

# The Religion Of The Individual

Intro: Phi. 2:12 <sup>12</sup> Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” Christianity is a universal religion: it is for all men everywhere and in every nation.

1. This fact is emphasized by:
  - a. Heb. 2:9 <sup>9</sup> But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.”
  - b. The Lord’s great commission:
    - i. Mat. 28:19-20 <sup>19</sup> Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: <sup>20</sup> Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.”
    - ii. Mark 16:15-16 <sup>15</sup> And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. <sup>16</sup> He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
    - iii. Luke 24:46-47 <sup>46</sup> And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: <sup>47</sup> And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”
    - iv. Acts 1:8 <sup>8</sup> But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.”
2. But the Scriptures also teach that Christianity is an individual religion, it is a religion of and for the individual.
  - a. Notice again the great commission: Mark 16:15-16 <sup>15</sup> And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. <sup>16</sup> He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”
  - b. Acts 2:38-40 <sup>38</sup> Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. <sup>39</sup> For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call. <sup>40</sup> And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.”
  - c. Gal. 6:5 <sup>5</sup> For every man shall bear his own burden.”
  - d. Phi. 2:12 <sup>12</sup> Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”
3. Communism is a great opposing force to Christianity.
  - a. This is true because communism is interested in destroying individualism.
  - b. One cannot conquer the world without destroying this God ordained human trait.
  - c. And one cannot destroy individualism without destroying the teachings of Christ.

## I. CHRIST’S TEACHINGS HAVE EVER BEEN ADDRESSED TO THE INDIVIDUAL.

### A. Many of Christ’s outstanding lessons were given to but one person:

1. The new birth; John 3:1-8 <sup>1</sup> There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: <sup>2</sup> The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. <sup>4</sup> Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother’s womb, and be born? <sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and *of* the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. <sup>6</sup> That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. <sup>7</sup> Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. <sup>8</sup> The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.”

2. True worship; John 4:23-24 <sup>23</sup> But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. <sup>24</sup> God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship *him* in spirit and in truth.”

**B. Too, though He often preached to multitudes, He addressed His lessons about individuals to individuals.**

1. His parables and illustrations indicate the one.
  - a. Mat. 16:26 <sup>26</sup> For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?”
  - b. Parable of the talents; Mat. 25
  - c. The good shepherd sees the one sheep astray and rejoicing in heaven when found; Luke 15:4-7 <sup>4</sup> What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? <sup>5</sup> And when he hath found *it*, he layeth *it* on his shoulders, rejoicing. <sup>6</sup> And when he cometh home, he calleth together *his* friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. <sup>7</sup> I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance.”
  - d. Parable of the prodigal son and elder son; Luke 15:11-32
2. Jesus never expected entire nations, states, or families to follow Him; rather, He was and is concerned with the individual.

**C. Now, let us make application of these principles.**

## II. BECOMING A CHRISTIAN IS AN INDIVIDUAL MATTER.

**A. The steps in conversion are of such a nature no one can obey them for us.**

1. The way of salvation.
2. Gal. 6:5 <sup>5</sup> For every man shall bear his own burden.”

**B. In light of New Testament teaching on personal responsibility, many religious doctrines now being taught by man are seen to be false.**

1. Baptism for the dead; 1 Cor. 15:29 <sup>29</sup> Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?”
2. Praying someone out of purgatory.
3. Infant sprinkling.

## III. CHRISTIAN WORSHIP IS PERSONAL

**A. Others cannot attend the worship services for us (some try to satisfy their own conscience when one member of the family is present).**

**B. Too, each item of worship is an individual, personal matter.**

1. Singing, praying, giving, the Lord's supper, and Bible study.
2. Worship is more than simply “going to church.”

## IV. ALL PHASES OF OUR CHRISTIAN LIVING ARE INDIVIDUAL

**A. The development of the Christ-like character should be of great concern to each child of God**

1. 2 Pet. 1:4-11 <sup>4</sup> Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. <sup>5</sup> And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; <sup>6</sup> And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; <sup>7</sup> And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. <sup>8</sup> For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup> But

he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. <sup>10</sup> Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: <sup>11</sup> For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

2. Many people are too concerned with what the church as a whole has done, instead of what the individual member has done.
3. We cannot go to heaven or hell on the merits or demerits of others.

**B. Phi. 2:12** <sup>“12</sup> Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.”

## V. THE JUDGMENT IS PERSONAL.

**A. Rom. 14:12** <sup>“12</sup> So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”

**B. 2 Cor. 5:10** <sup>“10</sup> For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad.”

**Conclusion:** A realization of these great truths would cause people to cease hiding behind others. It should cause each person to intensify his efforts to work out his own salvation.