

Searching  
the  
Scriptures

A  
Scriptural  
Definition  
of A  
Christian





When a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints shares his faith, one comment is almost always made: "We are Christians. We believe in Christ. In fact, His name is part of the name of our Church!" Continuing, he will state how offended he is when people say he is not a Christian. Most often he will quote the LDS Church's First Article of Faith which reads: "We believe in God, the Eternal Father, and in His Son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Ghost." While professing such a faith sounds quite Biblical, can we conclude from this statement that The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a Christian religion? Let's go to the final authority, the Bible, and find the answer.

**WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?** The word "Christian" is used 3 times in the New Testament.

"...And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." Acts 11:26

"Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." Acts 26:28

"Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf."

1 Peter 4:16 / The Greek word "Christianos" means simply "follower of Christ".

#### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO FOLLOW CHRIST?**

"And He said to them all, If any man will come after Me, let him *deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.*" Luke 9:23

"*Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.*" Matthew 7:13,14

"And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know. Thomas saith unto Him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way? Jesus saith unto him, *I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me.*" John 14:4-6

"Not everyone that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but *he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven.* Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from Me, ye that work iniquity." Matt. 7:21-23

One who follows Christ is one who does the will of the Father.

**WHAT IS THE WILL OF THE FATHER ?** "And This is the will of Him that sent Me, that *every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.*" John 6:40

"Then they said unto Him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the Work of God, that ye *believe on Him whom He hath sent.*" John 6:28,29

"And this is His commandment, That we should *believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as He gave us commandment,*" 1John 3:23

The will of the Father is to believe in Christ.

#### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BELIEVE IN CHRIST?**

"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe, and tremble." James 2:19

"And there was in their synagogue a man with an unclean spirit; and he cried out, Saying, Let us alone; what have we to do with Thee, Thou Jesus of Nazareth? art Thou come to destroy us? I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God." Mark 1:23,24

Clearly the belief of these demons, recognizing who Jesus is and understanding His presence, is not what Scripture refers to when we are told to "believe on Him".

#### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BELIEVE IN CHRIST?**

"...The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of *faith*, which we preach; That if thou shalt *confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God has raised Him from*



*the dead*, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on Him, shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Romans 10:8-13

"He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." John 3:18

"Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12

"But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." John 1:12

Believing in Christ is not just a head knowledge, but requires complete trust and reliance on Christ, and Christ alone, for all that salvation means.

**WHAT IS SALVATION?** "But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him." Romans 5:8,9

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." John 5:24

"And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath He reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy and unblamable and unprovable in His sight." Colossians 1:21,22



Salvation, then, is being justified by Christ's blood, saved from the wrath of God, passing from death into life, being presented unto God holy and pure.

**WHERE IS SALVATION'S ETERNITY?** "If any man serve Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall also My servant be: if any man serve Me, him will My Father honor." John 12: 26

"...If ye loved Me, ye would rejoice, because I said, I go unto the Father..." John 14:28

The eternal dwelling place of those saved through Christ is in God's presence, in His kingdom.

**WHAT IS A CHRISTIAN?** A Christian is a follower of Christ. A follower of Christ is one who does the will of the Father. The will of the Father is believing on Christ. Believing is not merely acknowledging, but trusting Christ alone for personal salvation. Personal salvation is being reconciled to God, having the promise of spending eternity in His presence.

#### **ARE LATTER-DAY SAINTS CHRISTIANS?**

The Latter-day Saints say they are Christians. They claim to believe in Christ. As we have seen, God has a specific definition attached to the word "believe" when He reveals salvation and His Son to us in Scripture. Mormons do not trust in Christ alone to be reconciled to God. Brigham Young taught: "no man or woman in this dispensation will ever enter into the celestial kingdom of God without the consent of Joseph Smith. From the day that the Priesthood was taken from the earth to the winding-up scene of all things, every man and woman **must have the certificate of Joseph Smith, junior**, as a passport to their entrance into the mansion where God and Christ are..." Journal of Discourses, Vol. 7, p. 289 / " All those who believe in their hearts and confess with their mouths that **Joseph Smith** is a true Prophet, at the same time trying with **their might** to live the holy principles Joseph the Prophet has revealed, are in possession of the Holy Spirit of God **and are entitled to a fullness.**" Brigham Young,

Journal of Discourses, Vol. 9, p. 312 / The Book of Mormon, the keystone of the Latter-day Saint Church says: "for we labor diligently to write, to persuade our children, and also our brethren, to believe in Christ, and to be reconciled to God; for we know that it is by grace that we are saved, after all we can do." 2 Nephi 25:23

Latter-day Saints trust in **Joseph Smith**, the **Priesthood** and **their own might** to bring about their personal salvation. If you are a Latter-day Saint, are you really doing **all** you can do, as your Church requires? How full must you fill your cup with good works before Christ will consent to fill the rest with His grace? Dear Saint, you need not live with the threat of falling short on Judgement Day. God has given a promise to all of those who trust in Christ.

**WHAT IS GOD'S PROMISE?** "And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; **that ye may know that ye have eternal life**, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."

1 John 5:11-13 / Please examine your faith in the light of the Bible and set it right with God.

#### **HOW TO RECEIVE ETERNAL LIFE FROM JESUS**

**ONE:** Realize that salvation is a gift freely given from Jesus to you. (Eph. 2:8 & 9) **TWO:** Decide to turn away from your false beliefs or unclean life. (Acts.3:19,20)

**THREE:** Receive Christ by praying and asking Him to come into your life as your Savior and Lord. John 1:12,13

**Have you done this? Congratulations! You are now "Born Again"! (John 3:1-7) Welcome to the Family of God! (Rom.8:15-17) OUR HANDS ARE EXTENDED**

**IN LOVE! Bud and Ginny, with;**

#### **FREEDOM IN TRUTH, OUTREACH.**

P.O. Box 7033

Fax (541) 412-0784

Brookings OR. 97415

E-mail: fit@wave.net

[www.wave.net/tsn/freedom/freedom.htm](http://www.wave.net/tsn/freedom/freedom.htm)