

What It Means To Be a Christian

Dub McClish

The word *Christian* has greatly changed in meaning through the centuries. In modern usage, one may believe as little or much of the teaching of the New Testament, as long as a person lives “a good moral life.” While an upright life (as defined by the Bible) is an essential part of being a Christian, we must also understand the way one becomes a Christian, which we will notice later. For the moment, consider with me, by means of an acrostic, some basic elements of the conduct of a Christian in daily life:

- **C**onverted, a changed or transformed person (Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 4:22-24).
- **H**umble, a person who is submissive to God and free of pride toward others (Phi. 2:5-8).
- **R**eherent, in awe of God, His Son, and His Word (Mat. 6:9; Rom. 16:27; Heb. 2:1-3).
- **I**nnocent, living a blameless life, above reproach morally (Gal. 5:19-21; Phi. 2:15; 2 Pet. 3:14).
- **S**anctified/holy, one “set apart,” dedicated to Christ (Rom. 12:1; 1 Cor. 6:11).
- **T**hankful/grateful to God, Christ, and to fellowmen (Eph. 5:20; Col. 3:17; 1 The. 5:18).
- **I**nfluential, “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world (Mat. 5:13-14; 1 Tim. 4:12-13).
- **A**ctive in serving Jesus and one’s fellowmen (1 Cor. 15:58; Gal. 6:9-10; Heb. 12:3).
- **N**ew “creation”/person (John 3:3-5; Rom. 6:1-4, 12-13; 2 Cor. 5:17).

But how does one become a Christian, a “new creation”? One must hear and believe the Gospel that tells of God’s love and mercy, demonstrated through His Son, Jesus Christ (John 8:24; Rom. 10:14, 17). One’s faith, if genuine, will cause him to gladly confess his faith in Jesus as God’s Son (Rom. 10:9-10) and will lead him to humbly repent of and forsake sinful behavior (Acts 2:38; 17:30). Then one must be baptized (immersed) in water for his sins to be forgiven through the blood of Christ (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:37-38; 22:16; Rom. 6:1-4). By these responses to the Gospel, one is saved from the guilt of his past sins, added to the church Jesus built (Acts 2:41-42, 47). Those who from that day forward thus became disciples of Jesus thereafter came to be called Christians (11:26). Eternal salvation through God’s grace is thence dependent upon living a life of faithfulness to God’s Word after becoming a Christian. As the numerous passages cited in the *CHRISTIAN* acrostic listed above.

Have you become a Christian by New Testament definition? If you have not done so, I urge you to do so immediately. If you are a brother or sister in Christ, I exhort you remain faithful to Him Who died for you.

[Note: This article is adapted from a radio script I wrote for the Light of Life program on KPAR radio, Granbury, TX. which aired on July 3, 1980. This daily program was presented by the Granbury Church of Christ,

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