

These are days of the light, fast, easy things: days of hanging back, of non-involvement, of non-commitment, of (dare we say it?) getting lukewarm. Today we see quick marriages, easy divorces, and ready abortions. We even have “lite” snacks, Bud Lite...and, unfortunately, “Christianity-Lite” and “Church-Lite”!

We are to be lights in the world (Matthew 5:14), but we are not to make “light” of our Christianity. When we take our calling lightly, we are practicing, in effect, “Christianity-Lite”!

Recently my father died, and, as he lay dying, I was surrounded for three weeks by people I had not seen for years: relatives, old friends, church members, former members, and various ministers. For whatever reason, it seemed that I suddenly became fair game and a “lightning rod” for redress, correction, and evaluation. It became readily apparent that virtually all these well-meaning people had different sets of beliefs, although most professed to be “Christians.”

unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life?” God’s Word tells us right from wrong and it is incumbent upon His saints to obey Him.

The practice of justifying one’s actions with a “Don’t judge me!” attitude is what is referred to as “Christianity-Lite” profession without commitment, belief without foundation, faith without works (James 2:20).

Following are a few of the many statements I heard at this time of duress. How would you answer them?

“There is no love in the Ten Commandments. I’ll argue that with anybody. The Old Testament is replaced by the New Covenant. The law was nailed to the cross” (this by a minister).

“I do not believe all the Bible is inspired. I never proved it. I felt as though I were brainwashed” (this by an ex-member).

“Buddhism has led me to Christ. Everyone knows Christ traveled through the

‘Christianity-Lite’

“This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away” (2 Timothy 3:1).

I soon discovered that it is “OK” to profess Christianity...as long as you do not try to live it. If you live it, you are accused of “judging” the ones who do not. “We all worship God in our own way,” it is excused, “so we must not judge one another.” “Judge not, that ye be not judged” (Matthew 7:1) is quoted as a watershed for doing one’s own thing with a clear conscience. Although it is true that we are not to condemn as to anyone’s ultimate fate or their worthiness before God, we are, however, to discern, evaluate, and make determinations. First Corinthians 6:2,3 asks, “Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are ye

East and appropriated the tenets of Buddha as His own” (proclaimed by a relative).

“The reason they kept the Sabbath, Holy Days, and dietary laws is that they were Jewish. We are not Jewish!” (this by a gainsayer).

“He is in heaven now smiling down at us. We need to live for him now” (from a stranger).

“Christmas is OK. God understands. Why, we’re not worshiping pagan gods. There is only one God; we all worship the same God no matter what you call Him” (spoken by a former member of God’s church).

And finally, “The Feast of Tabernacles re-established? Oh, God, I hope not!” (by a former member).

These statements are reproduced to arouse your awareness of a few of the attitudes that are extant. How would you have responded? Could you have answered these statements, and if not, why not?

Brethren, spiritually we are nearly alone out there! God's church is turning "gray." And unless we are able to pass the baton to a new, enthusiastic generation of Christians, we may be just one generation away from apostasy and darkness. When a man—a false prophet—appears and stands in the Holy Place, proclaiming that he is God and encourages men to take his mark, his name, or the number of his name, millions will follow (Revelation 13:16-18)! How can you know you will not be deceived?

Second Thessalonians 2:2-4 warns us "That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (cf. Revelation 17:16-18).

Christian, are you scripturally prepared to respond to questions like these, to answer those who may sincerely ask you? And to stop the mouths of skeptics and gainsayers at a moment's notice (Titus 1:9)? If not, why not?

First Peter 3:15 encourages us to "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."

We do not need Christianity-Lite or Church-Lite today! More than ever, we need "Christianity-Heavy," "Christianity-Substantial," with heartfelt church commitment. We must constantly stretch toward spiritual maturity-not maintain spiritual infancy (2 Peter 3:18).

While more and more in these last days are becoming mere Bible professors, God's people are to be Bible believers-and doers of the Word. Christ said, "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). Again, He said, "Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Mark 7:7). It is not up to mankind to define sin. God's Word tells us what sin is—"the transgression of the law" (1 John 3:4)—it is up to us whether we will obey or disobey.

Could you prove to a trinitarian from the Bible that God is not a trinity? (*Write for the free booklet, Who, What, Is God?*)

Can you explain from the Scriptures that we do not go to heaven when we die, and show the true state of the dead? (*See the article, Immortality-God's Gift to the Saints.*)

Can you show that we are not "born again" now? (*Write for the free booklet, Born From Above-or Born Again?*)

Are you able to go through your Bible from beginning to end and show that God's people are to keep God's Sabbath and Holy Days? (*Write for Sunday, Saturday—What Difference Does It Make?*)

If not, why not?

Can you explain these things, and others, from your own Bible, or do you feel you may be stepping onto a spiritual land mine? Beware! Until you know a thing well enough that you can teach it to

polite about it. A simple "Get thee hence!" will do (Matthew 4:10). Far too many Christian soldiers have fallen because they did not heed this plain and simple admonition!

Christ said, in Luke 18:8, "Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" Think. Why would He have asked that if there were not some possibility of it coming to pass?

Let us return to the basics. Get back into the Word of God; back into our church literature that expounds it; back into true Christian fellowship. We need to put on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:11) and fight the good fight. We need to know and know that we know! (*Be sure to write for our free booklet, How to Study Your Bible, to get started or to renew your commitment.*)

We need "Christianity-Substantial" in these last days—weighty, unwavering, and intense. We need committed Bible reading, Bible study, prayer, and

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others, you do not know it well enough yourself (Hebrews 5:12)! We desperately need to get back to the basics (Jude 3)!

Too often we become so "familiar" with the basics that we become "bored" with them and our ears itch for some new thing (2 Timothy 4:3). Too many have thought that they knew the basics well enough to "dabble" in strange doctrines with immunity and found out the hard way that they did not know them nearly as well as they thought they did. (In this vein, study Matthew 24:4,24; Acts 20:30; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15; Ephesians 4:14; 1 Timothy 4:1; and Hebrews 13:9). We need to prove—and reprove—what we think we know (1 Thessalonians 5:21)!

The doctrine of a progressive revelation after the apostles is not found in the New Testament. We are to defend the faith once delivered with all the strength we can muster, both by true doctrine and good example of life. Second John 10 warns us, "If there come any unto you" whether it be a friend, gainsayer, minister, or "an angel from heaven" (Galatians 1:8) "and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house" into your mind "neither bid him God speed." In other words, you do not even need to be politically correct or

meditation—not Laodicean "Christianity-Lite" (Revelation 3:16)! Matthew 6:33 exhorts us, "But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." There is nothing more awesome or important than your own salvation. We are encouraged in Philippians 2:12 to "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8). When—not if—satanic attack comes in any of its many disguised forms, will you be found wearing the whole armor of God? Or will you become another spiritual casualty?

"Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not" (Luke 12:40). When the King of Glory comes again, will you be practicing "Christianity-Lite," or will you be ready?

All Scripture quotations were taken from the King James Version. This article is adapted from a sermonette delivered by the writer at this year's Feast of Tabernacles in Land Between the Lakes, Kentucky. AG