

## WORSHIP

### SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

Only a God Like You, This is Amazing Grace, How Deep the Father's Love, 10,000 Reasons

## WELCOME

**Following Jesus.** Do you consider yourself a follower of Jesus? If so, in what ways is this manifested in your life?

## WORD

### MATTHEW 5:17–20

<sup>17</sup>“Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill. <sup>18</sup>For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished. <sup>19</sup>Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. <sup>20</sup>“For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.”

The industry of counterfeit brands is a multi-billion-dollar business in the world. But the most serious phenomenon of counterfeits is the rise of counterfeit Christians. It is most costly because it has an impact on one's eternal destination.

Many call Jesus, Lord, but the sad truth is He never really knew them from the beginning (**Matthew 7:21–23**). This is because to begin with, they never had a relationship with Him. These so-called Christians may go to church regularly and may even be part of a small group and other ministries. However, if they are still living in secret sins and don't truly follow Jesus, it is possible that what they have is only religion. For if Jesus is truly our Lord, we will truly follow Him. This is the evidence that separates the genuine from counterfeit Christians.

How can you tell whether you are a genuine or counterfeit Christian? It is not based on religion or attending church gatherings. Do not be deceived, the unrighteous will never inherit the kingdom of God (**1 Corinthians 6:9–11**). However, this is not a license to judge others. Rather, we should examine ourselves if we are a genuine follower of Jesus (**2 Corinthians 13:5**).

### GENUINE VS. COUNTERFEIT CHRISTIANS

Genuine Christians understand that they need to follow moral standards, but they are not to be legalistic about it, for we are not saved by obeying the Law. Jesus did not come to abolish the Old Testament Law but to fulfill it (**Matthew 5:17–18; Luke 24:44**).

We know that the commandments of God are timeless and never obsolete. Genuine Christians follow the moral etiquettes of the Law of God. Counterfeit Christians, on the other hand, continue to follow their own selves instead of the will of God.

Genuine Christians are not perfect, but they are being transformed day by day into Christlikeness by the grace of God. Their old life has gone, the new has come (**2 Corinthians 5:17**). Their desire now is to please God. On the other hand, counterfeit Christians think that they are saved by grace already so it is okay for them to remain in sin (**Romans 6:1–2**). They go to church but live with secret sins.

Genuine Christians are neither legalistic that are rigid in following the Law (with dos and don'ts) nor are they licentious people who abuse the grace of God that brought forgiveness for all sins.

Genuine Christians are concerned about the heart, the inner holiness. They do not go to the church to impress people but to learn from God and worship Him. Counterfeit Christians are like the Pharisees who are hypocrites according to the Bible, whose service to God is only external (**Matthew 23:27–28**).

### TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS IS INTERNAL

Apart from the Bible, who or what shall tell us about what is right and wrong? True righteousness comes from the standards given by God.

True righteousness is internal not external. True righteousness is the Law of God, while external

# WORD (cont'd)

righteousness is the legalistic law of the Pharisees. External law says, do not murder, but Jesus says, anyone who is angry at his brother commits murder (**Matthew 5:21–22**). Legalism says do not commit adultery, but Jesus says anyone who looks at a woman with lust commits adultery (**Matthew 5:27–28**). Legalism says, love your brothers and hate your enemies, but Jesus says, love your enemies (**Matthew 5:43–44**).

True righteousness is not hard, it is impossible apart from Jesus. A genuine follower of Christ acknowledges that true righteousness is so high, incapable of being reached by sinners like him. When he looks at God's Law, he admits how he turns against the will of God. He does not give any excuse for his sin as merely a lapse of a mistake, but admits that it is a gross violation of the divine commandments of God.

A genuine follower of Jesus admits that he is a sinner who needs a Savior (**Romans 3:20**), believes that Jesus is his Savior, and calls upon Jesus to be his true righteousness (**Galatians 3:24**). He puts all his trust and his confidence in Christ alone (**2 Corinthians 5:21**). He understood that he is saved by grace and is called to obey God, not out of duty but out of love (**Galatians 5:13**).

As followers of Christ, we are no longer under the law but because we are saved we now obey the law. We do not obey the law to become Christians but because we are Christians we obey the law.

The whole Law is fulfilled in one word – love (**Galatians 5:14**). Loving God and loving others is our greatest motivation for true righteousness. If we are genuine followers of Jesus, we will obey His commandments because we love Him (**John 14:15**).

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

*(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)*

1. **Observations.** What are your observations from **Matthew 5:17–20** about the Law and true righteousness?
2. **For Real.** Would you say you are a counterfeit or genuine follower of Jesus? What makes you say so?
3. **I Will Follow Him.** What specific actions will you do radically to genuinely follow Jesus Christ in your life?

# WORKS

## PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Examine yourself today.

Are you a genuine Christian based on the Bible and as per discussion today?

Who are following you? Are they following you as you follow Jesus?

Share to people in your pray-care-share list what it means to be a genuine follower of Jesus Christ.

## WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

### I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

### II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of Public Servants and a God-centered Philippines
- Repentance and Salvation

### III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

### IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

### V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends