

This brief essay is for two kinds of Christians. The first being the new Christian. The one who has believed the Gospel, repented of their sins, been baptized and has begun attending a local church. The second kind of Christian this is for is the one who simply feels stuck in their life. These Christians work Monday to Friday, putz around the house on Saturday, go to church for an hour on Sunday, and do it all over again. Perhaps this person has been doing this for a decade or more and they may or may not have thought, "Is this it?" For these two Christians, you must know your responsibility to Jesus. The question, "now what?" must be answered.

Being a Christian is not simply a "get out of hell free" card. Being a Christian does not simply mean that your ticket is punched, and you have fire insurance and the flames of hell will never touch you. However, that is great and wonderful news! But what we are after in this essay is looking for what the Gospel means now. If all God was after was your security from hell-fire through the forgiveness of sins, what in the world are you supposed to be doing in the meantime? Where is your life going right now and why? What are you supposed to be doing?

The Gospel is not only the sacrificial death of a substitute for the forgiveness of your sins. It is that, but it is also more. God has always been in the business of saving sinners from their sins. The Old and New Covenant include the remission of sins through the shed blood of a substitute.

The Good News of Jesus Christ is that Jesus died, yes, but that Jesus also rose from the dead and reigns over all things at the right hand of God the Father. This is in almost every sermon in the book of Acts (see Acts 2.33-36; 3.22-23; 4.8-12; 7.56; 10.39-43 and so on).

In other words, the enthronement of Jesus is just as much the Good News as His death on the cross, it a whole package. Christ is King, and you have been baptized into union with Him. Your name is John Christian, or Sue Christian. You belong to Jesus. His death was the means by which you are forgiven of your sins, and His resurrection is the means by which you live your life now (see Romans 6.1-4).

So, back to our question of Christian responsibility. What are you supposed to be doing now? In a limited view of salvation, the only goal is the forgiveness of sins. If your sins are forgiven, you have nothing else to do but to coast by through history until the Rapture, or until you die. Is that really all that God is after? Of course not! (see 1 Corinthians 15.20-28)

Jesus gave a command to the church before He ascended to His throne, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matthew 28.18-19). It is unfortunately a common understanding that this command only applies to those in "the ministry." But this separates the identity of Christians. Christ is your king, just like Christ is the king of your pastor or the missionary. It is not just for "the ministry" to make disciples. It is for us all. Now, to make disciples, you must be a disciple, and this is your responsibility.

The first thing you are responsible to do is to find a church where you are being taught to obey all that Jesus commands. Find a church that cherishes the whole Bible and teaches it as authoritative. Jesus tells us that if we love Him, we will obey Him and to obey Him we must be taught all that He has commanded (see John 14.15, 23-24). If you are part of a church that avoids the Old Testament or considers the Law of God as antiquated and irrelevant, you are obligated to leave. If a church ignores parts of the Bible willingly, you are

obligated to leave. The *entire* Bible is given by God for the purpose of teaching and training in all good works, and that includes Leviticus just as much as it includes Romans (see 2 Timothy 3.16-17).

The second responsibility of the Christian is to grow in obedience to the commands being taught (see Romans 3.31). You are not simply to be taught what God's commands are, but you need to be doing His commands (Romans 2.13; James 1.22-25; 2.18-24; 1 John 3.7; Revelation 20.12). In all of your endeavors, from day to day, we must incorporate the ethics and commands of God into all we do. Take, for example, the command to give thanks for all things (1 Thessalonians 5.18). How are you doing with that? Do you give thanks in all circumstances? Do you give thanks when the grass in your yard dies? How about when your friend dies of cancer? Do you give thanks when your enemy at work gets promoted and you don't? This is a command of God and it is to be obeyed, so how are you doing with this obedience?

This is what it means to be a Christian. You are forgiven unto obedience. Being a Christian means obeying God, and it is our Christian responsibility to grow into maturity, to be more like Jesus. In union with Jesus, you have died and been resurrected now (and you will later too!) and so, now in union with Jesus you are to grow up into that identity (Ephesians 4.15; Colossians 1.10, 18; 2 Peter 3.18).