

ARE CHRISTIANS WINNERS OR LOSERS?

By Nino Boezio

Christianity is a very tough sell these days, particularly in the last several decades.

Christianity has been increasingly portrayed as a way of life for losers. Today, there are many negative views attached to Christianity that include the following:

- There's no fun in it and there are too many restrictions;
- It consists of teachings that are out-of-date and are no longer in-sync with our "progressive" culture;
- Its worship involves musty old buildings that are uninviting, unpleasant and filled with the odor of candles;
- Some of its ministers are strange and like to profess that the end of the world is near;
- Christian teachings are built upon myth and consist of flowery poetic language that contains little substance;
- Our world is so far advanced in its thinking now, that our own mind and decisions can surpass any value derived from living a Christian way of life;
- We are also better off being guided by our sociologists, psychologists, politicians, philosophers, progressive thinkers and so forth (you may be laughing uncontrollably at this statement though).

Some of the above remarks regarding the value of Christianity may have merit, depending on one's vantage point and the brand of Christianity being observed as the template. Many organizations calling themselves Christian have made various attempts to modernize and to fit into today's culture with the intent of making the church more relevant. But these attempts normally fail miserably since these don't capture what Christianity is to be truly about. There has been a substantial deviation from what was once taught two thousand years ago, which has taken away from Christianity's power, its message and its effectiveness.

Here is the crux of the problem and questions we must answer. What is the role of the church and why should it be fundamental to our life? And are Christians truly losers?

There are certain points that need to be kept in mind, which has been lost by many of the churches claiming to be Christian today:

- Christians are to be forward-looking and futuristic people. They view the world and this earth in the context of eternity, not in terms of a short span of years. That was a major point in Christ's gospel message.

- Christians have a holistic view of the world that includes the past, the present and the future. They understand the progression of history and where it has come from and where it is going. They are not prisoners to the ideas and trends of the day, which change continually anyway. The leaders of the world come and go, nations rise and fall, but God remains constant forever.
- Christians are to uphold the highest standards of conduct, behavior and honor. They understand that such principles work and build towards success, and these principles come from God.
- God's way leads to a life of fun and happiness. However, Christians are also expected to sacrifice at times, which is all part of the Christian growth process.
- The Bible is the compilation and record of the greatest thinking and experiences of human history (both good as well as tragic), and its overall assembler and author is God.
- All of the items listed above work to produce the finest in character, which should be the goal of every human being.

Christianity understood in its purest form, has been tarnished by bad information and superstition, often coming from the proponents of Christianity itself. It has also been given descriptions and labels from persons who truly know very little about it, but have come to conclusions based on observations and assessments of what they may think is the Christian standard. However, the common brand of Christianity prevalent today has been degraded substantially and has deviated from the standards set two thousand years ago.

When the true principles of Christianity are lived up to, winners not losers are produced. It focuses on eternity. These aim to create the highest quality in the human being and to achieve the greatest outcome of such a person's life.