First of all, let us ask,

I. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BEING A "PRETEND CHRISTIAN" AND A "REAL CHRISTIAN"?

Once we have been truly converted to saving faith in Christ, we want to make every area of our lives pleasing to Him. We want to be genuinely Christian in each aspect of our living, because we know that being genuine is being real! And we want to be "real Christians!"

On the other hand, being "pretend Christians" is phony, fake, unreal. It makes us feel uneasy, unsatisfied, unfulfilled, insincere. At the very core and center of our being we want to be real, because instinctively we know that to be real is to be free!

In John 8:31-32 Jesus said to the Jews who had professed faith in Him, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." I believe that our Lord was saying that to know the truth is to know it experientially; i.e., to do the truth, to obey the truth, to follow the truth in our lives. When we do that, we will experience the freedom that living the truth brings.

And in I John 1:6 the Apostle writes: "If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth." Living by the truth means living according to God's truth, including His revealed will for our lives. I believe this is what it means to be "real Christians." And living as "real Christians" frees us from the sense of unreality, and frees us from the feelings of uneasiness, dissatisfaction, and insincerity that go along with being half-hearted and double-minded in our commitment to Christ.

This brings us to our second major question,

II. HOW CAN I TELL WHETHER I'M A "PRETEND CHRISTIAN" OR A "REAL CHRISTIAN"?