

# CHRISTIANITY LITE (Tastes Great-Less Filling)

Now it happened as they journeyed on the road, that someone said to Him, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go."

And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

Then He said to another, "Follow Me."

But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."

Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God."

And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house."

But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Luke 9:57-62 NKJV

## I. Tastes Great-Less Filling

### A. The Story of Miller Lite Beer

"The first mainstream light beer, Miller Lite has a colorful history. Created in 1967 by a biochemist working for (another brewery)...the recipe was (from) the inventor of the light beer process...(later) launched as "Lite Beer from Miller" in 1975...heavily marketed using masculine pro sports players and other macho figures of the day in an effort to sell to the key beer-drinking male demographic. Miller's approach worked...(with) Miller's production totals of 12.8 million barrels quickly increasing 24.2 million barrels by 1977 as Miller rose to 2nd place in the American brewing marketplace. Other brewers responded..."

from WIKIPEDIA, May 2008

1. The ads pictured men in a saloon, divided into two camps, shouting at each other over why Miller Lite was so great. One side shouted, "Tastes great!" The other side shouted back, "Less filling!"
2. The idea behind Miller Lite was to give people what they want-just change the *nature* of it so it wouldn't "change" them!
3. The idea caught on with dairies, potato chip brands and cola companies.

(At this point, an array of "light" products is put on a table)

### B. Christianity Lite

1. At some point, it seems the Christian Church in America picked up on this and decided the way to sell more gospel product was to *tamper* with the gospel, to *change the nature* of it so that it still *tasted* like the gospel, but with none of the offensive results of the fattening version.
2. Like beer and Coke, it still tasted a little like the real thing, but the church figured "they'll get used to it".

3. And so here we have it, a gospel of “Christianity Lite” served up every Sunday that doesn’t change anybody...

***A new “Lite” version of the Gospel that “TASTES GREAT” but is “LESS FILLING”***

“Christianity Lite” is the reduction of the cost-counting call of Christ by the intentional removal of the Gospel’s potentially offending elements.

- You want to follow Me??? GREAT! If you do, you’ll be rich!
- You want to follow Me as soon as your old Dad dies? GREAT! I’ll wait!
- You want to follow Me after you’ve talked it over with your family? GREAT! I’ll wait here until you get back?

How many cost-counting invitations do we hear today?

4. The problem is that in order to mass produce CL, we had to tamper with the recipes in the Bible.

5. We do this by removing some of the ingredients that may change a person.

6. After all, it’s a big book with lots of “calories.” We can take some of the ingredients out and still have something to carry under our arms!

- **Romans 3:23-For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God** (You didn’t sin...you just made a mistake)
- **Isa 59:2-It’s your sins that have cut you off from God. Because of your sins, he has turned away and will not listen anymore.** (This can’t be right. God loves everybody)
- **Num 32:23-24-But if you fail to keep your word, then you will have sinned against the Lord, and you may be sure that your sin will find you out.** (I’m not sure I can’t get away it)
- **Lev 18:22-Do not practice homosexuality, having sex with another man as with a woman. It is a detestable sin.** (Whoa! This might run off a whole people group)
- **Proverbs 3:9- Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the best part of everything you produce.** (Why is the Bible always talking about money?)

7. Why not just take these ingredients out of the Bible? We can still preach from the Word...just not the *heavy* stuff.

8. It’s Gospel Lite. It tastes great but it doesn’t change your life.

9. And it’s like diet drinks and lite beer...drink it long enough and you get used to it. You might even come to PREFER it! Wow.

10. But what happens if everybody drinks “lite”?

### **C. What You Really Want**

1. Let’s be honest. What we REALLY want is the REAL thing!

(The “light” products are replaced with the “full” version.)

2. Tastes great-but not less filling...it’s FUL-filling!

3. This is the “full Gospel”...the real Gospel...the Gospel of the Kingdom!

4. Drink this! Eat this! You’ll change!

## II. Introduction to The Call

### A. Entering a New Era

1. For the next year, we're going to focus on the Kingdom of God, on Christ and His call to "*Kingdom-Driven Living*."

"Seek the Kingdom of God above all else...  
and God will give you everything you need."  
Matthew 6:33 NLT

2. Our paraphrase of Matthew 6:33...

***The Kingdom of God is God's Total Answer for Man's Total Need!***

3. We're going to take the entire summer to revisit foundational Christianity from a Kingdom perspective. Our teaching team will take us back into the Bible, and every week you'll hear the Gospel of the Kingdom.

4. But before we take off, we need to count the cost!

### B. Counting the Cost of Seeking the Kingdom (Luke 9:57-62)

1. Jesus says "Follow Me" to #2 and #3; But #1 comes and volunteers!

"...someone said to Him, "Lord, I will follow You wherever You go."  
And Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

- a. This seems the opposite of what we hear today: "Follow Christ...be rich..."
- b. It's as if Jesus "mistrusts the too-ready enthusiasm of this would-be disciple (seeing) he would never stand the test of severe self-sacrifice."  
(Matthew Henry's Commentary)

2. The second man:

Then He said to another, "Follow Me."  
But he said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father."

- a. Some commentators believe the man is asking to DELAY following Christ until his aged father has died; others believe he's asking for a delay until he's dealt with the funeral, execution of the will, etc.
- b. None believe Jesus is teaching to dishonor the father or his memory
- c. ALL agree the issue is the man's putting off his obedience to Christ's call using family commitments as an excuse!

Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God."

3. The third man:

And another also said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house."

Paraphrase: "I want to follow you. Just let me first go and talk to my family and friends about this decision."

- Notice two of the three exchanges revolve around the Kingdom of God!
- These are "me first" issues! Anytime we say "let me first..." to God, we can be sure we've got things out of order!

### **III. Conclusion**

#### **A. The Bottom Line: Kingdom Usefulness**

But Jesus said to him, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."  
Luke 9:62

"...no one...looking back, is fit for service in the Kingdom of God."  
New International Version

"...no one...who keeps looking back is of any use for the Kingdom of God."  
Today's English Version

1. Don't miss this-the call of Christ is to "kingdom-driven living" and brooks no competition.
2. "Looking back" to them was a metaphor of Lot's wife, who "looked back" and turned into a pillar of salt.

But his (Lot's) wife looked back from behind him, and she became a pillar of salt.  
Genesis 19:26 KJV

3. "Looking back" often precedes "going back"; but only "he that endures to the end shall be saved." (Matthew 10:22)

#### **B. The Call: An Invitation to Follow Christ and His Kingdom**

1. We have heard Christ's call.
2. We've made a decision and we're launching out.
3. We're not going to tamper with the product.
4. We're drinking the real deal....Tastes great! AND Fulfilling!