



Confirming Your Calling (Part 6)

The Almost Christian Discovered

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2 Peter 1:8a



3 Just as His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. **4** Through these He has given to us precious and very great promises, in order that by them you may become a partaker of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption which is in the world by lust. **5** Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in [your] moral excellence knowledge, **6** and in [your] knowledge, self control, and in [your] self control, perseverance, and in [your] perseverance, godliness, **7** and in [your] godliness, brotherly kindness, and in [your]

brotherly kindness, love. **8** For if these things are yours and are increasing, they make you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9** For he who is lacking these is blind or shortsighted, being forgetful of the purification of his former sins. **10** Therefore, brethren, be diligent to make your calling and election sure, for in doing these things you will never fall. **11** For in this way the entrance to the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be abundantly supplied to you.

– 2 Peter 1:3-11, As translated from the Greek New Testament by Tony A. Bartolucci.

The Passage is Also Found on Page 183 of the New Testament Section of the Pew Bibles

"The Almost Christian Discovered"

English Puritan Matthew Mead

Mead's Thesis: "There are very many in the world that are almost and, yet, but almost Christians."

Question One: "How far may a man go in the way to heaven and yet be but almost a Christian?"

→ A man may have great knowledge of the things of Christ and yet not know Christ

"To make a man altogether a Christian, there must be light in the head and heat in the heart, knowledge in the understanding and zeal in the affections. Some have zeal and no knowledge - that is blind devotion. Some have knowledge and no zeal - that is fruitless speculation. But where knowledge is joined with zeal, that makes a true Christian."

→ A man may have much knowledge and much light; he may know much of God and His will, much of Christ and His ways, and yet be but almost a Christian.

→ A man may go far in opposing his sin [even hate his sin] and yet be but almost a Christian.

"A man may forsake the life of sin and yet retain the love of sin. Now, though leaving sin makes him almost a Christian, yet loving sin shows he is but almost a Christian. It is less evil to do sin and not love it than to love sin and not do it, for to do sin may argue only weakness of grace, but to love sin argues strength of lust. "What I hate, that I do." Sin is bad in any part of man, but sin in the affection is worse than sin in the conversation; for sin in the conversation may be only from infirmity, but sin in the affection is the fruit of choice and unregeneracy. . . . All sin may be chained and yet the heart not changed."

→ A man may be a member of the church of Christ, he may join himself to the people of God, partake with them in all ordinances, and share of all church privileges and yet be but almost a Christian.

→ A man may have great hopes of heaven, great hopes of being saved, and yet be but almost a Christian.

→ A man may be under great and visible changes, and these wrought by the ministry of the Word, and yet be but almost a Christian.

→ A man may be very zealous in the matters of religion and yet be but almost a Christian.

→ A man may be much in prayer. He may pray often and pray much and yet be but almost a Christian.

His one great conclusion: "A man may do all as to external duties and worship that a true Christian can and, when he has one all, be but almost a Christian."

"The professor rests in duties, and so is but almost a Christian; but you must be sure to rest upon the Lord Christ. This is the way to be altogether Christians for, if you believe, then are you Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise."

"Pray much, but then believe much too. Hear much, read much, but then love God much too. Delight in the Word and ordinances of God much, but then delight in the God of ordinances more."

We are brought back to grace!

I. Salvation's Sufficiency: The Believer's Inheritance (3-4) [An Inheritance Granted by Grace]

II. Salvation's Service: The Believer's Fruitfulness (5-9)

A. Fruitfulness Demonstrated Through Seven Virtues (5-7)

Conclusion (two questions): **1) What do you Believe? 2) How do you Behave?**

1. What do you Believe as to G_____ and the G_____?

2. How do you Behave? *What's really in your heart?*