

# Lesson One: What Does it Mean to be a Christian?

A Christian is someone who professes belief in and follows the teachings of [Jesus](#).

They're people who recognize Jesus as Savior (another word for Christ), listen to His teaching, and put His words into action.

**1<sup>st</sup> Bible Reference to Christianity:** Acts 11:26 *“For a whole year, Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.”*- [Acts 11:26](#).

- The word ‘Christians’ was used for the early followers of Jesus and is now used for all believers.
- The Christian experience begins with being “born again” – (John 3:5; 1 Peter 1:23). To connect with God, we must build a special relationship with Jesus.
- The Bible says, *“God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”* –John 3:16. Therefore, to be a Christian, we must first learn what it means to be a Christian!

## 1. Admit Your Sins

The Bible says that all humans have sinned, lack the desire to serve God, and have no potential to save themselves. Stubbornness, wrong choices, and failures leave us humans powerless and guilty. Such habits are hard to break and soon become addictions. Human sins affect our entire society and create a world of violence, oppression, greed, injustice, and pollution.

[Romans 3:10-12](#) states, *“... There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands, no one who seeks God. All have turned away; together become worthless; there is no one who does not even one.”*

Despite our sins, God loves us and desires our fellowship. With Jesus' life, death, and resurrection, Christians hope for a new life that continues beyond death. Therefore, admit your sins to renew your Christian faith.

## 2. Invite Jesus Into Your Heart

Jesus says: “*Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.*”- **Revelation 3:20**. Invite Jesus into your spirit, asking God to forgive the sins that separate you from Him. Be thankful for His blessings, and regret your sins, promising never to walk back on the path of the wrongdoers.

**John 1:12-13 (NLT)** says “But to all who believed and accepted Him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn – not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.”

Romans 10:9-10 (NLT) “If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by openly declaring your faith that you are saved.”

Inviting Jesus to be a part of your life is crucial to being a Christian. Eventually, God will minister our hearts, enlightening our innermost being. That’s how true transformation takes place. The Trinity sets Christians apart from other believers. It’s an avenue for us to be intimate and connected with our creator. Therefore, being a Christian means filling yourself up with the presence of God.

## **2. Begin To Change**

Admitting your sins isn’t enough unless you regret and turn away from them. The Bible teaches in Acts 3:19, “*Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.*”

Repentance in Greek means ‘changing your thinking,’ or ‘turning around.’ Turning away from our sins is crucial to being a Christian. **Repentance** changes your actions, mindset, and your life’s direction. True repentance is about pleasing God and living an outward lifestyle.

Romans 12:1-2 helps us to understand how change takes place. “And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all He has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice – the kind He will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship Him.

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect." (NLT)

1. According to John 3:5, what must a person do to enter the kingdom of heaven?
  - a. Confess your sins and be baptized;
  - b. Read the bible, pray, and worship God
  - c. Love your neighbor and help those in need
  - d. Be born again.
  
2. Romans 10:9-10 says that these must happen for a person to be saved?
  - a. Confess your sins, ask for forgiveness.
  
  - b. Believe that Jesus died for our sins, change old habits;
  
  - c. Openly declare that Jesus is Lord; believe that God raised him from the dead;
  
  - d. Ask God for forgive your sins, openly declare that Jesus is Lord.
  
3. Looking at Romans 12:1-2, how does Christianity affect our lives?
  - a. We are no longer interested in our old lifestyle.
  
  - b. God's word changes the way we think and respond to our world and life circumstances.
  
  - c. We make choices based on gut feelings and life experiences.
  
  - d. We pray and search the word of God for answers.

