

The Four Stages of Christianity 2

The second stage of becoming like Christ in every way is the “Use Me” stage.

2. USE ME

After some time we realise that there is more to becoming Christ like than just the “Give Me” stage and we sense the need to give back and to be making a difference with our lives. Man has within him an insatiable need to do, or to be used, which has been placed there by God, but because of the fall, this position has been twisted and poisoned and now man’s sense of worth, purpose, meaning and identity, is all wrapped up in what He does, rather than in who he is in God.

We hear messages about how it's all about God and the accomplishment of His will and purpose, rather than living for ourselves and our purposes.

We start to move from it all being about me getting and receiving, to it being about me giving and being used by God for His purposes. It starts to be about being good to my fellow man and getting on board with the purpose of the church family I am part of.

We hear messages about how true religion is about looking after the poor and the widows and how it's essential we all enter into the process of having a heart for people who don't know Jesus and sharing our belief system, whenever we get the opportunity. We hear about knowing your gifting and serving God and others with the gift you have been given. We are challenged to be surrendered and committed to God and His purposes for why He gave us life and there is nothing wrong with any of the above and we are to be part of all of the above, but there is an issue.

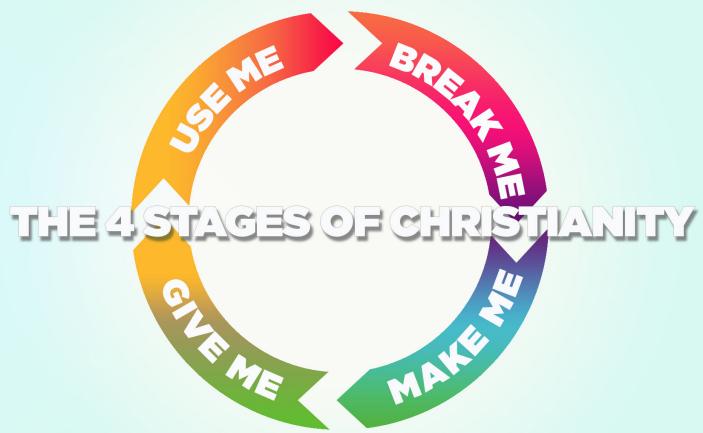
Colossians 1:28-29 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ. For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

All of this doing or functional activity is to be accomplished by God’s strength operating within us. The passages of scripture below signify this “Use Me” heart and mind set operating, so let's have a look and see what we can learn from them.

John 13:33-38 Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, now I also say to you, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’ A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, where are You going?” Jesus answered, “Where I go, you cannot follow Me now; but you will follow later.” Peter said to Him, “Lord, why can I not follow You right now? I will lay down my life for You.” Jesus answered, “Will you lay down your life for Me? Truly, truly, I say to you, a rooster will not crow until you deny Me three times.”

Matthew 26:51-56 And behold, one of those who were with Jesus reached and drew out his sword, and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, “Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot appeal to My Father, and He will at once put at My disposal more than twelve legions of angels? How then will the Scriptures be fulfilled, which say that it must happen this way?” At that time Jesus said to the crowds, “Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me as you would against a robber? Every day I used to sit in the temple teaching and you did not seize Me. But all this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures of the prophets.” Then all the disciples left Him and fled.

Isaiah 6:8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?” Then I said, “Here am I. Send me!”



1 Corinthians 13:1-3 *If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing.*

The problem is 2 fold. The first question we need to ask ourselves is, "From what or who's source of power and strength, is all of the above to be accomplished by?" and secondly, "From who's leading and intention, is all of the above to be accomplished by?"

The intention of our heart to want to serve God and see His kingdom come and His will be done, is right and is to come from a pure motive, but all this is to take place from the position of man no longer being the source or strength of His own life.

1 Peter 4:11 *Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

There is the source and strength of self or there is the source and strength of the Spirit. Hebrews 4:9 teaches us there is a Sabbath rest for the people of God to enter into and verse 10 says all who enter into His Sabbath rest, rest from their works.

As His followers we are all to enter into His rest, so when God calls us to co-labour with Him, or in other words, God uses us as His hands and feet, all of this work is accomplished from rest, because it is all a work of the Spirit and not us.

Jesus said, "It's the Spirit who gives life and the flesh profits you nothing."

Questions

1. What are we all hearing from what has just been articulated?
2. How many of use relate to this "Use Me" stage, where we want to be used by God to see His kingdom established?
3. How dangerous is this insatiable need to do things for God to our fellowship with God and one another, if it is not defined by God?
4. Why is it so critical that all that we do for God comes from His divine strength operating within us and not our temporal human strength?
5. Why is it so critical that how we are used by God, all comes from His divine prompting and leading?

Action Point

Get the group to right down 1 action point which they sense they need to start doing in relation to what they have heard tonight. Each person is to share what that 1 thing is and then get the person themselves to pray to God for that 1 thing. Each member is to do this.