

Exploring Christianity

Part One – What is Christianity?

Introductory Question:

Based on what you have learned so far in life, what do you think Christianity is? Do you have a positive or a negative opinion about Christianity?

Some Definitions:

“At its most basic, Christianity is the **faith** tradition that focuses on the figure of **Jesus Christ**. In this context, **faith** refers both to the believers’ act of trust and to the content of their **faith**. As a tradition, Christianity is more than a system of religious belief.”

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Christianity>

“the religion derived from **Jesus Christ**, based on the Bible as sacred scripture, and professed by Eastern, Roman Catholic, and Protestant bodies”

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Christianity>

“The beliefs elemental to Christianity are summarized in 1 Corinthians 15:1–4: Jesus died for our sins and was resurrected and thereby offers salvation to all who will receive Him in **faith**. Unique among other faiths, Christianity is more about a relationship than religious practices. Instead of adhering to a list of “dos and don’ts,” the goal of a Christian is to cultivate a close walk with God. That relationship is made possible because of the work of **Jesus Christ** and the ministry of the Holy Spirit.”

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Christianity.html>

1. Which key words in bold type are repeated in all three definitions? Why do you think these words are repeated?
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2. Now what do you think Christianity is based on the above definitions?
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The Word Christianity in the Bible

The word Christianity is not mentioned in the Bible, but the word Christian is mentioned 3 times, each time about followers of Jesus.

Read the following 3 passages: Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; 1 Peter 4:16 to learn how the word is used.

[Acts 11:26](#)

“Then Barnabas went on to Tarsus to look for Saul. When he found him, he brought him back to Antioch. Both of them stayed there with the church for a full year, teaching large crowds of people. (It was at Antioch that the believers were first called Christians.)”

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3. This passage describes the people that Barnabas and Saul met in Tarsus. What kind of people were first called Christians? What were these people doing?

[Acts 26:27-28](#)

“Paul replied...King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know you do—” Agrippa interrupted him. “Do you think you can persuade me to become a Christian so quickly?”

4. Agrippa had arrested Paul (formerly Saul) for preaching about Jesus. Now Paul was preaching to Agrippa. What was Agrippa’s response? What did he think Paul was trying to do?

[I Peter 4:16](#)

But it is no shame to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God for the privilege of being called by his name!

5. Fill in the blanks.

Sometimes Christians _____. It is a _____ to be called a _____.

Points to Understand About Christianity.

- Christianity is about Jesus Christ.
- A Christian has faith in Jesus Christ.
- A Christian meets with other Christians and learns about Jesus.
- Christianity is more about a relationship with Jesus than with doing religious things.
- Like Paul, Christians share their faith.
- Sometimes Christians suffer for their faith.
- Christians follow the example of Christ.

Christ, Our Example

“For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps. He never sinned, nor ever deceived anyone. He did not retaliate when he was insulted, nor threaten revenge when he suffered. He left his case in the hands of God, who always judges fairly. He personally carried our sins in his body on the cross so that we can be dead to sin and live for what is right. By his wounds you are healed. Once you were like sheep who wandered away. But now you have turned to your Shepherd, the Guardian of your souls.”

[I Peter 2:21-25](#)