



## What Is a Christian? Am I One?

*“Go to church? Every Sunday. Read the Bible? I try to! Have a pretty good grasp on the teachings of the Bible? I think so. But am I really a Christian? I don’t know. Why don’t I know? How can I call myself one if I don’t know what it means? Is it ok if I doubt? At moments I feel like I’m a Christian, but then in other moments I have no clue. I don’t want to be someone who does it half-way. I want to know what it really means.”*

It may start with a prayer, but the words in themselves are not what make you a Christian. Most of us think that in some magical moment we repeat a prayer and POOF, we are redeemed and back with our Father. Yes, it’s true that our relationship with God does sometimes start in those moments, but only if our hearts truly believe in what is being said. Our salvation comes when we accept God’s gift of grace through faith with our whole being, not just our minds and not just with our emotions.

Christians are devoted followers of Christ that daily choose to surrender their lives to God, letting His Word and the Holy Spirit guide them. Christians, through faith, believe that Jesus is God and that He paid the price for the sin of man. He conquered death and life in eternity with God became guaranteed. Christians have faith. Not a mindless faith, but faith that comes from learning and reading the Word of God.

When we trust our lives to Jesus, tremendous change happens. We are forgiven, we are named righteous, we are heirs, children of the light, citizens of a Holy nation. We become hungry for others to know Him, too. This is a natural by-product of life with Christ. Checking things on a list doesn’t make you a Christian. Living a life radically changed by the one true God, and desiring that change in others, does.

Sadly, many who think that they are Christians are not. Yes, they may attend a church, attend church events and may even go on retreats, but all that does not make them Christian. These people are called Neo-Christians. They may give an intellectual acknowledgement of Jesus and many will know the “Christian verbiage,” but their lives do not reflect Jesus, rather they reflect that of the world. When away from an accountability figure, these people will act no differently than their non-believing friends. Their values and behavior mirror those of the world. Their behavior is often viewed as that of a hypocrite. The fruit of their faith will be almost non-existent.

If this describes you, confess and turn to Jesus who is anxious to forgive and cleanse you from all unrighteousness. Remember, Jesus died so that you could be forgiven. He is a God of second chances. He wants to give you life so that your life on this earth will reflect Jesus and draw many to Him. Why wait?

John 3:16-17 *“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”*