

Wearing the Name Christian

Introduction

- 1. The name "Christian" is found three times in the New Testament: Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16.**

Acts 11:26 And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called **Christians** in Antioch.

Acts 26:28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You almost persuade me to become a **Christian**."

1 Peter 4:16 Yet if anyone suffers as a **Christian**, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.

- 2. The denominational world wears the name, but contrary to the prayer of Christ.**
John 17:20-26

- A. Contrary to the plea of Paul.**

1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you **be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.**

- B. Contrary to the plan of Paul.**
Ephesians 4:4-6

3. **This lesson is directed to undenominational Christians - those in the church belonging to Christ.**
 - A. **We know that “Christian” is the right and only name, but many do not realize the full significance of wearing it. All baptized believers wear it, but some not well!**
 - B. **A Christian is more than a: baptized person, church member, weekly worshiper. There are many of these, but fewer true Christians!**

What Wearing the Name Christian Means

1. **The honor of wearing the name Christian.**
 - A. **The name Christian is the greatest and most distinguished name of all.**
 - 1) **Song - “Precious name, O how sweet...”**

Isaiah 56:5 Even to them I will give in My house and within My walls a place and a name better than that of sons and daughters; I will give them **an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.**

Isaiah 62:2 The Gentiles shall see your righteousness, and all kings your glory. You shall **be called by a new name**, which the mouth of the LORD will name.

2) **Early Christians were excited to wear it.**

1 Peter 4:16 Yet if anyone suffers as **a Christian**, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter.

Acts 5:41 So they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that **they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name.**

- 3) We wear the name, not of an ordinance, man nor angel, but the name of God's Son. We can glory in this name.**

Galatians 6:14 But God forbid that I should boast except **in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ**, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

2. The reward of wearing the name Christian.

A. The blessings of a benevolent Father belong to the Christian.

1) The material blessings of life.

Matthew 6:33 But **seek first** the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and **all these things shall be added to you.**

2) The more valuable spiritual blessings are especially the Christian's.

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with **every spiritual blessing** in the heavenly places **in Christ**,

- a. Things such as forgiveness, the holy spirit, prayer, etc.**

B. The promise of heaven is given to Christians only.

1) Not to unbelievers.

John 8:24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for **if you do not believe that I am He**, you will die in your sins."

2) Not to the disobedient.

2 Thessalonians 1:8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

3) Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people and only true, Bible Christians, are making the preparation for heaven.

John 14:3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also.

3. The responsibility of wearing the name Christian.

A. Wearing a name of honor and blessing brings with it responsibility.

Illustrate: Wearing the name American should involve the duty of believing in the constitution, practicing democracy, being patriotic, etc.

- We are all citizens by birth. Some practice it well, others do not.

B. Wearing the name "Christian" means assuming the responsibility: as a disciple, to learn; as a follower, to imitate; as a child of God, to obey; as a servant, to be loyal.

Luke 14:25-33

C. The Christian life is a life of duty.

Ecclesiastes 12:13 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all.

Luke 17:10 "So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"

Difference Between Being a Christian and Just Wearing the Name:

1. The Bible speaks of different kinds of Christians, and between the following extremes there are various degrees and shades.

A. Strong and weak.

Romans 15:1 We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

B. Spiritual and carnal.

1 Corinthians 3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ.

C. Hot and cold.

Revelation 3:15-16 I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.

D. Stable and unstable.

Ephesians 4:14-16

E. Center and peripheral.

Matthew 26:57-58

2. The truths regarding these different Christians:

A. The first kind wears the name Christian well, the second, not well; the first is a glory to the cause, the second, a reproach; the first are truly converted, the second, half or unconverted; the first are going to heaven, the second, are going to hell.

- 3. How can I determine if I am a true Bible Christian, or merely wearing the name?**
- A. Did I become a Christian from conviction or convenience? If for family, prestige, etc., I am merely wearing the name.**
 - B. Am I separated from the world in my recreation, language, literature, etc? If I drink, dance, curse, gamble, etc., I am just wearing the name.**
 - C. Am I really devoted to the church? Does it come first or second?**

Matthew 6:33 But **seek first the kingdom of God** and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

- D. Do I love the brethren or have no time for them?**

John 13:34 A new commandment I give to you, **that you love one another; as I have loved you**, that you also love one another.

- E. Do I attend the maximum or the minimum number of services? Do I give liberally or miserly? If I am in the first group, I am a Christian; if not, I only wear the name.**
- F. Do I appreciate strong preaching, or am I offended when truth and error are kindly but plainly differentiated?**

Galatians 4:16 Have I therefore become your enemy **because I tell you the truth?**

John 6:66 From that time many of His disciples went back and **walked with Him no more.**

G. Am I growing in the Christian graces?**2 Peter 1:5-8****H. Am I growing in knowledge? Or am I unconcerned about Christian development?**

2 Peter 3:18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

I. Am I trying to save the lost according to my opportunities and ability, or do I care about telling others of Christ? I cannot be a real Christian unless I am a soul-winner for Christ.**Facts Regarding the Wearing of the Name Christian****1. We wear it voluntarily. Christ did not compel me to take it and wear it. Therefore, we ought to serve Him gladly and willingly.**

2 Corinthians 12:15 And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.

2. We always wear it. Wherever we go or whatever we do, we wear the name Christian. We can't take it off and put it on again.

Luke 9:23 Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.

Matthew 24:44 Therefore you also **be ready**, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

3. We ought to wear it intelligently. We should wear the name Christian ever mindful of our influence on others.**Matthew 5:13-16**

4. We need to be cognizant of the fact of the final judgment.

2 Corinthians 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that **each one may receive the things done in the body**, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

Conclusion

- 1. Are we Christians or merely wearing the name?**
- 2. Not all who wear the name will go to heaven, but only those who try to live up to the name**
Matthew 7:21
- 3. Let us ask ourselves, "How can I be a better Christian?"**

CHRISTIAN

Invitation

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