**The**

**Christian**

Who is a Christian? What does the “Christian” mean? When was the first time the name “Christian” was used? What does it mean to say, “I am a Christian!” This lesson will answer all these questions and more about the Christian.

**The First Christians**

The name “Christian” is found only three times in the Bible:

1. **Acts 26:28—“Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.”**
2. **I Peter 4:16—“Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.”**
3. **Acts 11:26—“…And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.”**

The people in the city of Antioch daily watched and talked about the difference in the lives of the people who followed Christ. Ten years had passed since the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, but the people continued to follow Him. The people in the city called these followers Christians, because they were different in their ways, actions and lives. The followers of Jesus Christ were first called Christians in the city of Antioch about 42 A.D.

**What Is a Christian?**

The name Christian means Christ-like or Christ-ian. A Christian is a follower of Jesus Christ. Notice the first Christians did not call themselves Christians but their name was given to them by the world. The first Christians were good examples. The leader was a man named Barnabas. The Bible says he was, **“…a good man, and full of …faith: and much people was added unto the Lord”** because of him (Acts 11:24). It is important for the cause of Christ that the unsaved see good examples of Christ. The greatest witness for Christ is good Christians. The greatest hindrance is people who use the name Christian but live the same as unsaved people.

**A Good Christian**

Not all saved people are good Christians. Just the same as Barnabas, a good Christian will have a good testimony. The early Bible Christians knew the importance of the name Christian. Many suffered and many died just for the testimony and confession, **“I am a Christian!”** Live the right example and show others that the Christian life is real. Unsaved people expect Christians to live differently and act differently. A Christian should have the testimony that, “He is a good man, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith.”

**Are You A Good Christian?**

1. Are you saved? (Romans 10:9)
2. Have you been baptized? (Acts 2:38)
3. Do you faithfully attend church services? (Hebrews 10:25)
4. Do you give of your time and money for the work of God?

(II Corinthians 9:7)

1. Do you practice worldly, sinful habits? (I Corinthians 6:19)
2. Do you daily read your Bible? (II Timothy 3:15)
3. Do you daily pray to God? (I Thessalonians 5:17)
4. Do you practice Christian living on your job, in school and at home? (Joshua 1:8)
5. What do other people have to say about your Christian life?

(Matthew 5:16)

1. Would you be ashamed to meet the Lord today? (I John 2:28)

**Illustration:** In a Communist country soldiers went into a church and demanded the people to leave one at a time. An officer stood at the door and asked each person, **“Are you a Christian?”** In order to have freedom, he demanded they spit upon a picture of Jesus Christ and deny Him.

The soldiers waited outside the door with guns ready to kill those who refused to deny the Lord. The first man looked at the soldiers with guns, bowed his head with fear, denied the Lord and spat upon the picture. Three other men followed the same example.

Finally, a young girl came to the door. She looked at the soldiers and then looked at the picture. She wept, took the picture in her arms and said, “I love Him—I cannot deny my Lord.” She waited for the soldiers to shoot but the officer was touched and said, “I have never seen such faith. Free the girl and kill the four men.” He saw true Christianity.

The world needs to see that the Christian faith is real. Be strong, stop your sin, change your habits, join with those in the past who stood for Jesus and be a good Christian. Jesus Christ gave His life for us. We, as Christians, need to live for Him.