

CHRISTIANITY

What is Christianity

What it means to be a Christian

According to the New Testament of the Holy Bible

- Acts 11/26: It was at Antioch that the disciples were first called 'Christians'.

- Acts 26/29: And (King) Agrippa said to Paul, "In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?"

The Greek term *christianos* is formed from the Greek word *christ(os)* = Christ, and the latin ending – *ianus*, which gives it the meaning of "belonging to". However, this is the normal usage only if the ending is attached to a latin name. If it is attached to a Greek name, it becomes a term of derision – an insult. So in Antioch, it was the pagans who came up with this term to insult and ridicule the followers of Jesus. Similarly, King Agrippa's remark was an expression of contempt. St. Peter makes mention of this in his first letter:

- 1Peter 4/16: Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name.

During the first century, the followers of Jesus never identified themselves by the term: *christianos*. They called themselves "the brethren", or "the saints", or "the disciples", or "the believers". However, by the second century, the derogatory connotation of this term was forgotten, and they began using it when speaking of themselves.

The core teachings about Christianity are scattered throughout the different parts of the Gospels, making it difficult, if not impossible, for the occasional reader of the Bible to arrive at a full understanding of what Christianity is. The purpose of this work is, therefore, to collect and organize these teachings in a way that will bring the meaning of Christianity into clear focus.

The quotations in this text are presented without any commentary or explanations, because the Bible is not primarily about intellectual understanding, but about spiritual understanding, and it is only by the gift and guidance of the Holy Spirit that the reader will attain growth in life and faith and spiritual understanding.

- 2 Timothy 3/14-15: But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

In the case of lengthy parts, as, for example, the parables, only the part containing the actual lesson is quoted in this text. The reader can turn to the Bible to read the full text.

The quotations in this text are taken from the English Standard Version of the Holy Bible.

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