

How does the world define Christianity? Who are the ones calling themselves Christians in this world?

As a matter of fact, anyone associated with a church or religion professing that Christ has something to do with God, will tell you that they are Christians. The word Christian is therefore applied as a label that simply describes an appearance of beliefs.

However, the New Testament of the bible uses the word Christian only three times, as found in the following scriptures:

Acts 11:16: "So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch."

Acts 26:28: "Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You almost persuade me to become a Christian."

1Peter 4:16: "Yet if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this matter."

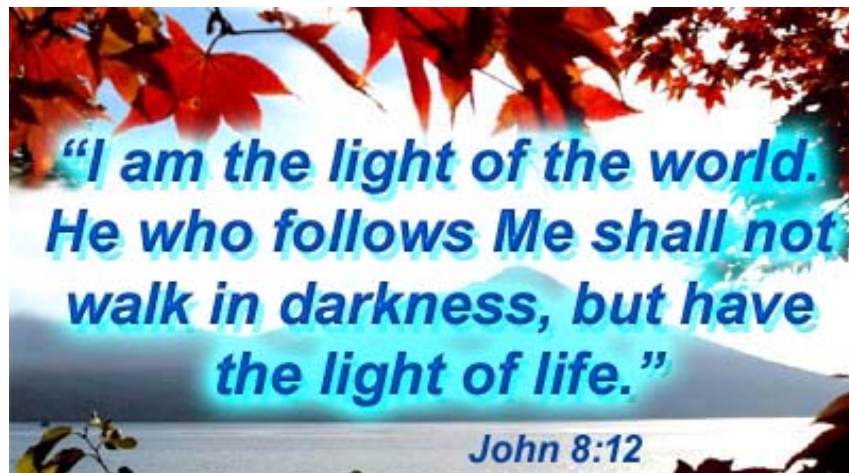
Interestingly, Jesus never used the word Christian to describe His followers, but rather called them disciples.

Why?

Because a disciple is defined as a follower of Christ, who adheres to His teachings, and lives to be His witness. The reason why the New Testament uses the word disciple 275 times to describe the true followers of Christ.

Do I simply label myself as a Christian, or am I rather a true disciple of Christ?

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Why, if we truly believe in Christ, must we become His disciple?

John 8:31-32: "If you abide in My Word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."

2Cor. 5:14-15: "Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life. He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them."

Eph. 2:10: "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

Romans 1:17: "For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

The reason Jesus said:

John 12:26: "If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there will My servant be also. If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him."

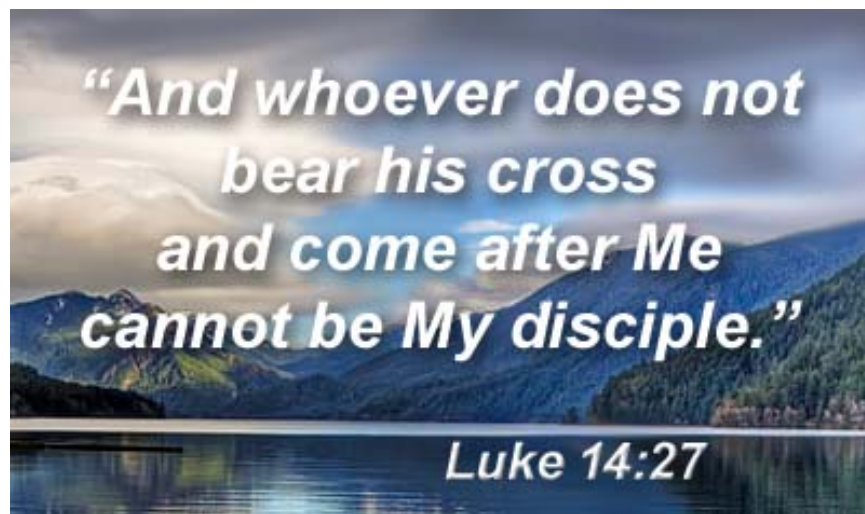
Jesus also warned us:

Luke 6:46: "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and not do the things which I say?"

Mat. 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven."

Do I understand that becoming His disciple is an essential requirement of a true believer in Christ?

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Is there a price to pay to be a disciple of Christ?

Let's see what Jesus said about this:

Luke 9:23: "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."

Luke 14:33: "So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple."

Mat 10:37-38: "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me."

John 12:25: "He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life."

John 16:33: "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

And the ultimate purpose to keep the faith and abide in Christ is:

Mat 11:29: "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

James 1:12: "Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him."

Am I committed to follow Christ no matter the cost?

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