

that he has become a member of the Lord's family (John 3:3,5; Galatians 3:26,27).

* To be a Christian one must wear the Lord's name, as a member of His church, "*The churches of Christ salute you*" (Romans 16:16); and as an individual follower of Christ, he is called a Christian. "*Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf*" (1 Peter 4:16). "*...I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named*" (Ephesians 3:14,15). "*Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved*" (Acts 4:12).

* To be a Christian one must worship God in spirit and in truth each first day of the week (John 4:24; Acts 20:7), and he must live the faithful Christian life (Revelation 2:10). Being a Christian means learning to be Christ-like, learning to "*...be partakers of divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust*" (2 Peter 1:4).

* One of the most vital points of Christian growth is the bearing of fruit to God. Jesus said of His disciples, "*I am the vine, ye are the branches; He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without*

me ye can do nothing. ... As the Father hath loved me, so I have loved you: continue ye in my love. If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love..." (John 15:5,9,10).

* To be a Christian one must practice the love and compassion of Christ. "*Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me*" (Matthew 25:34-37).

Based on these facts, are you a Christian — not a particular *kind* of Christian, but just a Christian? If not, we pray that you will become one, according to the teaching of God's word.

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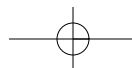
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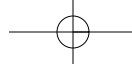
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Who Is a Christian?

J.C. Choate





Who Is a Christian?

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Large numbers of people all over the world claim to be Christians. There are several definitions of such a person, but let's consider: **Who is a Christian?** How does one become a Christian? What makes one a Christian? Would the Scriptures agree that everyone who *thinks* he is a Christian really is a Christian?

First, let us see who a Christian is not!

- ✓ One is not a Christian because he was born physically into a family of believers; there are no babies who are Christians.
- ✓ One is not a Christian simply because he believes in God and believes that Christ is the Son of God.
- ✓ One is not a Christian because he is willing to confess Christ as the Son of God, or because he "confesses" that "God for Christ's sake has pardoned his sins".
- ✓ One is not a Christian simply because he has "joined" some church or because he has been sprinkled or poured or immersed.
- ✓ One is not a Christian because he lives a good moral life and worships with believers in Christ.

No, one is not a Christian because of these or perhaps any number of other things that might be listed.

Then who is a Christian? Continue to think with me.

* To be a Christian one must be old enough to be an accountable being, knowing right from wrong (Romans 14:12). He must be able to hear the word of God and to understand it, believing in God and believing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Paul said, "*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*" (Romans 10:17). The Hebrew writer said, "*But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him*" (Hebrews 11:6). Finally, Christ said, "...ye believe in God, believe also in me" (John 14:1).

* To be a Christian one must repent, or turn away from his sins. Paul said that God "...commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). Christ said that we must repent or perish (Luke 13:3).

* To be a Christian one must confess with the mouth that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. "*For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*" (Romans 10:10). Christ said,

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:32). We have an example of the man from Ethiopia saying that he believed with all of his heart that Jesus Christ was the Son of God (Acts 8:37). On the basis of that confession, "*...they went down both into the water; both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him*" (Acts 8:38,39).

* Thus, if one is to be a Christian, he must be baptized. Christ said, "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*" (Mark 16:16). Peter said that one must repent and be baptized to have the remission of sins (Acts 2:38). And Paul further explained, "*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life*" (Romans 6:3,4).

* To be a Christian one must not only obey these commands of the gospel to be saved, but at that point he is assured that "*... the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved*" (Acts 2:47). This means that the obedient believer has been born of water and of the Spirit, and

