



Scriptures and Doctrine :: What does it mean to be a Christian?

What does it mean to be a Christian? - posted by lyndon, on: 2003/12/13 22:09

Hi

I'm just looking for peoples personal thoughts on this subject, I do not want to hear Leonard Ravenhill or Calvin's thoughts, but your own personal thoughts according to scripture. What does it mean to be a Christian? How do we know we are Christians?

The reason I am asking this is I've been reading some of the posts, and I am beginning to wonder what constitutes being a Christian. A certain behavior or a certain belief, a set of '4 spiritual laws' and praying the 'sinners prayer'?

A Work in Progress
Lyndon

Re: What does it mean to be a Christian? - posted by lwpray (), on: 2003/12/14 4:04

To be a Christian:

To have been made spiritually alive, not mentally attached, spiritually alive to the eternal purposes of Heaven.
L. W.

Re: What does it mean to be a Christian? - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/12/14 6:47

As the Bible only seems to use the word 'Christian' in the sense of an accusation it inevitably poses the old question If you were brought to trial for being a Christian would there be enough evidence to convict you?

Re: - posted by lwpray (), on: 2003/12/14 7:06

If you were brought to trial for being a Christian would there be enough evidence to convict you?

Provoking indeed, isn't it?!

Re: - posted by JPmissionary, on: 2003/12/15 3:49

I believe to be a Christian it would mean to put on Christ, become more Christ like, all which we learn how to do from the Bible and Christ that dwells in us.

Re: What does it mean to be a Christian? - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/12/15 4:37

Hi Lyndon

One of the difficulties in defining 'Christian' is that 'Christian' is not the word generally used in scripture to define 'Christian'. If you see what I mean.

The more usual words are 'believer' and 'saint', with 'believer' being a participle which implies process rather than crisis. In other words the Bible 'describes' Christians by their characteristics. 'Christianity' is therefore is not primarily a 'belief system' nor a 'moral code' (although it has both). It is a relationship of total dependence on another which is manifested by the life of the other being seen with increasing clarity. Its focus is life rather than birth.

Just to be even more pedantic. 'Christian' is a noun, so I will not use it as an adjective. So I never think in terms of 'Chris

tian politicians', 'Christian business men' etc. This affects quite a bit of my thinking e.g. I do believe you can have a Jewish Christian, but not a Christian Jew.

Re: - posted by almondBranch (), on: 2003/12/15 5:32

Quote:

-----'Christian' is a noun, so I will not use it as an adjective

Quite true, I might also say that it is a noun that needs no adjective to accompany it. (or should need none anyway). :-D

As Watchman Nee relates:

Quote:

-----I met a certain believer once on a train who asked me what kind of Christian I was. I replied that I was just a Christian. He said, "There is no such Christian in the world. Saying that you are a Christian means nothing; you have to say what kind of Christian you are in order for it to be meaningful." I replied, "I am simply a man who is a Christian. Do you say that for a man to be a Christian means nothing? What kind of Christian would you say is meaningful? As for me, I can only be a Christian—nothing more." That day we had a very good talk together.

Re: What does it mean to be a Christian? - posted by lwpray (), on: 2003/12/15 5:37

A Christian:

A space-time display of the work of the Cross for the sake of demonstrating the Holiness of God.

L. W.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2003/12/15 10:45

Quote:

-----but your own personal thoughts according to scripture. What does it mean to be a Christian? How do we know we are Christians?

I feel that by reading the 'Gospel of John' you can come to a knowledge of the truth and become a Christian:

John 20:31 (niv) - But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

And in the book of '1 John' the message is written that you may become a Christian and also know that you are a Christian.

1 John 5:13 (niv) - I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

Re: What does it mean to be a Christian? - posted by lwpray (), on: 2003/12/15 11:00

A Christian:

Walking in light and fellowship with God
far beyond doctrinal acknowledgment.

L. W.

Re: in a single verse - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/12/15 11:30

In a single verse?

I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ living in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me.

A Christian is a 'no-longer I but Christ living in me' person

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2003/12/15 15:59

A babe in Christ is one who struggles with the old man. He may live in the House for awhile. If he learns to obey the commands of Jesus in his daily life his heart will cry out abba Father. If he chooses to remain in subjection to the flesh he will be thrown out of the house. That is what faith is all about, saying, "Yes Lord." "My sheep know my voice." To know God's will for us is what saves us. Salvation is revelation.

in Christ
Jeff

Re: - posted by moreofHim (), on: 2003/12/15 16:42

Quote:

-----A Christian is a 'no-longer I but Christ living in me' person

Most wonderful! The simpler- the better. So basic, so simple- yet so true.

In His perfect love, Chanin

Re: - posted by ccchhhrrriiisss (), on: 2003/12/15 20:11

I like Keith Green's definition of a christian:

"Someone who is BANANAS for JESUS!"

:D

It is simple, but if the shoe fits...

Re: - posted by ccchhhrrriiisss (), on: 2003/12/15 20:32

My definition of a "christian":

Someone who trades everything he is for all that He is.

A christian wants -- more than anything else -- to KNOW Him, and to be His friend.

He is willing to give up all that he was, all that he is, and all that he will ever be -- just to know Him, and to be His friend.

A christian is not worried about what he will lose, nor what he will gain.

He is concerned most of all with having a close and intimate relationship with the God of all Creation -- and to offer humble adoration and pure love to God.

His heart beats at the thought of spending time with Him; his heart bleeds when time has gone by without spending quality time with Him.

The greatest moments of a christian's life come when he spends time alone with the Lord.

He lives his life as a walking prayer -- considering the Lord in all circumstances.

He hates sin, because the Lord hates sin.

When his heart grows proud, he remembers that His heart is humble.

He cares for others because He cares for others.

He is offended when he believes that God is offended, but sincerely loves the offender.

With every decision he makes, he consults the Lord first.

His life revolves around the Lord (not just church), and he makes decisions accordingly.

He realizes that life is but a pilgrimage, and that it is fleeting in comparison with eternity.

His greatest desire is to PLEASE the Lord, and attempts to learn what pleases the Lord with every beat of his heart.

The Lord is first in his life -- and everything else is very distantly second.

He loves the Lord with all of his heart, mind, soul and strength.

He longs to know the heart of God -- and the more he knows, the more he realizes he doesn't know.

He longs to see the face of God. He knows that seeing God results in death -- but figures that this would be the best way to die (and then awaken in the presence of the Lord seeing Him forever)!

:)

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2003/12/16 10:54

Awfully momentous question! Your eternity depends upon the answer. 'He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life.' Oh, what a simple thing the gospel is! How fearful to think it is hid from so many (2 Cor. 4:3-4)!
-Robert Murray McCheyne

Salvation is Christ not a list of verses. The scriptures point the way to the living Christ.

John 5:39-40 (niv) - You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.

Re: - posted by rookie (), on: 2003/12/16 11:40

Those who say, "Yes Lord."

Re: - posted by ccchhhrrriiisss (), on: 2003/12/16 16:45

Great definition!

Re: - posted by riki (), on: 2003/12/16 18:26

I would just like to say THANKS :-) for some wonderful definitions. Some of them are really... Wow. I don't know how to put it. I can tell that more than one person has put his heart into this, trying to define what/how a Christian is. And that is exactly how it should be - it is a question of heart!

It is also interesting to see that according to the definitions I like best, it seems like I am saved, baptized and speaking in tongues, but not a Christian... THAT is provoking, but nevertheless well needed. I do believe that I am still in the House, though, by the grace of God. As lyndon put it, "a work in progress". ;-)

Re: George Foreman Lean Machine - posted by philologos (), on: 2003/12/19 12:47

I had another take on this thread today. I watched an advert for the George Foreman Lean Machine. It's a kind of low fat steak fryer. At the end of the advert he looked into the camera and said 'Ah'm so proud of it, ah put ma name on it'.

It immediately spoke to my heart. He is willing to be identified with His people. It's nothing that we have added, but He has invested so much in us, that it is as though he says (please excuse the accent)

"ahm so proud of what I am doing in these people ah've put ma Name on them" :-P