34-35); 3:11-15,16-19; 4:7-12,19-21; 5:1-2.
- Not Loving the World: I John 2:15-16. See Matthew 16:24-26; Galatians 6:14; Philippians 1:21. [See "*Relationship to the World*"]
- Supreme Love for God: I John 2:17 (cp. Matthew 22:36-38); 4:16,19; 5:2-3.
- Fellowship with the Local Church: I John 2:18-19 cp. 1:7.
- Dwelling in God's Love: I John 4:16-19; 3:16-19. [*God's love fills our thoughts, desires, words, and deeds. See John 17:20-23,26; Ephesians 3:14-19; Jude 1:20-21.*]

Relationship with the Holy Spirit

- Unction / Anointing – *The indwelling of God’s Spirit as a guide and teacher:* I John 2:20-21,27; 3:24; 4:13.
- Not Denying the Father and the Son – continuing in the Truth: I John 2:22-24; 5:1,5,9-10. [See “*Relationship to the World – Confessing Christ to Others*” – I John 4:13-15.]
- Led by God’s Spirit to do righteousness: I John 2:29; 3:7. [*More than just keeping commands. Integrity and practical righteousness in your life.*]
- Led by God’s Spirit to pursue purity: I John 3:3. [Dealing with the heart – *Internal motivation for correction & improvement cp. I Corinthians 6:12-20; II Corinthians 6:14 – 7:1; I Peter 2:11*].
- Not allowing or permitting sin in your life. I John 3:4-10. [*Sin may happen, but it is not tolerated or loved. See Psalm 66:18; Romans 12:9; I Corinthians 13:4-7.*]
- Assurance / Peace in Your Heart: I John 3:18-21; 4:17-18.
- Answered Prayers: I John 3:21-22; 5:13-15. [*Not just saying prayers.*]
- Intimacy with Christ: I John 5:11-12. [*More than just imitating Christ or obeying His word – fellowship with the living Christ. See Galatians 2:20.*]

Relationship to the World

- The World Does Not Love Us: I John 3:1,12-13; 4:5-6. [In “*Realities of Your Love Life*” it is noted that we do not love the world (I John 2:15-16 cp. Galatians 6:14).]
- Confessing Christ to Others: I John 4:13-15. [The Spirit’s power to witness to men.]
- Faith that Overcomes the World: I John I John 5:4-5. [See *John 16:33; Galatians 1:3-4; 2:20; Romans 8:31-39; James 4:1-10.*]

Relationship to Satan

- Satan Does Not Get the Final Victory: I John 5:18; 2:13-14; 4:4 cp. 3:7-12.

We are conquerors through Christ. See Romans 8:28-39; 16:20; Colossians 2:6-15.

We do not fraternize (fellowship / associate in a friendly way) with Satan or the dark things of Satan. See II Corinthians 6:14 – 7:1; Ephesians 4:27; 5:8-13; 6:10-13; James 4:7; I Peter 5:8-9; Revelation 12:10-11.