

HAS CHRISTIANITY FAILED?

1 Corinthians 15:50-58

Introduction:

- 1. Frequently, skeptics write in “Letters to the Editor.”**
 - a. They make a common charge, “Christianity has failed.”**
 - b. Some see war, hatred, and poverty and blame Christianity.**
- 2. Has Christianity really failed?**

Discussion:

- I. MOST DO NOT KNOW WHAT CHRISTIANITY IS.**
 - A. It is not a political, military, or economic system (Jn. 18:36).**
 - B. Its mission is spiritual and eternal, not physical and temporal (Mt. 20:28; Lu. 19:10; Mk. 16:15, 16).**
 - C. It is not a “forced” religion.**
 - 1. Muhammed’s followers spread their faith by the sword.**
 - 2. Charlemagne “baptized” 5,000 Germans at sword point.**
 - 3. Converts to Christ are only made by Gospel preaching (1 Cor. 1:23; Mt. 28:19; Jn. 6:44,45).**
 - 4. Man is free to accept or reject God’s will (Josh. 24:15).**
 - D. It is not Roman Catholicism or Protestant denominationalism.**
 - 1. Bertrand Russell listed evils committed in the name of Christ in his book “Why I Am Not A Christian.”**
 - 2. Christ has but one church as revealed in the New Testament; all others are counterfeit (Mt. 16:18; Acts 2).**
- II. CHRISTIANITY MUST BE APPLIED TO BE EFFECTIVE.**
 - A. Who can improve upon the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5, 6, 7)?**
 - B. The greatest ethics are useless if not put into practice.**
 - 1. An atheist who owned a soap plant argued with a Christian that Christianity could not be true for it has failed to eliminate all the evil in the world. As they talked, they came upon a group of dirty boys at play. “I don’t believe in soap for there are so many dirty people in the world,” the Christian said. “But soap must be applied to be effective,” the atheist protested. “Exactly,” replied the Christian, “and so must Christianity!”**
 - 2. True Christians are “doers and not hearers only” (Ja. 1:22)**
- III. WHY IS THERE SO MUCH EVIL IN THE WORLD?**

- A. God created man as a free moral agent (Ge. 2:16,17; Ja. 1:13-15).
- B. Satan continues to tempt man to do evil (Mt. 4:1-11; 1 Pe. 5:8).
- C. God is working out His purposes in the world (cf. Habakkuk).
- D. Ultimately, justice shall prevail (Eccl. 12:13, 14; Acts 17:30, 31).

IV. THIS WORLD IS NOT MAN'S PERMANENT RESIDENCE.

- A. Political philosophers dream of the perfect human society.
 - 1. Plato envisioned it in "The Republic."
 - 2. Sir Thomas Moore dreamed of it in "The Utopia."
 - 3. Karl Marx thought his communist system would bring it about.
 - 4. Premillennialists look for it in "millennium."
- B. Christians look for a "new heavens and a new earth" (2 Pe. 3:10-13; 1 Pe. 1:3-5).

V. WHAT DOES CHRISTIANITY HAVE TO OFFER A SAD WORLD?

- A. Forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:7).
- B. Fellowship with God (Rom. 5:1).
- C. Hope (Rom. 8:24; Col. 1:27).
- D. An abundant life now (Jn. 10:10).
- E. Eternal life in the age to come (Mk. 10:28-31).

Conclusion:

- 1. Is it honest to say Christianity has failed?
 - a. No! It is a perfect system given by a perfect God to imperfect men and women.
 - b. The majority of those who claim to be Christians have rejected the true Christianity of the New Testament.
 - c. The failure is man's, not God's.
 - d. Instead of criticizing, skeptics need to show us a way that works better.
- 2. Why not become a Christian according to the New Testament?