
What is the Christian life?

1. The following are different views of the Christian life.

- a. Do you think that there is a "secret" to the Christian life that ends the struggle and makes life easy sailing?
- b. Have you resigned yourself to failure as a Christian, because it seems too hard to change?
- c. Have you ever become a "disciple," someone consciously changing, learning how to think and act like Jesus Christ in every situation of life?
- d. When you become aware of a shortcoming in your life, do you treat it as a great crisis, either to excuse or to despair over or to seek instantaneous perfection and deliverance?

2. Read this description of the normal Christian life:

*This life, therefore,
is not righteousness but growth in
righteousness,
not health but healing,
not being but becoming,
not rest but exercise.*

*We are not yet what we shall be, but we are
growing toward it;
the process is not yet finished but it is going on;
this is not the end but it is the road.
All does not yet gleam in glory but all is being
purified.*

—by Martin Luther

- a. What is this life like?
- b. What promises does this hold out, both for the present and the future?
- c. Is this your view of the Christian life? Where are you challenged? How are you encouraged?
- d. How specifically do you need to change?

3. Luther wrote what he wrote because he had studied the Bible. Study the following passages of Scripture: James 1:2-5; Philippians 1:6, 1:9-11, 2:12-13; 2 Peter 1:3-11. Ask of each passage the same questions you asked of Luther's quotation.

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