

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

THE NAME “CHRISTIAN”

John Edwards

What name do you wear religiously? The Bible teaches that the name “*Christian*” was given by God for His people to wear.

GOD GAVE IT. The prophet Isaiah revealed, “*And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name*” (Is. 62:2). When the Gentiles received the gospel, “*the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch*” (Acts 11:26). James said that when these Gentiles were called “*Christians*”, it was in agreement with the “*words of the prophets*” (Acts 15:13-17). This proves that the name “*Christian*” is of divine origin and calling.

PAUL ACCEPTED IT. When Agrippa said unto Paul, “*Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian*” (Acts 26:28), Paul accepted the name. He announced that he was a Christian and exhorted his hearers to become Christians (Acts 26:29). Preachers of the New Testament persuaded folks to be Christians, nothing more and nothing less.

PETER SANCTIONED IT. Peter wrote, “*Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf*” (1 Pet. 4:16). Peter gave the name “*Christian*” his authoritative approval and recorded such for the comfort of Christ’s followers.

EARLY DISCIPLES WORE IT. Luke, the inspired historian, records, “*And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch*” (Acts 11:26). From that day unto this hour, the disciples of Christ have been wearing the name “*Christian*”.

The name “*Christian*” was divinely given and accepted.

BIBLE CONCLUSIONS

John Edwards

Sometimes God leaves it to man to draw his own conclusions. Many have difficulty drawing the right conclusions. Then there are times when God draws the conclusions. When God concludes something is true, then no mistake can be made about it. We can either choose to accept it or reject it. Let’s call attention to a few Bible conclusions.

ALL UNDER SIN. The

Bible concludes that all have sinned. Paul wrote, “*But the scripture hath concluded all under sin...*” (Gal. 3:22). Further, “*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*” (Rom. 3:23). Solomon stated, “*...there is no man that sinneth not...*” (1 Ki. 8:46). To go beyond or fall short of what God says makes men sin (Jas. 4:17; 1 Jn. 3:4). Sin leads to spiritual death (Rom. 6:23; Jas. 1:13-15). To avoid this death, our sins must be forgiven by God.

JUSTIFIED BY FAITH. The Bible has concluded that man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. The saints at Rome were told, “*Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law*” (Rom. 3:28). Also, “*Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight*” (Rom. 3:20). The Bible is filled with evidence that man cannot be saved by keeping the law of Moses (Gal. 2:16; 3:10-11).

JUSTIFIED BY WORKS. Some read a few verses on the subject of faith and conclude that we are saved by faith alone. To make that conclusion is to draw the wrong conclusion. James spoke of faith and works and concluded, “*Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only*”

(Jas. 2:24). The type of faith that pleases God is the "...faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6).

GOD WOULD MAKE A NEW COVENANT. The word of the Lord made the conclusion that the day would come when God would make a new covenant. Jeremiah prophesied of the new covenant (Jer. 31:31-34). The Hebrew writer contrasted the two covenants and said, "Now of the things which we have spoken this is the sum: We have such a high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens" (Heb. 8:1). The book of Hebrews concludes that we live under the new covenant. The new covenant became effective when Christ died on the cross (Heb. 9:16-17).

MAN IS TO FEAR GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS. Solomon declared, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12:13). To fear God is to reverence God (Heb. 12:28).

John wrote, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Rev. 22:14).

DIVINE MAGNETS

John Edwards

A magnet has drawing power. The Bible mentions some things that have drawing power like a magnet. A divine magnet does not draw against man's will. It draws as the will of man submits to the will of God. We call to mind three divine magnets.

GOD. Jesus said, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day" (Jn. 6:44). God draws men! Just exactly how does God draw men? "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (Jn. 6:45). Men are drawn to God as they are taught. They hear, learn, and come unto the Lord.

THE CROSS OF CHRIST. Jesus announced, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me" (Jn. 12:32). Jesus was lifted up from the earth when He died on the cross (Jn. 3:14). The death of Christ on the cross is like a magnet to attract men to become Christians. It is by the cross that folks are reconciled unto God (Eph. 2:16). Folks need to be impressed with the death of Christ on the cross!

THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST. Paul told the Romans, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Rom. 1:16). The only drawing power that God uses in saving men from their sins and to keep them faithful is the gospel.

Do these magnets attract you?

The Edwards family wishes to thank you for your prayers, encouragement and support in 2020, and pray for you a happy and healthy new year!

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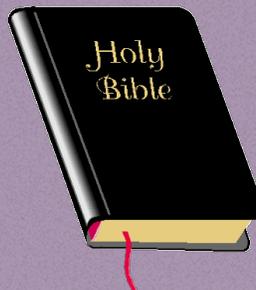
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