

Title: WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?

Text: I Peter 4:16

Intro: The word "*Christian*" is used only **3X** in the King James Bible (**text; Acts 11:26c; 26:28**). Most people call themselves Christians yet when measured and weighed by God's biblical standards, they are badly found wanting and untrue to the definition of a genuine Christian! The Bible gives us seven specific descriptions of a true Christian –

1. IN FAITH – He is a BELIEVER in Christ (John 3:16-18). Things like religion, church membership, sacraments, good deeds, praying, Bible reading, religious rituals and ceremonies, etc. do not automatically make a Christian. One becomes a true Christian by wholly believing and trusting in the perfect Person and work of Christ alone (**Gal. 2:16**).

2. IN RELATIONSHIP – He is a CHILD of God (John 1:12-13). What a great privilege! Originally, what are we by nature? The answer is found in: **John 8:44a & Eph. 2:13**. But in Christ Jesus we obtained a new spiritual relationship (**Gal. 3:26**). Now as the children of God we must truly love, trust and obey our Heavenly Father! The Bible says that in the spiritual realm there are two kinds of children: those of God and those of Satan. Friend, whose child are you?

3. IN CHARACTER – He is a SAINT of God (Rom. 1:7; I Cor. 1:2). The Roman Catholic concept that only super-holy (but dead people) who are canonized by the Catholic Church, are saints is plainly unscriptural. The word "**saint**" as used in the N.T. describes all those living people who have put their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus. Ask St. Peter himself what is the definition of a saint... **I Pet. 1:15; 2:11**.

4. IN SERVICE – He is a SERVANT of God (I Pet. 2:16). Before a man is saved, he is a servant of sin (**John 8:34**). A saved man is different because he has been freed by Christ from sin and death (**Rom. 6:18, 22; 8:2**). A Christian servant first obey God before men (**Acts 5:29**). He must not strive but is gentle with men (**II Tim. 2:24-25**).

5. IN COMMUNION – He is a FRIEND of God (John 15:14-15). Like the man of God – Abraham, a Christian is a friend of the Lord, not just a fan or an ordinary acquaintance but a dear friend (**Jas. 2:23**). God spoke unto Abraham as a man speaks to his friend. As a friend, God revealed things to Abraham (the destruction of Sodom & Gomorrah, etc.) unknown to other men. And so with the Christian; we too have a great friend in Jesus (**Prov. 18:24**). He knows all our fears, sorrows, troubles, trials, and weaknesses. Jesus cares for us and has revealed to us God’s word and will.

6. IN CONFLICT – He is a SOLDIER of Christ (II Tim. 2:3-4). A soldier in the Armed Forces is one who is willing to endure hardness, deny himself comfort, and lay down his life for his country. A Christian is involved in spiritual conflict (**Eph. 6:10-12**). As a soldier of Christ, he must be a good one. Many believers wish to be children and friends of God, but hesitate to be soldiers of Christ due to the demands and hardness! Sadly, many churches are training spoiled children and lazy servants rather than good soldiers of Jesus Christ!

7. IN EXPECTATION – He is an HEIR of God (Rom. 8:17). How would you feel if you inherited \$100 million? As an immediate inheritance upon salvation, a Christian has been assured of two things: (1) a mansion in the Heavenly City (**John 14:2**); and (2) a new, glorified, immortal body at the Rapture (**Phil. 3:20-21; I John 3:2**). Now if Christians SUFFER patiently and diligently SERVE for the glory of God, they are further assured of additional inheritance. Faithful servants and soldiers of Christ will be rewarded with an inheritance of crowns, thrones, real estates, and reign with Him (**Rom. 8:17-18; Col. 3:24; II Tim 2:12; Rev. 5:10**).

CONCLUSION: Every professing Christian listening right now should honestly examine himself whether he is a real Christian. As for new believers, you must continually grow in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To the unsaved, the first step is salvation – a heartfelt repentance of your sins and a personal faith and trust in Jesus Christ.