

I Am Just A Christian

I am trying to be a simple New Testament Christian. By that I mean I have confessed Jesus Christ to be the Son of God and been united with Him in baptism (Rom. 10:9-10; Rom. 6:3-7). That allowed me to be in fellowship with God, Christ and the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 13:14; I Pet. 1:2). This makes me a “disciple” – student or follower – of Christ, which is also called a “Christian” (Acts 11:26). I am also called a “saint” (Acts 9:13) and “believer” (2 Cor. 6:15).

When other disciples (Christians, saints, believers) are grouped together in fellowship they are referred to in the Bible as “the church” (Acts 11:26), or “the church of the Lord” (Acts 20:28), or “the churches of Christ” (Rom. 16:16), or “the church of God” (I Cor. 1:2), or “the churches of the saints” (I Cor. 14:33), or “the church of the living God” (I Tim. 3:15), or “the church of the firstborn” (Heb. 12:23). Not one of these names was ever used in a denominational sense. In the first century the church did not have any “trademark” name to set them apart as a denomination (a term whose very meaning in Latin means “to divide by naming”).

Churches in the Bible were all meant to be alike. For instance, Paul wrote to the church of God at Corinth about doctrines (teachings) they were to follow, then concluded, “even as I teach everywhere in every church” (I Cor. 4:16-17). He reminded them there is a single unified pattern that all saints are to follow by saying, “and so I ordain in all the churches” (I Cor. 7:17). What an inspired apostle spoke or wrote to one church would be applicable to all churches. Their epistles (letters) were from God and could be exchanged from one church to another (Col. 4:16). In the first century there were no divisions of various denominations (I Cor. 1:10-13). Such was an abomination to God and a violation of the unity of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 4:3-6), and a rejection of Jesus’ prayer for unity (Jn. 17:20-21).

So, will you join me in just trying to be a simple New Testament Christian?

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