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We continue steadfastly in prayer, and in the  
ministry of the word.

Acts 6: 4 ASV

## Nominal Belief

### A Message for Adults

Week of Sunday 4 June, 2017 A.D.  
(Anno Domini – In the year of our Lord)

Sunday 10 Sivan, 5777

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- Through the centuries, millions have been more anxious to spread the name and philosophy of Christ than to share the experience of Christ. It is a strange paradox but true. Have you seen that bumper sticker with icons for the differing religions spelling out *Coexist*. Religion is big business directed toward making nominal Christians; a person who feels an interest in the general subject of religion, and is sincerely and perhaps zealously devoted to Christianity, as a philosophic choice. He or she is a Christian as

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another is a Hebrew or a Muslim. They have right to the name, but have never known the inward power of Christ in personal experience. They're not Christian! <sup>21</sup> Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven. Matthew 7: 21 ASV

- We like to think one administration is Christian and another worldly. That is wishful thinking. Politicians know the value of a Christian stance and they use it. Legislation may be passed with

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a Christian flavor. Laws may provision to further Christian effort. Money may be appropriated toward these ends. All of this is exciting. I support it. Still this does not prove the state, considered as a whole community, is penetrated with the Spirit of Christ, and determined and governed in all things by Christian principles. It proves the state, in public capacity, allows prayers, texts, and conscience joined to the Christian sect. This distinction means the government is not Hebrew or Muslim

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or Shinto. Never has there been a Christian nation.

- Just as a Ford salesman must do his best to turn a General Motors customer; or Republican try to convert a Democrat, I'm not opposed to conversion! It must be. I evangelize! There is no other way. The apostles proceeded in this way. I do my best to turn men to Christ. 9 Confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord Romans 10: 9 ASV  
Declaration for Christ is a start. Outward rites do not make a Christian. Baptism, breaking of

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bread, and tithing are not the new birth, you experience from the power and authority of Holy Ghost regeneration. <sup>12</sup> But as many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on his name: <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. John 1: 12-13 ASV Inward regeneration changes human nature. There is more than joining some Christian denomination!

- Can you find a community with zero crime and

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and no one thinking in terms of personal advantage? Do you know one community, where people love God supremely and one another as themselves? Yes, moral and religious tones of certain communities improve over others. I applaud and approve of such. They are to be commended and recommended. Even under the veneer of Christian philanthropy and ethics there is always a subsurface of petty jealousies, chicanery, mean and bad passions, and unredeemed human nature. It is easy to be carried away by wishful thinking, but efforts

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have been made. They have failed.

- Denominations are Christian in name only! Don't misunderstand! Each contained thousands of individuals who knew Christ and lived for Him alone. Some number far more than others. Doctrines of some are more favorable than the tenets of others. But denominational history makes sad reading. They have been bent and twisted by the world. They adopted policies favorable to public recognition. New Testament directives have



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been compromised! Yes, they have right to the name; they promote Christianity. They are a buffer to atheism. But read the New Testament and compare whatever denomination you call your own. Do you find exception?

- Isn't it manifestly absurd to make Christ and His gospel answerable for the conduct of those who have never known the power to become what He alone gives. Bring me a man who is a "son of God" by the authority of Jesus Christ, and who has brought his whole life and mind into

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the subjection of Christ, and I admit it would be perfectly fair to try the merits of that man's confession by his daily conduct. But in the name of reason and common sense, why charge to His gospel inconsistencies and vices which originate in want of Christianity?

- Where should you look for Christians? Everywhere! They are in this real world. They have always been present.
- Text: John 3: 1-12 ASV
- Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named

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Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: <sup>2</sup> the same came unto him by night, and said to him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that thou doest, except God be with him. <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, 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 a second time into his mother's womb, and be born? <sup>5</sup> Jesus

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answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born of water and 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 anew. <sup>8</sup> The wind bloweth where it will, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. <sup>9</sup> Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things be? <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou the

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teacher of Israel, and understandest not these things? <sup>11</sup> Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen; and ye receive not our witness. <sup>12</sup> If I told you earthly things and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?

- Did Nicodemus know Jesus and do the will of God?
- Text: John 19: 39-42 ASV

<sup>39</sup> And there came also Nicodemus, he who at

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the first came to him by night, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. <sup>40</sup> So they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. <sup>41</sup> Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new tomb wherein was never man yet laid. <sup>42</sup> There then because of the Jews' Preparation (for the tomb was nigh at hand) they laid Jesus.

- Is there more than profession? Is there more

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than belief? Is there more than sincerity? Is there more than zeal? Is there more than sobriety and virtue? Do you have the approval of Jesus upon your life? You must know Jesus to do the will of God like Nicodemus.

*You are invited to join us!*

*We continue steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and prayers every Sunday at 10:00 a.m.*

*We study doctrine and pray every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.*