

# Know Your Rights As a Believer

Yes, as a believer, you have rights.

## God has Spoken of These Rights

**But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God . . .**

John 1:12

It says that not all believers are automatically the children of God, but rather they do have the right to become His children.

## Claiming Rights Takes Strength

But not all believers take advantage of their right. Here is a case:

**Nevertheless, many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the glory that comes from man more than the glory that comes from God.** John 12:42-43

John credits these authorities with believing, but they could not take the next step because of peer pressure. (Faith and belief translate the same original Greek word. Faith and belief are the same.)

On the other hand, there was a case of a large group who overcame peer pressure.

**And the word of God continued to increase, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.**

Acts 6:7

These Jewish priests not only had faith in Christ, they acted on that faith. Having faith was not adequate. It was their obedience to faith that caused Luke the writer to mention them.

## Some Listeners used their Rights

The church of Christ began in Acts, chapter 2. Thousands of men and women who believed in God had come to worship in Jerusalem. Peter was the Lord's spokesman and told them that Jesus was the Lord and Christ (Messiah), but they had crucified him.

**Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"** Acts 2:37

Peter's response to the question from these believer in God is concise and understandable:

**Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.** Acts 2:38

A small portion of the listening believers obeyed what Peter said.

**So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.** Acts 2:41

The rest did not exercise their rights. They declined or postponed.

But not everyone put off obedience. Years later, Paul wrote to a church he had worked with in the province of Galatia:

**But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.** Galatians 3:25

Taking this sentence alone, we might conclude that the hearers were saved by faith and not by following through, but that clears up in the very next sentence:

**For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.** Galatians 3:27

They had put on a new garment when they were immersed, that being the garment that is Christ.

## Community Christianity

In America today, there is Community Christianity. Everyone believes that Jesus is Lord and that God is to be worshiped somehow.

### Its Life Style

The vocabulary of this community religion might include a few swear words now and then, but not to excess.

The mild use of alcohol, tobacco and drugs is seen as a choice.

Church attendance is on Christmas and Easter, but one church is as good as another. Just go somewhere. The weekly Lord's Supper doesn't even come up for consideration.

Prayer may be as often as once a day or certainly, when there is a crisis. It probably is not at mealtime.

Service to the Lord may take the form of working at the Soup Kitchen.

Sex outside of marriage is frowned on, but then "Judge not" is invoked to keep things civil.

Couples living together are frowned on too, but the frowns are very shallow.

Giving may be giving a few dollars to a homeless person at a street corner.

### At Death

This Community Christianity is frequently heard at funerals where the Community Prophet assures concerned listeners that the deceased is now in the arms of Jesus.

## Your Rights

You can move up from the Community Christianity by correcting your lifestyle (repentance) and being immersed for cleansing from past sins.

Meet to worship with others who have made the same decisions. Focus on the Lord's death weekly as we have the Lord's Supper together to affirm our unity as believers and remember the enormous price that was paid for our cleansing.

# Know Your Rights As a Believer



What Are  
My Rights?

© 2017 Charles Dailey

Charles Dailey