**Keys to Living a *Christ-like* Life**

I find it quite interesting- and telling, that after recounting great men and women *of faith* from the past (*i.e.* Old Testament)in Heb.11, when it comes to living faithfully (*“lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and… run with endurance the race set before us”*) the writer points us NOT to their example, but to *Christ- “fixing our eyes* ***on Jesus*** *the author and perfecter of faith…”* Heb.12:1-2. Simply put: To be a *Christian,* look to *Christ-* He is your example, standard, and goal. So, let’s consider a few keys to living a *Christ-like,* or *Christian,* life:

* Jesus knew **from where He came** and **where He was going, John 8:14; 13:3.**  If/when we *know* (realize and admit) that we have *“come forth from God”-* that we are not the result of some *cosmic happy accident* but are instead *divine descendants* (cf. Acts 17:26-28), and that, when this life here is over, our *“spirit(s)* will *return to God who gave” them,* Eccl.12:7, then we **know *who* we are!**
* Jesus knew **why He was here, Luke 19:10.** Fulfilling this purpose included a few others: 1) *preaching the kingdom of God,* Luke 4:43; and, 2) *to die on the cross* as the *propitiation for sin,* John 12:27. Therefore, to live *like* Christ, we must understand and likewise fulfill comparable purposes: 1) to be *“crucified with Christ”* so that *“it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I no live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me,”* Gal.2:20; and, 2) to be *“faithful men, who will be able to teach others also,”* 2Tim.2:2. Do you know ***your purpose*** as a “Christian”? If so, you know ***why* we’re here!**
* Jesus knew **failure was a possibility, just not an option, Heb.4:15.** If sin was not possible for Jesus- that the *divine* part of His nature (cf. Col.2:9) made it impossible for the *human* part to sin, His example becomes meaningless to/for us. But such is not the case because Heb.4:15 says He can *“sympathize with our weaknesses”* precisely because He was *“tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.”* He *could* sin, He just *didn’t*. If He had sinned, His sacrifice on the cross for our sins would have also been meaningless. Now think about us. In our admitted dependence upon divine *grace,* do we become spiritually complacent regarding the commands to *“Become sober-minded as you ought and stop sinning”* (1Cor.15:34a), or to be *“like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, ‘You shall be holy, for I am holy’”* (1Pet.1:15-16). Giving in to temptation is certainly a *possibility* for us, but it shouldn’t be considered an *option.*  If we know this, then we know ***how* we are supposed to live!**
* Jesus knew and kept **the most important thing(s) the most important thing(s), Matt.22:37-39.**  Look, I get it. We all struggle to keep what we know are “the most important things” *in our heads* “the most important things” *in our lives.* Jesus succeeded where we often fail. But we can and should (often) *re-evaluate* and *refocus* our priorities to keep “the main things” “the main things” and not let all the “other things” of life take over our lives! *“But seek* ***first*** *His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you,”* Matt.6:33. If we do this, **we are living the “Christian” or Christ-like life!**

So *“fix your eyes on Jesus”* and *think* like He thought, *know* what He knew (to the degree possible of course), *feel* like He felt, and *do* what He did… and don’t ever take the “Christ” out of “Christian”! (Philip C. Strong; Viking Drive Church of Christ; 3791 Viking Drive, Bossier City, LA; online at vikingdrivechurchofchrist.com; email to mrpcstrong@hotmail.com)