



WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?



# THE QUESTION MATTERS

Matthew 28:18-20, 1 Timothy 3:14-16, 1 Corinthians 15:1-4







YOU'RE A CHRISTIAN IF...



# YOU BELIEVE JESUS IS THE CHRIST, THE SON OF GOD

- Matthew 16:13-16 – This was a pivotal moment in Peter's growth. He weighed the evidence, considered the miracles and signs, carefully judged the character and quality of Jesus' life, and came to the only logical conclusion (John 5:22-23, 26-27).
- Belief is connected to life (John 11:25-26).
- It must be a public belief (Matthew 10:32-33) that includes both the facts of His ministry and life as well as the content of His preaching. He actually existed and was/is everything He claimed to be (John 20:30-31).



YOU'RE A CHRISTIAN IF...



# YOU HAVE ACCEPTED JESUS' MESSAGE IN ITS ENTIRETY

- John 6:41-51 - When you listen to His message, you are being taught divine truth (John 7:16). He calls this "bread" because it must be consumed, internalized, and made a part of us.
- John 8:31-32
- The practical side of this is that nobody can do it for you. Reading and meditating upon the word cannot be outsourced. Remember the way the Ethiopian eunuch's heart and mind were touched by the scriptures (Acts 8:26ff). He came to know Jesus without ever seeing His face.





YOU'RE A CHRISTIAN IF...



A large wooden cross stands on a hill against a sunset sky. The cross is made of two weathered wooden beams. The background shows a horizon with silhouettes of hills and a sky with soft orange and purple clouds.

## YOU HAVE RESPONDED TO THE GOSPEL AS JESUS DEFINED IT

- It is not enough to merely believe in the message of Jesus. You must also act upon that truth in the way He prescribed. Keep in mind the sobering story from John 12:42-50.
- Jesus describes baptism as the very means by which we are made into disciples (Matthew 28:18-20). His apostles consistently taught salvation in the same way, commanding both belief and response (Acts 2:38, 8:12-13, 10:48, 16:11-15, 16:30-34, 18:8, 22:16).

# BAPTISM

- Puts us into Christ and into His death (Romans 6:3, 1 Corinthians 12:13)
- Saves us (1 Peter 3:21) and clothes us with Christ (Galatians 3:25-27)
- Remits our sins (Acts 2:38) and washes us (Acts 22:16)
- Makes us disciples (Matthew 28:19)
- It is through baptism, not faith alone, that we are buried with Him (Romans 6:4) and then raised up (Colossians 2:12)
- Is not a superstitious or magical ritual (1 Peter 3:21)
- So, does it sound like you can be a Christian without baptism?



A CHRISTIAN WILL ALSO....





# MAKE PERSONAL SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND FAITHFULNESS A PRIORITY

- Colossians 1:19-23 - Christ did the greater part in your salvation. He has already paved the way and purchased your redemption. But this doesn't mean you play a passive role in your own spiritual life.
- Colossians 3:1ff & 1 Peter 2:1-5
- The one who fails to put a premium on continual growth has made a fatal error. After all, we are all moving in one direction or another, whether we know it or not (Heb. 5:11ff, Phil. 3:12-16).

# BUT WHAT ABOUT...?

- What do we do with those who claim to be Christians but have accepted error or have not been baptized or are simply deeply misguided?
- Fortunately, it is not our job to serve as their final judge. God will judge (Jeremiah 17:10, Proverbs 16:2), and that must be satisfactory. Our responsibility is to teach, to the best of our ability and as we have opportunity, and let truth do what it does best!
- Ideally, we would all have the same eagerness to learn and grow with humility as people like Apollos (Acts 18:24ff) and the Ephesians (Acts 19:1-7).