

Are We Real Christians

Acts 11:26

The lesson for today is going to deal with being a real Christian. Now by this we do not mean being saved. The world today has come to think that being saved is the same thing as being a Christian. But if you look in the King James Bible the word Christian only occurs 3 times. We will look at those scriptures and give a biblical account of what it means to be a Christian. Now it goes without saying that one must be saved to be a Christian. But as we go through this lesson it will be clear that it is possible to be saved and not be what the word of God defines as a Christian.

Even though Acts 11:26 is our key text let us look at some other scriptures in the book of Acts that will give us a good introduction for our first point. In the verses below we will see many different people getting saved starting with the day of Pentecost and following all the way up to where Peter preached to the house of Cornelius. In each of these accounts the people are saved, but as we will see no one was called a Christian until Acts 11:26.

Acts 2:41-47 (This is the result Peter preaching on the day of Pentecost)

Acts 4:1-4 (This is the 2nd time that Peter preached to the Jews)

Acts 8:26-39 (Here we see Philip preach to the Ethiopian eunuch and he gets saved)

Acts 9:1-25 (This passage gives us the conversion of Saul who is also Paul)

Acts 10:34-48 (Here we see the Gentiles receiving the Holy Ghost as a result of Salvation)

Now let us go to Acts 11:26 and put this all together. In Acts 11:26 we see saved people first called Christians. Now if you look at the people there some of them were saved well before coming to Antioch, like Paul and Barnabas. So therefore many were saved for a while before anyone called them Christians. They called them Christians first at Antioch and not Jerusalem. The most likely reason for calling them Christians is because they preached Christ contrary to the Law or other religions of that time and also these people who were saved were very different to the average person of Antioch. Therefore we see that it is possible to be saved and not a Christian by the bible definition of the word because they were not called Christians until Antioch.

If the word Christian only occurs 3 times in a King James Bible it must be significant and it is. Let us look at all three times and we will see a characteristic of what a Real Christian is by the word of God 's standard and not the worlds.

1) Acts 11:26 (They were preaching Christ and being Christ like in their actions)

- A real Christian will promote the Lord Jesus Christ in all areas of his life. He will also strive to maintain a good testimony as Christ did which will separate him from the world in many areas.
- Today we can't tell the difference between saved people and lost people. The saved crowd today in many areas has picked up the worlds dress, music, language, and actions. They think just because it has the name Christian in front of it that makes it

- ok. You can't just put the name Christian on some and make it spiritual take for instance "Christian rock" there is no such thing. By the definition of rock it cannot be spiritual.
- In Philippians 2:5-8 we see that we are to have the mind of Christ. This includes the following things.
 - a. No reputation (verse 7). Everything in our lives should be about the Lord Jesus Christ and not us. This is not so with much of Christianity in America today because Christianity in America today has become about putting on a show and entertaining the people instead of ministering to them.
 - b. The form of a servant (verse 7). Our life should be a life of service. After all this is our reasonable service considering what Jesus has done for us Romans 12:1-2
 - c. Learned obedience through humility (verse 8). A real Christian will follow this example in the Lord Jesus Christ.

2) Acts 26:28 (Here a Real Christian is connected with Persuasion)

- As a saved person our life should have some persuasion about it. If we do not live any different from the world as we were discussing in point number one then we can not persuade anyone to get saved.
- We are said by the word of God to be the salt of the earth. Then we should make lost people thirsty for the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Does anything about your life persuade others to get saved?

3) 1 Peter 4:16 (Here being a Real Christian is connected with suffering)

- This is probably the number one reason that we do not live any different or try to persuade other to be saved is because we are afraid of suffering a little persecution.
- First of all Jesus left us an example of suffering (1 Peter 2:21-25). Therefore to be a real Christian as we should be we will have to suffer some.
- We are also told that if we live Godly which a Real Christian does then we will suffer persecution. 2 Timothy 3:12

So the 3 main characteristics of a Real Christian are suffering as a Christian, having some persuasion about us, and living as Christ would have lived. By these definitions many maybe saved but few are truly Christians. So the question is if you are saved are you a Real Christian.

Are We Real Christians : Handout
Acts 11:26

Where were people first called Christians?

Where were some of those people first saved?

Explain how one can be saved and yet not be a Christian?

What do you think would be a good definition of a Christian then?

List the 3 different times that the word Christian is found in the Bible.

Using the 3 scripture given above show 3 things that characterize what a Real Christian is?