

Corn Chip Christianity

Popcorn was made by handily, and much. They're salty, savory, and snack-worthy. But there's nothing to them – no nutrition, no satisfaction, and no filling.
By Ben Graydon

Hits: 1619
Many Christians have the same sort of spiritual life. They pop into a church on Sunday, observe a performance, get some emotional stirring and hear a good word or two, but then go out the door the same way (internally) they came in. That is the way it is designed to ... by “church leaders.” Because it sells and, in some shallow way, keeps the church relevant in the eyes of enough consumers to keep the doors to the church (a business) open.

Want to keep living on the corn chip level? Fine, but for those like me who want real nutrition ...

Don't tell me who is speaking. Let it be the Holy Spirit, and so plainly obvious that everybody knows without prior announcement.

Don't bring me in and sit me down in an audience to observe a performance. Let the Holy Spirit's presence be so real and so palpable that when my heart and my emotions in my body are still, I rise involuntarily to go with the flow of the spirit. Let me experience “Be still and know that I am God.” Let me feel what Job felt when God told his three “friends” to sit down, shut up and listen to what HE, the Creator and Lord of all, has to say.

Don't tell me what version of the Bible I ought to read or even that my life should center around reading the Bible. Tell me of the love of God and show me how He reveals himself to us not just through the pages of His word but also through the beauty of His creation as well as, most importantly, through the still quiet voice of the Holy Spirit in the heart in the mind of each one who seeks Him.

Don't elevate the church or any other institution to anything approximating the level of the fullness of God. If God can use that instrument, and He can use whatever He chooses, then let Him do so without the agency or the command of man.

Do not call a building, much less an institution, the “house of God.” WE who know Him ARE the house of God.

Do not elevate the primacy or the authority of the words of man, but realize that all men are, apart from the grace of God, but mere men. Do not insist upon human authority or human leadership or any authority structure or construct apart from the authority of the Holy Spirit and the word of God itself. (Do not tell me that there is any authority structure on earth that I am to submit to but the authority of God Himself, and do not tell me that God delegates His authority to men so that we are to obey them as part of our obedience to Him.) Tell us the truth, how that all men and women and children can speak as led by the Holy Spirit, in the wisdom, in the authority of God, and it'd be more authoritative than any man-made title or office or position.

Do not define life in Christ in terms of experiences, emotions or timelines. Do not speak of heaven

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as “future” or “up there”; it’s **HERE** with us now, if we will but see it and be part of all that God has for us. Corn chippers munch through the movie, thinking of real nutrition to come later, after the movie credits roll, but God has provided for us now all things that we need for life and godliness, and we need not wait to be nourished.

Do not tell me anything at all about God in terms of authority except about His love and redemption. Do not, in other words, seek to gain any advantage over me by representing yourself as God’s representative, assigned by Him to rule over me with what you say are His directives, for the moment in which you do that, you make Him out a liar and lose any authority you might otherwise have. (Do not come in behind me and call ME a liar, pointing to some authority of church or pope or tradition or proof-texted words from some version of the Bible, trying to shame me for daring to speak the truth that makes you uncomfortable.)

Why do I keep writing about this issue? Because I believe that history (eternity, at least) will prove that it has done more to keep people from coming to a personal relationship with God than any other single thing. Church is useful for many purposes, but being the Body of Christ (as most versions of the Bible would make it out to be) is not one of them, for that it is not – no more than Fritos, Doritos and Cheese Puffs are health-giving nutrition.