



Pastor Scott Velain

Should I Be Called A “Christian”?

As we move into this morning’s study entitled “Should I Be Called a Christian?”, I want us to understand some very basic principles before we ever even get started. Many of our brothers and sisters out there may be scratching their heads thinking, “why wouldn’t I want to be called a Christian? Haven’t we always been called Christians? Weren’t the early disciples called Christians? Aren’t Christians followers of Christ the Messiah?” And it is good to ask these kinds of questions. And by the way... the answer to all these questions is yes. Yes, we should want to be called Christians (and we’ll explain why as we move forward). Yes, we have always been called Christians from clear back in the days of the apostles and the early church... and yes, the disciples themselves were indeed called “Christians”, and they clearly accepted that title according to scripture as we will soon see. And yes... true Christians are indeed followers of Christ, who is the anointed one, the “Mashiac”... the “Messiah” of God.

If you were to stand in downtown New York City today and ask people if they knew what a Christian was, I would submit to you my friends that the majority of people that you spoke with would hands down agree that a Christian as someone who follows Yahshua Hamashiach (also known as Jesus in the Greek), the only begotten son of God.

I want us to also understand that literally millions of people have been butchered, tortured, and murdered for simply being Christians. The apostles themselves were murdered for being Christians. And this is a historical fact that cannot be disputed.

The truth is my friends that those of us who believe in the Messiah have been called Christians from the very beginning, and for someone to claim that they are not a Christian is quite frankly a slap in the face not only to those who have died for being Christians... but also for our Messiah himself, who clearly told us to pick up our crosses and to follow him. He also told us that whoever denies him before men... he would deny them before his father!

This idea that followers of our Messiah should not be called “Christians” is literally a new age understanding. This understanding has just surfaced within the last couple of years because of unstudied, and ignorant people who love to follow after other people instead of doing their own homework, reading their Bibles, and properly understanding history.

My friends there are people all over YouTube and all over the Internet that are teaching hundreds of thousands of things that they ought not to be teaching about our Messiah and about his Christian followers and what they should and shouldn’t be doing.

People love to watch videos on the Internet, and because it seems to make sense... without any further study... and without any further questions, and without testing the fruits of that man that is teaching, or his doctrine, they are all too willing to be drug into the devil's boat like a largemouth bass with a hook in its jaw. And if that sounds condescending... maybe it should.

Shame on us for not doing our homework. Shame on us for trading the truth for a lie and a lie for the truth. Shame on us for trading what is sweet for what is bitter. Shame on us for being so lazy and so slothful that we think that it is right to follow some man, rather than to follow the word of God.

My friends the first thing that we must understand... Is that words mean things. Words are how we communicate through sound. Certain words have certain meanings to certain people.

We in the Christian community often times throw around words like "legalism", or "Trinity", or "rapture" that can mean many different things to many different people. Take the word "legalism" for instance. What does legalism mean to you? Some Christians will claim that other Christians are being legalistic because they follow the laws of God. But I... who follow the laws of God because I love God, refer to those who follow the laws of man... as being legalistic.

How about the word "Trinity"? If someone asks me if I believe in the Trinity I might say yes, or I might say no, depending on their definition of the "Trinity". If you are asking me if I believe in three separate co-equal gods who are all coequal and eternal in power and in glory then no... I do not believe in the Trinity. My Bible tells me that God is one... not three gods. And my Father in heaven tells me that there are no other gods before him.

But... if you are asking me if I believe that there is a Father, and a Son, and a Holy Spirit... then my answer would be yes, I believe that there is a Trinity. My Bible clearly tells me that there is a Father, and that there is a Son, and that there is a Ruach Hackodesh. Our Messiah clearly tells us to be baptized in the name of all of them because each one of them plays a significant part in the gift of salvation, and each one of them is where his authority comes from.

How about the word "rapture"? If someone asks me if I believe in the rapture, I might say yes, or I might say no depending on their definition of "the rapture". Some people believe that there's going to be a pre-tribulation rapture that is going to rescue God's people from the persecution of the world that is to come. In that instance... I would answer "no" I do not believe in the rapture.

On the other hand... we all know that there is indeed going to be a rapture at the first resurrection just as the Bible very clearly tells us in Revelation chapter 20 versus four through six. And so, if someone asks me if there's going to be a rapture, my answer would be yes, that there is going to be a rapture of God's people. It's called the first resurrection.

And so, when we talk about the word “Christianity” we must first understand that there are different understandings of the word “Christianity”. Some people believe that the word Christianity means that you are Catholic. Other people believe that the word Christianity means that you are a Baptist. Other people believe that the word Christianity means that you are a Lutheran. Other people believe that the word Christianity means that you’re a Jehovah’s Witness. Other people believe the word Christianity means that you’re a Mormon. Other people believe that the word Christianity means that you belong to any one of over 50,000 different man-made denominational charters of men. None of which is true according to our God breathed Scriptures by the way.

The words “Christian” and “Christianity”, can only be properly defined through the word of God because it is through the word of God that the word “Christian” was first uttered, or made known (and we’ll talk more about that as we move forward here this morning).

Now... as we move through our study today we’re going to explore both the Greek and Hebrew languages. We’re going to also explore the Roman God “Serapis”, and we’re going to explore the only three times that we find the word “Christian” in the New Testament. And as we look at what the word of God has to say about the word “Christian” we’re going to very quickly find that the apostles themselves called themselves “Christians”.

We’re also going to find that the apostle Paul never rebuked the followers of our Messiah from being called “Christians”. We’re also going to find that the apostle Peter tells us that we should not be ashamed to be called Christians, and furthermore, that we should glorify God in that name! Let’s turn to first Peter chapter 4 verse 16:

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

Now my friends this should shut the mouths of those who are wrongfully chastising those of us who are Christians, and who are not ashamed, and who are glorifying God in that name just as Peter tells us to. And yet... we always have those people who don’t read the book for themselves, who run off half-cocked, cherry picking Scriptures, preaching a monkey see monkey do sermon that they got off the Internet from someone else who is preaching a monkey see monkey do sermon that they got off the Internet from someone else. Once again, never asking the Father for discernment, never truly studying to show themselves approved, never testing the fruit of the man that told them that nonsense, claiming to be wise... they have become fools!! And this is how it happens.

I want us to understand the Greek word for Christian found in first Peter chapter 4 verse 16. The original Greek word for Christian is the Greek word “Christianos” which clearly means and I quote “*a follower of Christ*”. And it doesn’t matter whether you go to Strong’s Greek definitions or if you go to Thayer’s Greek definitions... It means “*a follower of Christ*”.

And if we look at the Greek word in Strong's, we can see that this word "Christianos" is derived from the word "Christos" which means, "the Messiah" who was indeed the anointed one of God.

Now my friends, I don't care what some fool on the Internet has to say, because according to the word of God, and according to the Greek definition of the word "Christian"... if I am a true God-fearing, cross bearing, Messiah following person... then I am a Christian... according to... the word of God! I didn't say that... the Bible says that, and the Bible tells me that if I suffer as a Christian, that I should not be ashamed and that I should glorify God in that name!

Therefore... as I have said before so now I say again... I could care less what some fool on the Internet has to say. I am a Christian, and as for me and my house, we will serve Yahovah and his only begotten son Yeshua Hamashiach, and we will glorify our Father in heaven by being called Christians who are part of the body of the Messiah.

Now before we get too far I want us to know and I want us to understand why some people are so lost concerning the title of "Christian" or "Christianity". It's important that we understand how and why people are getting lost, and so I'd like us to turn to acts chapter 11 verse 26:

Act 11:26 and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.

Now the reason that some people have questioned whether or not they should be called a "Christian" is because some people have been spreading the rumor that it was the pagan Gentiles who first started calling the followers of our Messiah "Christians". And because it was the pagan Gentiles that first started calling the followers of our Messiah "Christians" that we should not accept the title of "Christian".

My friends, I have heard a few statements that are as ridiculous as that one. Number one, the Bible makes no mention of pagan Gentiles calling anyone a "Christian". Number two, even if the pagan Gentiles were mocking the followers of our Messiah by calling them "Christians", what does the Bible say about those who mock us? Let's turn to Matthew chapter 5 versus 11 and 12:

Mat 5:11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.

Mat 5:12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

And so even if... and that's a big if... even if, the pagan Gentiles in Antioch were mocking the followers of our Messiah by calling them "Christians" my Messiah tells me that I should be glad for my reward is great in heaven! I will gladly be called "Christian" by the pagan Gentiles!

I indeed do take the title of “Christian” as a badge of honor, and I glorify my Father in that name just as the apostle Peter tells me to!

I don’t care how you slice it, or how you dice it my friends... these anti-Christian people do not have a leg to stand on. The idea that we should not, or cannot be called “Christians” is unbiblical, and because it is unbiblical, it is not of God, nor is it of his will.

My friends we have many would be brothers and sisters out there who have as much as 75% of the truth. If we alienate ourselves from them... If we separate ourselves from them by claiming that we are not Christians... they will be right in pointing right back at us and proclaiming that we are outside the word of God. And they would be right to do so!

Think about it... How can we bring our lost brothers and sisters back to the truth of God’s word while all the while, we are ignoring the truth of God’s word ourselves? We are giving them cause to point at us as being biblically illiterate. This my friends, I would submit to you, is a trick of the devil himself.

Our Messiah came to bring division between his people and the world. Our Messiah did not come to bring division between his people. And those who bring division between his people should be set outside of the assembly of his people. Who is it that wants to bring division into the body of our Messiah, other than the devil himself? Who is it that wants to divide and conquer the people of God other than the devil himself?

Some people will say, “oh it really doesn’t matter what they call you because God knows your heart”. And this is true. But... according to the Bible and his God breathed Scriptures, a Christian is a follower of the Messiah. And if we deny being a follower of the Messiah... then our Messiah will deny us before our Father in heaven. This is no small matter by any means!

This all goes right back to the very clear, very distinct fact that words mean things. The Bible tells us that we will be judged by every word that proceeds from our mouths. So, to say that your words are meaningless, is to once again show yourself as unstudied and ignorant of what the Scripture says.

This is not a joke my friends. This is an attack, and too many Christians are falling for it. Too many Christians are simply waving it off as something trivial and meaningless. I assure you that it is not trivial, nor is it meaningless.

And so... with all that being said, I want to make it clear that I feel for, and I understand my brothers and sisters who do not want to be seen as the world sees Christians today. I get that, and I understand that. But I cannot rebuke what is written within my God-given Scripture to appease the world.

Those of us who have read the Bible from the beginning to the end, rather from the middle to

the end, clearly understand that Catholicism is not Christianity according to the Bible. Those of us who have actually read the book from the beginning to the end clearly understand that both Catholicism and her daughter protestant churches who follow after the traditions and the rituals and the myths of Catholicism are not Christians. Why do we say that? We say that because they are following after another Jesus other than the Jesus that was preached by the apostles. I'd like us to turn to second Corinthians chapter 11 verses four through six:

2Co 11:4 For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.

2Co 11:5 Indeed, I consider that I am not in the least inferior to these super-apostles.

2Co 11:6 Even if I am unskilled in speaking, I am not so in knowledge; indeed, in every way we have made this plain to you in all things.

Paul was chastising the church at Corinth because they have allowed these “super apostles” to come into the church and preach another Jesus, and a different spirit, and a different gospel other than the one that Paul and the apostles were preaching. And this is exactly what has been done through Catholicism and most of her daughter protestant churches who all preach another Jesus that came to do away with his Father’s law and came to do away with his feast days and appointments and came to do away with his seventh day Sabbath and came to lead people astray just as Paul warned the church at Corinth about.

These “super apostles” have names and denominational empires of dirt that are well known around the world as Christians, yet they are not true biblical Christians because they once again teach another Jesus, and a different spirit, and a different gospel than the ones that are taught by the apostles found within our God breathed Scriptures.

Our Messiah’s birthday was not on December 25th and that is not found anywhere in the word of God. Our Messiah did not die on Good Friday, he died on Passover day according to the word of God. He was not in the earth for two days and two nights, he was in the earth for three days and three nights according to the word of God. He was not raised on Easter morning, he was raised on firstfruits according to the word of God. He was not our Easter ham, he was our Passover Lamb according to the word of God. He did not come to create his own first day of the week Sunday Sabbath, he came to uphold his Father’s seventh day Sabbath according to the word of God. And I could go on, and on, and on but I think you get the picture. I want us to also hear, know, and understand what the apostle Paul told the church at Galatia in Galatians chapter 1 versus six through nine:

Gal 1:6 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel—

Gal 1:7 not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to

distort the gospel of Christ.

Gal 1:8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.

Gal 1:9 As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.

Even in the days of the apostles we can clearly see that certain people were creeping in unnoticed who long ago were designated for this condemnation, ungodly people, who were there to pervert the grace of our God into sensuality and to deny our only master and Lord Yeshua Hamashiach. The devil was already busy making his move even in Paul's time.

And so, I understand my brothers and my sisters who are concerned with being called "Christians" when there are so many "Christian" imposters around the world today. But I cannot condone deserting our Messiah by refusing to be called a Christian. I cannot preach a different gospel, and I cannot distort the gospel of our Messiah. Christians are what they are, and according to the word of God... a true Christian is a follower of the Messiah that holds fast to what he himself and the apostles preached, and that will never change.

I want us to understand that this is nothing new. Back in our Messiah's time there were even people who were claiming to be Jews who are not Jews. Let's turn to Revelation chapter 2 verse nine:

Rev 2:9 "I know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich) and the slander of those who say that they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan."

When our Messiah was speaking to the church in Smyrna he told them that he was aware of those who say that they are Jews but were not. Has anything changed today my friends? My friends there is nothing new under the sun. Did we think that there would not be people who would say that they are Christians and are not? And did our Messiah demand that we stop calling the Jews the Jews just because there were imposters of Jews? No! He commanded us to be able to discern between the spirits. First John chapter 4 verses one through six:

1Jn 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.

1Jn 4:2 By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God,

1Jn 4:3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you heard was coming and now is in the world already.

1Jn 4:4 Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

1Jn 4:5 They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them.

1Jn 4:6 We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

And so, you see my friends, there is a way to decipher between deceiving spirits. I can say that I'm a football player for the Dallas Cowboys. But if you would simply test the fruits of what I say, you would quickly learn that I would have a deceiving spirit if I said such a thing. And it's the same way with people who say that they are Christians.

If you stood out on the corner of any major metropolis in the United States today, and asked people if they were a Christian or not... it is said that's as many as 75% of the people there would claim to be Christian. Yet I would submit to you my friends that a very small percentage of them would truly be able to define what a Christian even is according to Scripture. But this should not cause true Christians to quit and run away from being Christians, and for setting the proper example of a true Christian so that others may follow.

My friends I look at it this way... And maybe this will help... Today in our world there is such a thing called the tomato, and there is such a thing as a genetically modified organism. The genetically modified organism that we find on our grocery shelves today looks like a tomato. But it does not taste like a tomato. Anyone who has tasted a true tomato that has been grown from a garden and not been genetically modified, clearly knows what a true tomato is supposed to taste like. The problem is that most of us have forgotten what a home-grown garden tomato tastes like. The genetically modified version of a tomato does not taste like a garden grown tomato. They are different. They look the same. The texture is the same. They're both round. They're both red (for the most part). But they're not the same. One was God grown and God ordained. The other was man created.

Christians are exactly the same. True Christians fear God, and they have picked up their crosses and have agreed to follow after his only begotten Son and to do as he did, and to live as he lived. True Christians understand that the biblical definition of the love of God is that we keep God's commandments and that his commandments are not burdensome to us. 1st John 5:3

Man-made Christians on the other hand do not fear God because they have been wrongly taught that God can only love and that God cannot have wrath, nor can he be judgmental. Man-made Christians do not believe they have to follow after the Messiah because they have been wrongly taught that they are once saved always saved and so it really doesn't matter how they live, and so... do as thou wilt is now the whole of the law for them. They believe what ever myth another man wants to whisper into their itching ears.

And so, once again I understand why many of our brothers and sisters are afraid to be called Christian. I understand that they don't want to be mixed up with this false religion that preaches another Jesus, and another spirit, and another gospel other than the one that Paul taught. I

understand that they don't want to be accursed along with others who call themselves Christians and are not.

But we must also understand that God does indeed search the hearts and minds of his people. God will not be fooled by those who say they are Christians and are not any more than he was fooled by those who said that they were Jews and are not. We need not worry about being lumped together with them unless we do as they are doing. What we need to be concerned with, is being an example for our lost brothers and sisters so that our light will shine the way for them to find the narrow path that we have found.

Words... mean things. We indeed will be judged by every word that proceeds from our mouths. According to the Bible, words mean things. In order to make my point, I want us to understand what the Bible says about the human tongue. We can find that in James chapter 3 versus one through 10:

Jas 3:1 *Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.*

Jas 3:2 *For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body.*

Jas 3:3 *If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well.*

Jas 3:4 *Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs.*

Jas 3:5 *So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire!*

Jas 3:6 *And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell.*

Jas 3:7 *For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind,*

Jas 3:8 *but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.*

Jas 3:9 *With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God.*

Jas 3:10 *From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.*

Again my friends, words mean things. If we say that we are not Christian, then our brothers and sisters who think that they are Christians, will automatically throw up their hands and deny us and everything else that we say. We have an opportunity to bring our lost brothers and sisters back to the truth of God's word and back to the hope of salvation that our Messiah gave to us.

But if we ruin that opportunity, and we trample that opportunity by denying who we are... how then will we be of any use to them? How will we be able to be a light on a Hill or the salt of the earth while at the same time denying who we are?

The title of Christian allows us to have common ground with those of our brothers and sisters who are lost and who are following after the wisdom of men. I'd like us to turn to first Corinthians chapter 9 verse 19:

1Co 9:19 *For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them.*

1Co 9:20 *To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law.*

1Co 9:21 *To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law.*

1Co 9:22 *To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.*

The apostle Paul became all things to all people that he might save some. But Paul never rejected or stopped being a Christian himself. I'd like us to turn to acts chapter 26 verse 28 and 29:

Act 26:28 *And Agrippa said to Paul, "In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?"*

Act 26:29 *And Paul said, "Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am—except for these chains."*

Here once again Paul does not deny being a Christian. He clearly admits that he is one! If Paul was not a Christian, or if Paul denied the title of Christian, or if it was wrong to be a Christian, Paul would have certainly corrected King Agrippa by telling him that he was not a Christian. But instead Paul agrees that he is a Christian and that he wants King Agrippa and everyone who hears him to become such as he is.

My friends I just don't care how you cut it, the idea of a Christian claiming not to be a Christian is ludicrous. A Christian that claims not to be a Christian is nothing more than someone who sows discord among the body of our Messiah and completely rejects what our God breathed Scripture clearly says.

You can not preach the word of God if your bent on preaching only the things that you do like, while throwing out the things that you don't like. And this is exactly what this demonically inspired new age movement is all about. Why would we even contemplate sowing such discord

among ourselves? And I must admit that I myself have been tempted to deny being called a Christian, but through prayer and supplication and proper study our Father has seen fit to extend his grace upon me so that I could indeed see the truth and repent of such foolishness.

Now... with all that being said, I also want to address something else that I believe has caused this whole idea of Christians not calling themselves Christian to occur in the first place. Where did this come from in the first place? Where did it start? I want us to understand where this all started, and I want us to understand the demonic movement that this came from in the first place.

There are people in the world today who call themselves black Hebrews. They claim that all Hebrews are black, and that if you are not black you are not an Israelite. They wrongly claim that white people are the descendants of Esau. And they claim that you should not be called a Christian because the followers of a Roman God called Serapis were first called "Christians".

Serapis was also called "Christus" or "Chrestus", which corresponds to Yeshua's title of the Messiah. It should be no surprise to us that the Greek and the Roman world in that time would call their God "chosen one." But we should understand that the term "Christ" or the Hebrew form of "Mashiach", predates the origin of Serapis by hundreds of years, and we can see that in Daniel chapter 9 verse 25 and Isaiah chapter 61 verse one.

This black Hebrew cult will wrongly claim that the Emperor Hadrian once wrote that the worshipers of Serapis called themselves "Christians". This letter written by Emperor Hadrian was supposedly written in 134 A.D... but... and here's the kicker... the document from which the letter comes which was called the "Historia Augusta" has been shown to be a forgery dating to 395 A.D. hundreds of years after the death burial and resurrection of our Messiah. So, in other words... this Emperor Hadrian did not write the letter and the whole argument is nothing more than a sham.

And so, I want us to be aware of this extremely important information because it is floating around out there on the Internet through the ignorant and unstudied cult members who are known as the black Hebrews. Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: "You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive."

Once again just to recap my friends... the disciples in Antioch were first called "Christians". The Apostle Peter tells us that if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name, and the Apostle Paul even admitted to King Agrippa in Acts 26: verses 28 and 29 that he was indeed a Christian, and that he not only wanted King Agrippa to be a Christian but everyone that would hear him.

The very word "Christian" comes from the Greek word "Christianos" and it literally means "a follower of Christ". "Christianos" is derived from the word "Christ" according to Strong's Greek definitions and "Christ" or "Christos" means "Mashiach, or Messiah". So, let us not bow

down to the days newest attack. Let us not cut and run... let us stand as we are commanded to stand in the evil day, and let us contend for the faith faithfully, and without giving up our ground.

As I have said before, so now I say again... I am a Christian, and as for me and my house... we will serve Yahovah and his only begotten Son. Let God be true... and every man a liar.