

CHRISTIAN<sup>m</sup> Nothing  
is all



## The Disciples Were Called Christians First in Antioch

*Acts 11:19-26*

The name “Christian” (one belonging to Christ) was first given to the believers in Antioch. It says that they were called Christians, but it does not say that they called themselves Christians. Apparently this was a term given to them by their unsaved acquaintances (perhaps as a term of reproach), not a name that they gave to themselves. The enemies of the Lord branded His disciples with His own blessed but despised name. The disciples were identified with Jesus Christ. May our devotion and passion for Christ be so obvious that when people around us think of us, they immediately think of our blessed Savior!

Harry Ironside was once studying Cantonese, one of the branches of the Chinese language. He learned that the word used for a Christian was “*Yasu-yan*.” *Yasu* was the word they used for Jesus and *yan* was their word for man. Whenever his teacher would introduce him, he would say that Harry was a “Jesus-man.” This is similar to the word “Christian.” What a honor to be known as a “Christ-man.”

While the term “Christian” is a very popular term today to describe followers of Christ, in the New Testament it is infrequently used. The term is elsewhere used only in Acts 26:28 and 1 Peter 4:16. The more common terms to describe God’s people were “brethren,” “disciples,” “believers,” and “saints.”

As an object lesson for children, or even for adults, you can write out the letters to the word “Christian”— CHRISTIAN. Point out that the first part of this word is CHRIST. What happens if you remove “CHRIST” from the word “CHRISTIAN”? When you do that you are left with only three letters: “IAN.” These three letters stand for I A M N O T H I N G. The message is clear: Without Christ, I am nothing! Compare John 15:6.

~George Zeller: [www.middletonbiblechurch.org](http://www.middletonbiblechurch.org)

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