

How Would God Define A Christian?

Matthew 7:21-23

Start with trip to West Indies: It dawned on me. No one has explained something to you. Down here we don't say "good night" to end a conversation. We say it begin one.

That person learned quickly that a word as simple as "good night" can mean different things to different people. To some it closes a conversation and to others it begins a conversation.

That same principle is true with the word "Christian." This word means different things to different people. If you were to ask the average person "what is a Christian?" you would get a variety of answers such as: 'A Christian is someone who goes to church every Sunday'. Others would mention church in their definition. Or they would say a Christian is someone who loves the Lord and tries to do right. A Christian is someone who lives by the Ten Commandments.

If you were to ask 100 people what a Christian is you would get a least 10 different answers.

But when you think about it, it doesn't matter how you or I would define it, the important question is, what does the Lord say?

God will not judge me by your definition or examine you by mine. The most important question is how does God define a Christian?

- I would like to first answer a question of how does God NOT define a Christian?

1. Look at vs. 21 "Not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord will enter into Kingdom of Heaven. But he who does the will of my Father in Heaven."

Notes he says "many."

- What does this mean? Until you realize that without Christ there is no hope then you will rely on yourself to good works to try to impress the Lord. The Bible says, "Its not based on work lest any man would boast."
- And let me add, sincerity doesn't make you justified before God. You can be sincere about something and also be sincerely wrong.

2. Vs.22 "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, cast out demons in your name, done many works in your name?"

- Let me just say that the need to be recognized and the need to feel like I would to do good works to get me there are always a temptation.
 - If you notice everything they do is good.
- People will say, I'm certain so and so are Christians. Look at the way he treats his neighbor. I think he even does devotions with his kids. But Jesus is saying is you cannot determine if a man is a Christian because he says the right things, the right conduct, proper language, or proper life for that matter. Many people who say and do the right things will NEVER see heaven.
 - Remember sincerity doesn't equal being a Christian.
- Vs. 23" And then I will declare to them, I never knew you; depart from me, you who practice this lawlessness." Being a Christian is not about saying or doing something.
- With that said, how does GOD define a Christian? Many times the answer is simpler than you think. Illustration: Readers Digest told a story about a photographer who does a lot of work with children. During one session he told a 5 year old that he had nice big blue eyes. He asked where did you get those? The boy simply said, "They came with my head"!!

- Look with me in John 6:40 “And this is the will of the one who sent me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise Him up at the last day.”
- The word “believe “ means to trust, depend on, rely upon. It is not what you have done or what you have said but who have you put your trust in as your only way to heaven. And that someone MUST be Jesus!!!
- What the Bible is saying here is, Jesus took your place. He died in your place!! Jesus is the only basis upon which God can accept you.
- There was a 31 year old woman who learned she had cancer. She got treatment and shortly after the cancer went into remission. She got married, became pregnant but the cancer reoccurred, and shortly after she died. The reason she died is that she refused treatment until the child was born. Once the child was born it was too late. She died in her baby’s place. She saved it by dying for it.
- Jesus has done that very thing for us. He saved us by dying in our place so that we can live.
- There are those who are trying to save themselves by saying or doing something instead of trusting the one who can save them.
- In closing: John 1:12 “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe on His name.”
Becoming a Christian is not a matter of saying or doing something but in trusting someone and that someone is Jesus!!