

21T11a Secret Agent Christians (Part 1)

Hello my friends. Thanks for joining me at the PUNLA Coffee Table. So, get your coffee or tea. Get comfortable and let's talk. If what I say is nonsense, then it's definitely from me. If anything I say brings you wisdom, then that's just God using me.

I've titled this series "Secret Agent Christians". I heard a pastor talking about "Secret Agent Christians" recently. He was talking about two groups of Christians; Disciples and Secret Agents. He described the "Secret Agent Christians, as Saved Christians but not disciples of Christ. Those who have done the minimum required for entry to heaven. This really confused me.

The term Christian literally means a follower of Christ. The term disciple means Follower. So Disciples of Christ and followers of Christ are the same Christian. The early Christians were also call followers of "The Way." So, can you be Christian or saved, and not actively following Christ.? When did the term Christian get redefined.? I had lots of questions.

So, the engineer in me wanted to understand the origin of this and was it possible to just be saved with no effort to be a follower of Christ or Disciple.

So, I thought I'd share my process with you.

First, I pray. I ask God to guide my process and bible verses and stories usually come into my mind. I read those first

Second, I use an internet search. I search for phrases, topics or words about my question. I read some commentaries but mostly I look for bible verses to cross-reference. Then I read and let God guide me.

So before we start please understand this is my process. My brain approaches things a little different than most. I am a researcher, so I search for answers. I do not try to find support for my preferred answer. That is an important distinction. Let's get started.

When I prayed for God to guide my process of understanding this concept of "Secret Agent" Christians. Immediately, I thought of the parable of the Sower in Matthew 13:1-23 (also in Mark 4:1-20 and Luke 8:4-15) and I never knew you verses Matthew 7:21-23.

In the parable of the Sower, Jesus is teaching about 4 groups of people that hear the gospel message. Three of these groups receive the message or believe. Let's read it from Matthew in the NKJV

The Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23 (NKJV). ¹On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. ²And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. ³Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, **a sower went out to sow.** ⁴And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them. ⁵Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. ⁶But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away. ⁷And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them. ⁸But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. ⁹He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

I often hear how difficult it is to understand the bible. Here we have a teaching of Jesus. And a few verses later He explains it clearly for all of us to understand.

Matthew 13:18-23 (NKJV) The Parable of the Sower Explained ¹⁸“Therefore hear the parable of the sower: ¹⁹When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. ²⁰But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. ²²Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. ²³But **he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces:** some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”

Jesus makes it very clear that 3 of the 4 group received the gospel message. Group #1 is the seed on the path. Jesus makes it clear these are those you have no interest in the Kingdom or Jesus. God won't override their will, He will leave them to their delusion. Group #2, the stony places receive the gospel with joy. Today we would say, if you receive or believe the gospel message you are a Christian. But Jesus goes on to explain when troubles come they stumble or turn away from the faith because they have no root, no foundation to support them. But if asked, they would probably still say they are Christian. Group #3, in the weeds, hears and receives, meaning they profess to be Christian. But the cares of the world or things of the world are more important so they are unfruitful. Maybe they are saved, you be the judge. The final group, is the good soil. They are fruitful producing hundredfold, sixty or thirty. Jesus is clear, these Christians are all fruitful. May to different degrees but all produce fruit.

I logged this and turned my attention to the next scripture. Matthew 7:21-23 which is often referred to as the “I never knew you verses” Matthew 7:21-23 (NKJV) ²¹“*Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.* ²²*Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’* ²³*And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’*”

This scripture is part of block of Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount. I would suggest reading Matthew 5-7 to get full context for these verses. Here Jesus is very clearly stating that not everyone who claims to be Christian will be allow to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. So people can think they are saved, Christian and not be.

These two scriptures seem to indicate that Secret Agent Christians may be true but the question really is are they saved. I remembered two stories I once heard from Bill Weiss. In one story, if I live in a remote spot and I give you directions to my house, then you say no you know better way. What are the chances you will get to my house? No chance, right.

I'm going to stop here for today. I'll pick up our discussion with the second story from Bill Weiss next time. As we explore if there are really “Secret Agent Christians”

Let me close with a prayer.

Lord Jesus, thank you for our modern tools that can allow someone like me to research and study your bible. I'm so thankful that a broken sinner like myself can read your words and understand your message because you promise to make it clear, to give us the wisdom we need if we only ask. I pray that the listener consider the big picture you paint with all the words of the bible, not just a single brush stroke.

I pray these things in your name Jesus. Amen

Thank you for joining me at the PUNLA Coffee Table. If you liked the message, please click like. And Please Subscribe to our channel. Leave comments here, or our website or email me. I want your feedback so let me know what you think

Until next time at the PUNLA Coffee Table. God bless.