

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 fact that I am alive is proof that I was born. Even so, you must not depend on church sacraments, ordinances, rituals, and certificates to declare that you are a Christian. If you are born again, you are alive in Christ. He is living His life through you. If He is not living His life through you, then you are still dead in your sins, no matter what anyone tells you. Are you truly a Christian? Let's highlight the statements in the book of I John that will 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 cp. II Timothy 4:10. [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; 1:7 (Acts 2:41-47; Ephesians 4:1-6,11-16).
- 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 – God’s Spirit teaches, equips, and empowers us: **I John 2:20-21,27** (to discern truth & error); **3:24** (to obey); **4:11-13** (to dwell in His love cp. Romans 5:5). See addendum following the sermon: “Notes on Unction and Anointing.”

Note the following evidence of the work of God’s Spirit in our lives:

- Continuing in the truth; not denying the Father and the Son; standing with God against the world: I John 2:19-27; 5:1,4-5,9-10. [See “*Relationship to the World.*”]
- Practicing righteousness: I John 2:29; 3:7. [It’s about ethics – *more than just keeping commandments. Integrity and truth are essential values in your life.*]
- Pursuing purity: I John 3:1-3; 4:12-19. Through God’s Word (“*behold/see...know...this hope...*”), we seek to be perfected by His love. See *I Corinthians 6:12-20; II Corinthians 3:18; 6:14 – 7:1.*
- Not allowing or condoning sin in our lives: I John 3:4-10. [*Sin may happen, but it is not tolerated or loved, as before. See Psalm 66:18; Romans 12:9; I Corinthians 13:4-7.*]
- Assurance / peace / love in our heart: I John 3:18-21,24 cp. 4:13,16-18; Romans 8:14-16.
- Answered prayers: I John 3:21-22. [*Not just saying prayers.*] See I John 5:14-15 cp. Ephesians 6:18; Romans 8:26-27.
- Intimacy with the Father and His Son: I John 1:3; 5:11-12,20. [*More than just believing doctrine, or just imitating Christ, or mere compliance with laws – We have fellowship with the living God.*] See John 17:3; Galatians 2:20; 4:6; I Corinthians 2:12-16.

Relationship to the World

- The World Does Not Love Us: I John 3:1,11-13 (II Timothy 3:12); 4:5-6. [In “*Realities of Your Love Life*” it is noted that **we** do not love the world either (I John 2:15-16 cp. Galatians 6:14)].
- Confessing Christ to Others: I John 4:1-3,13-15 (Romans 1:14-16 – See “*Continuing in the truth*”).
- Faith that Overcomes the World: I John 2:17 (cp. John 3:16-21; 6:27-29); 5:4-5. See John 16:33; Galatians 1:3-4; 2:20; Romans 8:31-39; James 4:1-10; John 15:1-5.

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.

Addendum – Notes on Unction / Anointing

I John 2:20,27 (24)

The word “**Anointing**” (*unction*) is from the Greek word “**Chrisma**.”

It means to apply a substance on someone/something to designate them/it as holy – set apart for God’s use.

It is a metaphorical reference to the anointing with oil, in Old Testament Israel, that the priests, kings, and some prophets received.

Christ anoints His people with His Spirit, giving us spiritual gifts, knowledge, understanding, power, and authority. See Revelation 1:5-6; Ephesians 4:7-8,11-12; Romans 12:3-8.

Through His anointing, we are able to serve God and represent Christ to others in the world.

Noting other related Greek words:

“**Christos**” = *Christ* (the “Anointed One” cp. Hebrew equivalent = “Messiah.”)

“**Charis**” = *Grace / kindness* (unmerited / unearned favor)

“**Charisma**” = *gifts* (i.e. spiritual gifts)

What does this mean to us?

The Anointed One (Christ) has anointed us. He showed us grace. He gave us grace. He gave us the presence of His indwelling Spirit. We now have spiritual gifts that we can use to minister and to share with others.