Reasons For Being A Christian

Intro: King Agrippa stated, Acts 26:28: “28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.” Some have seemingly accepted Christianity for many unscriptural reasons.

1. Such reasons as:
   a. Desire to follow the crowd.
   b. Please friends or loved ones.
   c. Desire for financial aid.
   d. Business possibilities.
   e. Prestige, social, or recreational reasons.

2. It is not our prerogative to judge any man’s motives, but if any of these reasons mentioned are one’s reasons for seemingly accepting Christianity, they are not acceptable.

3. There are others, like Agrippa, who have never, in any sense, accepted Christ.
   a. Possibly they think they are safe of saved without Christianity.
   b. Others possibly are not willing to make the sacrifice: changing their lifestyle, deny friends, loved ones, or self, etc.
   c. Others have never seen sufficient reasons for being a Christian.

4. In this lesson sufficient reasons shall be given.

I. WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?
   A. Christian is mentioned three times in the Bible.
      1. Acts 11:26 “26 And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”
      2. Acts 26:28 “28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.”
      3. 1 Pet. 4:16 “16 Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.”
   B. Again, seeing its importance, we ask; What is a Christian?
      1. It is to be Christ-like: a true follower of Christ.
      2. An heir of promise, thus all should desire to be a Christian.

II. REASONS CHRIST GAVE FOR BEING A CHRISTIAN.
   A. Christ delivered approximately 55 discourses.
      1. 10 were lessons on character and attitudes making no direct appeal for followers.
      2. Of the 45 left, Christ presented the following reasons for being a Christian.
         a. 4 appeal to the motive of love.
         b. 30 appeal to the desire of reward.
         c. 35 appeal to the fear of punishment.
   B. Of course, love is the highest motive but the Lord appealed to that which would move or reach people.

III. THE MOTIVE OF LOVE.
   A. How wonderful it would be if all men would follow Christ out of love for Him.
      1. 1 Cor. 13:13 “13 And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.”
      2. 1 John 4:19 “19 We love him, because he first loved us.”
B. True love manifests itself.
   1. John 3:16 \textit{“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”}
   2. John 14:15, 23 \textit{“If ye love me, keep my commandments…. 23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”}
   3. 1 John 5:3 \textit{“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”}
   4. If one truly loves the Lord, he will not falter at what the Lord commands.

IV. The Desire For Reward.
   A. This motive has ever played an important part in the life of man.
      1. Example: the man hired as a laborer.
      2. Example: the obedience of children.
   B. Christ knew this motive and thus used it as an incentive for being a Christian.
      1. Mat. 11:28-30 \textit{“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”}
      2. Mark 10:29-30 \textit{“And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel’s, 30 But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life.”}
      3. John 14:1-3 \textit{“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.”}
      4. 1 Cor. 15:58 \textit{“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.”}
   C. Think seriously of the blessings of heaven and become a Christian.

V. The Fear Of Punishment.
   A. This motive has ever played an important part in the life of man.
      1. Example: the obedience of children
      2. Example: driving above the speed limit.
   B. This motive likewise plays an important part in persuading man to become a Christian and live right.
      1. The fear of unending torment in hell.
      2. Mat. 13:41-42 \textit{“The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; 42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”}
      3. Mark 9:44, 46, 48 \textit{“Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.”}
      4. Luke 16:23-24 \textit{“And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. 24 And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.”}
      5. It is being separated from God; Mat. 25:41 \textit{“Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”}
6. It is everlasting; Mat. 25:46 “And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

C. **Think seriously of the torments of hell and become a Christian.**

Conclusion: If we cannot persuade you to become a Christian by love or by the desire for reward, then possibly we can by the fear of punishment.