

Christian - Catholics make it a label

The purpose of a label is to box people in. It is about putting pressure on them to conform and about control. The Roman Catholic Church claims that once you are validly baptised you bear the label Christian. It denies that you need to be holy or a friend of God's in order to be Christian!

The word Christian means follower of Christ. Christ means messiah or anointed king. The suffix ianos added to it makes it Christianos - a Christ Person. In the same way Caesariani meant a servant of Caesar. A more accurate meaning is Christ-like. Thus if a baptised person does not have any interest in religion or doing good you can deny they are Christian for they are not Christ-like.

Christian is an adjective. It is not a noun. The Catholics say you can become a Christian without faith or doing good and merely by being baptised. That is to say Christian is a noun. That teaching is heretical and simply bigoted.

Acts 11:26, "and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And it came about that for an entire year they met with the church, and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch." This was about 43 AD.

This only reports that they were called Christians by the pagans. It does not say the term originated among the authorised apostles of the Church. It does not say if the term was approved. The term was undoubtedly used in a derogatory way. So we can assume that it was not approved. As Christ meant political king, we can be sure that the title was meant in a way intended to cast suspicion on them. As the early Jesus people identified as Jews not Christians it may have been intended to deny their claim to be Jewish.

Acts shows that the name Christian is invalid for it uses brethren (Acts 1:16), believers (Acts 2:44), saints (Acts 9:32), and disciples (Acts 11:26).

When somebody founds a group or religion, the term follower of X, is guaranteed to appear. It is odd that in this case it took place years after Jesus. And in Antioch. Surely Israel needed to distinguish the disciples of Christ from those of Judaism? The twelve apostles and the rest of the entourage were literally followers of Christ. They had to have been called that. That is a good clear definition. Outside of that it is just a word for anybody can do a few good works and claim to be a follower of this man they don't know and never walked with.

What is going on here? It makes no sense.

Tacitus wrote that during the persecution against believers by Nero the term was in common use in a nearly total pagan society which means it was not used in a complimentary way. Annals 15:44.

Acts 26:, Paul said, " King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. And Agrippa replied to Paul, "In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian."

And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds. Agrippa only uses the nickname. There is nothing in the text to indicate that Christian was the correct way to describe a believer in Christ. And Agrippa said what he said in humour for it does not flow from what Paul said to him. Paul did not for example show how he thought the Prophets predicted Jesus. Paul does not approve the term Christian but merely replies that Agrippa and everybody else would be better being like Paul.

Read 1 Corinthians 1. "I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought. My brothers and sisters, some from Chloe's household have informed me that there are quarrels among you. What I mean is this: One of you says, 'I follow Paul'; another, 'I follow Apollos'; another, 'I follow Cephas'; still another, "'I follow Christ.' Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I did not baptize any of you except Crispus and Gaius, so no one can say that you were baptized in my name. (Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I don't remember if I baptized anyone else.) For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with wisdom and eloquence, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power."

Read 1 Corinthians 3. "You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans? For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere human beings? What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as

the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The one who plants and the one who waters have one purpose, and they will each be rewarded according to their own labor. For we are co-workers in God's service; you are God's field, God's building."

Notice this condemnation of labelling appears twice in the letter. It rejects the claim to be a follower of Christ. The implication is that it is up to Jesus to decide what you are.

1 Peter 4:16, "but if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not feel ashamed, but in that name let him glorify God."

The term was one of abuse which is why Peter tells the believer not to be ashamed. The context is about being abused over Jesus. Peter does not approve of the nickname but merely says people must use the abuse to glorify God by doing good even in the face of it. He did not say you suffer for being a Christian but as one labelled as a Christian. You can suffer as a Christian though you are not a Christian or if you reject the label.

We must remember that long after his conversion to Christ and his leadership of the Church, Paul the apostle called himself a Jew (Acts 21:29). People we call Christians were called Jews in Acts 18:2 and Galatians 2:14.

Isaiah 62:2, 4 has God saying he will give his people a new name, "...and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name." Believers guess that he meant the name Christian. But he said "thou shalt be called Hephzibah." This name means pleasure. The name only applies to those who have a love relationship with God. It excludes any attempt to put religious labels on people.

Jesusans would be a better term than Christian. Christian speaks of Jesus being anointed one and king. The term may have been accepted by the Church to hurt the Jews who were offended at the thought that Jesus really was a king. It is a term based on an adjective about Jesus rather than Jesus himself. Christian is a name that could be applied to any group that claims to follow a Christ or Messiah. Jesus was not the only messianic claimant in the early days of the Church. Bar Kochba was another and Judas the Galilean.

The Catholic claim that a religious and spiritual waste of space can be called Christian is just a boast and a dose of arrogance. This is about politics in the semblance of a religion.