



NOMINAL Christianity

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The nominal Christians hate Bible doctrine but love “fellowship” such as praise and worships, church activities, gatherings, programs, missions, outreaches, religious music and all sorts of works in the name of God.

Nominal Christianity refers to Christians whose Christianity does not go beyond mere identification with a Christian group and their cause with affiliation to that cause in name only. Nominal Christianity is produced by incomplete gospel presentation (popularized by Billy Graham) with alternative message that does not reflect the true meaning of Christ’s plan of salvation. Nominal Christianity is manufactured by easy Christian’s victory (promoted by Rick Warren) of those who adhere to the external forms of piety and godliness while denying its power (2 Timothy 3:15).

Categories of Nominal Christians:

- The moral apostates – those who sincerely think that they are truly good, acceptable, and righteous before the Lord through their human good works as false divine production.
- The doctrinal apostates – those who sincerely think that their legalistic religious affiliation put them in special standing before God energized by arrogance to perform more work for God.
- The depraved apostates – those who are truly saved but without capacity to overcome and resist the world, the flesh and the devil. They are true believers living in a lifestyle of wickedness.
- The pseudo Christian apostates – those who have never been saved by faith alone in Christ alone but sincerely claimed that they are Christians trying to gain approbation by works.

Nominal Christianity is characterized by works and endless works rather than the absence of it. Faith for them does not concern about its object (which is the Living and Written Word of God) but the quality and quantity of their faith marked by works done by human power and wisdom.

Nominal Christianity is always together with the act and thought of compromise to the world seeking approbation and acceptance of men rather than of God.

One question that occupies a lot of attention is "How is Christianity to be distinctive in a culture where everyone assumes themselves to be Christian?" How anyone can tell someone is a nominal when he does not even know what real Christianity is? Most of those nominal Christians are very religious doing what they want rather than the will of God. They disdain any real spiritual progress because that would demand denying self and breaking their ego. The greatest scandal of Christendom today is called nominal Christianity is strewn with the wreckage of derelict, unfinished towers, the ruins of those who began to build their spiritual life but failed to finish it. Nominal Christians are littering the rubbish of hypocrisy, lies, false claims, suspicious decency covered with veneer respectability without reality.

They have allowed themselves to become somewhat involved in religious activities; enough to be respectable but not enough to be uncomfortable to carry their cross daily. Their religion is a great, soft cushion shield that protects them from the hard unpleasantness of life, while changing its place and shape to suit the convenience. Nominal Christians are contented with only comfortable and outward manifestation of their faith without the ability to discern what is of God and what is of the devil. They welcome all means to integrate their evil activities and pagan practices into their religion to avoid the mockery and rejection of the world. Such Christians are mostly willing to participate in many Christian functions and activities of their choosing as long as they are not too demanding or burdensome.

Nominal Christianity rejects:

- Commitment to the cause of Christ
- Conformity to the Word of God
- Concentration on priority of Bible doctrine
- Christ-centered and grace oriented messages
- Dedication to the truth of God’s Word
- Devotion to the whole counsel of God
- Conversion fruits manifestation
- Spiritual production of divine good works
- Certification of spiritual reality in life
- Loyalty and love toward the Lord Jesus Christ
- Undeserved sufferings due to spiritual growth

Some myths of nominal Christianity:

- Christians are born in Christian family

- Christians are those who go to church
- Christians are people who walk the aisle
- Christians are baptized people
- Christians are members of Christian societies

False fruits of nominal Christianity:

- Idolized celebrity preachers
- Grandeur edifice and facilities
- Fantastic number of members
- Numerous satellite ministry branches
- Rich and famous membership
- Impressive numerical church growth
- Fantastic music ministries and singers
- Live Broadcast preaching
- International ministries
- Multilanguage's ministries
- Increasing numbers of workers
- Dynamic emotional preaching
- Humanistic social ministries
- Building Foundations and institutions
- Truthful critics considered as persecution
- Celebrated ministries and church

The Gospel made easy (popularized by Billy Graham) and good enough to everyone to accept unlocks the door to nominal Christianity:

- Sign an acceptance and commitment paper
- Raise your hands and come forward
- Follow and pray the acceptance prayer
- Walk in the aisle and kneel down in the front
- Confess your sin publicly
- Put your hand in the TV screen
- Repeat the words of the preacher
- Supplanted and substituted Gospel truth
- Another "gospel" that cannot save souls

The Word of God made easy and acceptable to everyone (popularized by Rick Warren), minus the cross to carry daily and the undeserved sufferings that comes with it produces nominal Christians:

- Once a week worship with no Bible doctrine
- Man and ministry-centered worship
- Training and seminars with Bible doctrine
- Twice or once a week inspirational Bible study
- 40 days spiritual maturity plan
- Church-centered programs and activities
- Music centered worship honoring the singers
- Mission - tourism trip to third world countries
- Instant spiritual victory conferences
- Express spiritual maturity conferences
- Scripted and misguided easy daily devotional
- 12 Bible study methods that obscure the truth
- Instant spiritual warrior's conference
- Creating disciples after the preacher or leader
- Spiritual growth w/o the truth of Bible doctrine

Most pastors today have become dispenser of comfortable nominal Christianity creating an environment for

conducive, cozy and cushy worship event that people would want to come and keep coming back. The pastors' primary concerns are comfortable seats, coffee, good music, fantastic singers, and everything similar to the entertainment world. Nominal Christianity have claimed adherent to Christ and His teaching but failed to step aside to manifest the "life of Christ" lived by the power of God's Word and the Holy Spirit. Nominal Christianity focused most of their so-called Christian activities within the four-walls where they hang out with others this result to reaching for others by inviting them to join them where they are.

Nominal Christianity is generally thought as being mostly events and gathering replacing the smaller ones with a real big one. It seems that gathering develops an outward dynamic support for dynamic and "relevant" worship experience instead of dynamic spiritual lifestyle. The nest of nominal Christianity is its comfort zone anchored within the four walls of the church building protecting them from the fire of adversity of the real world.

Some verbal claims of the nominal Christians:

- By their lips they desire to follow Christ
- By their lips they profess their love for God
- By their lips they adore and glory in God
- By their lips they claim to love the Bible
- By their lips they claim to love others
- By their lips they claim serve Christ
- By their lips they claim to do God's will
- By their lips they claim to enjoy the Bible
- By their lips they claim to love the church
- By their lips they claim to live Christ's life

Some areas where the nominal Christians fail to discern:

- Whether the Bible is being taught systematically and properly interpreted or erroneously twisted to fit their doctrinal position
- Whether they have right or wrong motivation for decisions and actions in all aspect of their life
- Whether the people receive the true Gospel message or the message that cannot save
- Whether they are supporting a false prophet or a true preacher of God's Word
- Whether they are receiving the Word of God or just the invented "Word of God" by men
- Whether they are strengthened by God's Word they receive or simply being deceived to think that way
- Whether they are being renewed by the Holy Spirit through metabolized Bible doctrine in the soul or being brain-washed by opinion and teaching of men
- Whether their leaders and preacher are after their spiritual life and growth or simply after their support and contribution to the ministry

The exclusiveness of the nominal church:

- They interact with anyone as long as they fit into their practices and reject anyone who disagreed with their heretical lies.
- They attempt to live out their Christian life in front of other believers but disregarding their claims in front of others outside their circle.
- The spiritual matters are never their primary concern in life of others but putting emphasize on their common ground of acceptance.
- They do not like doctrinal preaching but something that tickles their ears and ego.
- They feel the Word of God is typically boring and intentionally sleep whenever it is communicated.
- They feel it is more important to fellowship with Christians than to spend boring minutes in doctrinal study of vital issues.
- They manifest outward form of their devotion and commitment without real concern for spiritual growth of others.
- They manifest exaggerated but unreal affection for each other that are easily destroyed by judging or condemning others through gossiping.
- They are typically good to each other inside their circle but indifferent to the outsiders.

The struggles of nominal Christians:

- Trying to be a good person to someone rather than being a new creature with a new mind and new heart produced by the Holy Spirit.
- Trying to be a good head or member of the family rather than being a member of the royal family of God.
- Trying to be a good church member rather than being a member of the kingdom of God, being His inheritance, portion and fellow heir of Christ.
- Trying to be a good person to the world seeking acceptance and approbation rather than being impressed with the grandeur of the One to come, of the things to come without falling to false promises and deliverers of the world.

The only thing that can puncture or prevent the buildup of the fortress of false profession of faith or becoming nominal Christian is the teaching and preaching of Bible doctrine that should be:

- Frequent enough (consistent daily basis)
- Central enough (doctrine on center stage)
- Precise enough (achieves precision)
- Divisive enough (separating viewpoint)
- Charity enough (rebuking with love)
- Clarity enough (Holy Spirit dependency)
- Powerful enough (ripping off masks)
- Explosive enough (destroying pretensions)
- Constructive enough (builds life principles)
- Conclusive enough (objective advance)
- Enduring enough (pursue without quitting)

Heinous mistakes of the nominal pastors:

- Living out for human unrealistic expectations
- Seeking the approbation of men
- Apprehensive for the opinion of men
- Advocating and selling illusion of truth
- Captivated to deception for personal interests
- Admiration for human accomplishments
- Covering the spiritual emptiness
- Pretense and hypocritical human good
- Failure to expose the deception within
- Substituting endless works for teaching
- Making Christianity what he wants it to be
- Giving what fits the interests of the people
- Failure to see their spiritual deficiency
- Building foundation for personal prestige
- No room for the pure Word of God (John 8:37)
- Empty confession and unreal repentance
- Prevailing spiritual reversionism (Rev. 3:15-16)
- A life of spiritual impotence build by pretense
- Lacking spiritual discernment to evaluate
- Tolerated and participation in evil works
- Building their monuments of arrogance
- Failure to confront unrighteousness squarely
- Entertaining fables, myths and superstition
- Reducing the value of transcendent Gospel
- Loving the gifts of God more than the Giver
- Accepting the empty promises of the world
- Unwilling to pay the cost of knowing God
- Building ministries and not spiritual life
- Playing harlotry of personal glory and honor
- Securing personal affluence than pursuing truth
- Modifying the message to suit worldly appetite
- Heaping preachers tickle the carnal ears
- Adopting the covetousness of the world
- Failure to create hunger for the Word of God
- Failure to prepare the people for revival

Some objective of nominal Christianity:

- Worldwide movement that mobilized evangelical leaders to collaborate for world evangelization like Lausanne Movement or Rick Warren's Church Growth Movement.
- Creation of Jesus' "disciples or apprentices" that is void of Bible doctrine truth and reality.
- Creation of one world church that is set after the pattern of human viewpoint of good and evil.

Calls that nominal Christians fail to take heed:

- Personal call to repentance (adjustment to the justice of God by rebound – 1 John 1:9)
- Personal call to advance in the plan of God (adjustment to the justice of God by spiritual growth and momentum)
- Personal call to apply the Bible doctrine that one has learned or understood and metabolized in the power and grace of God the Holy Spirit.

Some contradictions the nominal Christians faces:

- They claimed they are friends of the Lord Jesus Christ but they openly opposes Him (John 15:14) and failed to obey His commands.
- They claimed that they are living for the truth but the world wholly embrace as friends and what they have are not persecution from the world but self made miseries (2 Tim. 3:12).

Nominal Christians are traitors and betrayers:

- They will always choose to side with the world
- They will always betray anyone for the world
- They will always leave anyone for the world
- They will always choose the things of the world
- They will always find pleasure in the world
- They are always happy in the world
- They will always protect their world
- They will always sell themselves to the world
- They will always glory in the world

The escape away from nominal Christianity:

- Is moving away from realm of spiritual futility and brokenness toward God's effectual will (your personal sense of destiny).
- That is leaving behind the non-essential things that you have substituted for the spiritual things
- Results from brokenness of the spirit and soul from understanding that you have been distracted from the plan of God.
- Comes along with the hunger and thirst for God which you tried to find fulfillment from frantic search of happiness in the world.
- Is never possible without true biblical doctrine to nourish and provide growth to your spiritual life.
- Will never be easy but you have to resist all the temptation to give up the desire to attain spiritual maturity.
- God will be with you all the way to your spiritual success and victory.

Defense of nominal Christians for not cultivating dependency on God:

- "I want to do it my own way" (the power of old sinful nature at the control), "I rather do all things without God".
- "Only stupid people live that way" (doing everything with God), but "I rather do things only if God tell me to".
- "I tried to trust God before but He let me down" (frustrated by the way God did not answer their requests the way they wanted it to happen).
- "It won't work for me" (controlled by guilt and frustrated by their inconsistency, thinking that spirituality is only for the few elite believers.
- "I will do it later" (the procrastinators and those who believe the being late better than never).
- "I will do it" (but will have a good alibi later on).

Nominal Christianity is illusion without reality. To become a real Christian before the eyes of God demands reality. Here are some principles related to facing the reality of spiritual life:

- Reality will not allow you to substitute anything to replace spiritual life.
- Reality demands that when we encounter spiritual dryness that we let spiritual hunger push us to seek the Lord (and not to grab the rituals of religions).
- Reality will not allow you to make the distance between you and God far enough to lose your connection with him.
- Reality demands effectiveness of our spiritual life from the point divine power and resources.
- Reality cannot accept misapplication of truth by slipping into the comfort of religious rituals.
- Reality is always painful to pursue because Satan cannot tolerate the operating divine power.
- Going back to reality is costly and the price is very high.
- Reality will not allow us to substitute (some commitment confusion of nominal Christians):
 - Saying for doing
 - Confessing for being
 - Professing for acting
 - Promising for coming
 - Willingness for doing
- Reality is finding our all in God and leaving our all in His grace to fulfill.
- Reality is dealing with the disconnection that keeps us far from God.
 - WE – if we are faithful with the process of connecting to God all the time.
 - GOD – is faithful with fulfilling us in His time –in His way

Points to consider at the moment:

- Thinks and rethink about your spiritual life if you are in the faith for real. Most of those who claimed themselves as Christians must go back to the Gospel of life by believing in Christ alone by grace alone through faith alone and leave behind whatever they replaced the truth.
- Spiritual reality is to go through the real pilgrimage toward God with determination and solid discipline by being routinely faithful to realities in spite of the cost you have to pay (1 Timothy 6:6).
- No one can reach the point of spiritual maturity and enjoy spiritual reality apart from the truth of Bible doctrine.



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