

A wooden cross stands on a rocky mountain peak. The sun is setting behind the cross, creating a bright glow and silhouetting the cross against the sky. The background shows a range of mountains under a clear sky.

1 PETER 4:15-16

15 But let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a meddler. 16 Yet if anyone suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in that name.



THEY CALLED

THEM

CHRISTIAN

IT MATTERS WHAT WE CALL SOMETHING

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- So it is with God's people. The biblical words that are used to describe us all have special meanings and highlight various aspects of our



LET'S START WITH THE OBVIOUS ONE -
CHRISTIAN

Acts 11:26, Acts 26:28, 1 Peter 4:16

- All three examples indicate the term was used derisively. While it has certainly changed meaning over the centuries, it shouldn't be overlooked that the early followers of the Lord bore a NAME that was held in low regard! See also Matthew 10:22, Acts 4:17-18, 5:40, 26:9.

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- Contrast this fact with the way the name of Jesus Christ should be viewed – Acts 4:8-12, Philippians 2:9-10, Ephesians 1:21.
- We bear the name of Jesus Christ because we have been adopted into God's spiritual family through Him. There is salvation in no other name. There is no accolade, no connection, no title, no inheritance, that brings an eternal reward with it – but also, in this life, reproach from those

BROTHERS AND SISTERS

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- This kind of love is easier said than done (1 John 3:13-18). We need to be reminded to "let love of the brethren continue" (Hebrews 13:1). Be Gaius, not Diotrephes (3 John).

- “A disciple is not greater than his teacher, but everyone when fully trained will be like his teacher” (Luke 6:40). Jesus formed the picture of discipleship in His own example (John 13:1-17). His followers were frequently called “disciples”, not as a name or title but as a description of their lifestyle.



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- Discipleship is total submission to Christ. It means we don’t keep anything back (Luke 9:23, 14:27, 14:33) and we have aligned our will with His.

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A rustic wooden bowl with a blue cloth draped over its edge, resting on a dark wooden surface. The bowl is made of dark wood and has a weathered appearance. The cloth is a light blue color and is draped over the right side of the bowl. The background is a textured, light brown wall.

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- Discipleship is total submission to Christ. It means we don’t keep anything back (Luke 9:23, 14:27, 14:33) and we have aligned our will with His.
- A disciple has moved past ignorance, has grown in knowledge, has put that knowledge to good use, and has eagerly sought to fulfill the Great Commission – to make more disciples (Matthew 28:19). This is just what Paul told Timothy to do in 2 Timothy 2:1-

DISCIPLES



SOME OTHER TERMS

- “Saint” – Used frequently in the introduction to a number of epistles (i.e. “to the saints at...”). The root word means to be separated from something, and in a Christian sense, separated from sin and consecrated to God. It means “sacred” and “holy.” The New Testament does not use the term merely for Christians with exceptional holiness, or as a special honorific title. Rather, every Christian is a saint (1 Corinthians 1:2).

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- Follower of “The Way” – Acts (9:2, 19:9, 19:23, 22:4, 24:14, 24:22) employs this powerful description of the church, an obvious connection to John 14:6. Paul calls himself a “follower of the Way” in Acts 24:14.

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- “Believer” – 2 Corinthians 6:15 is one example where the term is used

A FEW WARNINGS

A wooden cross stands on a rocky outcrop in the foreground. The background features a sunset or sunrise over a range of mountains, with the sky transitioning from a deep blue at the top to a warm orange and yellow near the horizon. The mountains are silhouetted against the bright light, creating a layered effect of dark ridges and valleys.

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- Don't be fooled by other names (1 Corinthians 1:10ff). It doesn't make a difference who your "connections" are on the judgment day; name-dropping doesn't impress God.
- Let's help each other not to become "false brethren" – We are not enemies. We are family members, fellow disciples, sharers in Jesus' name. So take it to heart when the apostles talk about "false brethren" in the NT (2 Peter 2:1-3). WE are