

The Four Stages of Christianity

In this resource we want to look at and unpack what we are calling the 4 stages of Christianity. These 4 stages are the major stages and factors which take us from being an incorporated follower of Jesus Christ, where Jesus is in our lives, to being made one IN Christ, where Jesus *is* our very life.

There is quite a difference between Christ being *in* your life and Christ *being* your life.

God wants to be the very source of our lives and for us to live, move and exist in Him and not just know Him as a resource we cry out to in times of need.

Acts 17:28 for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'

Colossians 3:3-4 For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.

It's important to note that depending on our revelation of Jesus Christ through the gospel, we can find ourselves being in more than one stage at any one time. An example of this is you may find yourself in the make me stage, because your will has fallen on the Rock and been broken into pieces, while at the very same time, God is needing to break an old mindset and renew your mind to His version of Himself.

The 4 stages which we will unpack are: "Give me", "Use me", "Break me", "Make me".

STAGE 1: GIVE ME

This is the first stage in our relationship with Christ. When we have only given our lives to Christ, as opposed to losing our lives, we see this stage very prevalent. This stage is still all about us and what we are going to get out of giving our lives. This is a very childish and immature stage.

We expect to get something in return for what we have given. What am I going to get and how am I going to benefit from this exchange becomes our nature. This is a very self centred and self-consumed reality, which can not operate and function in a Christ like way. Everything this stage does is set up for personal gain.

We give our lives for ourselves rather than lose our lives for His sake as Jesus taught.

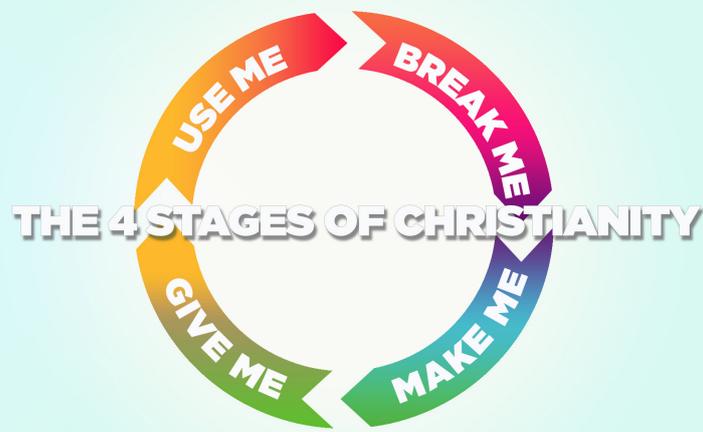
Mathew 10:39 He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it.

This may have in fact been the gospel message you received which is a false gospel, but the Father used it to bring you to Him - thank you Lord.

The passages of scripture below signify this "give me" heart and mind set operating.

Matthew 26:14-15 Then one of the twelve, named Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests and said, "What are you willing to give me to betray Him to you?" And they weighed out thirty pieces of silver to him. From then on he began looking for a good opportunity to betray Jesus.

Luke 15:12 The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.' So he divided his wealth between them.



Luke 15: 28-30 *But he became angry and was not willing to go in; and his father came out and began pleading with him. But he answered and said to his father, 'Look! For so many years I have been serving you and I have never neglected a command of yours; and yet you have never given me a young goat, so that I might celebrate with my friends; but when this son of yours came, who has devoured your wealth with prostitutes, you killed the fattened calf for him.'*

Acts 8:18-20 *Now when Simon saw that the Spirit was bestowed through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, saying, "Give this authority to me as well, so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the Holy Spirit." But Peter said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of God with money!"*

We can clearly see this strongman of self, the "Give Me" nature, manifesting out of each person here and it's ugly and very destructive to the Father's Way.

Questions

1. Why is having this "Give Me" attitude/nature as our first place position within us, so destructive to ourselves and God's Way?
2. Why does this attitude/nature of "Give Me" exist in God's people when we are called to be poor in spirit?
3. What has God given us as the antidote to kill this "Give Me" attitude/nature?
4. What kind of life are we able to live once freed from this inward attitude?

Action Point

Take 5 minutes and ask the group whether they see this "Give Me" inner attitude working in their lives. If so, take some time in prayer and repentance, turning to the Father to release us from this attitude. Confess before the Father this attitude so we can move towards the "Make Me" phase. This repentance prayer is part of the "Make Me" stage. We are signaling to God we want to grow and be set free from "self".