

March 29, 2016

What It Means to be a Christian

Colossians 1:16 (ESV), **“For by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things were created through Him and for Him.”**

We live in a culture in which simply saying that you are a Christian seems to be good enough for most people. We have one candidate for President who when asked if he was a Christian said “Yes, I went to church last Easter!” But you see being a Christian is more than just identifying yourself as one or occasionally darkening the door of a church and it is more than just the affirmation of a certain value system. I believe in our culture today which has largely abandoned Scripture as absolute truth, that the term “Christian” is largely meaningless. Being a Christian means that one has embraced what the Bible says about God, mankind, and salvation. Over the next few days we are going to consider six Biblical truths about what it means to be a Christian.

The first one is that God is the Sovereign Creator. Modern thinking teaches that mankind is the product not of God but the product of evolution. The Bible though tells us something completely opposite of that. Scripture tells us that we were created by a personal God to love, serve, and enjoy endless fellowship with Him.

The New Testament shows us that it was Jesus Christ Himself who created all things. John 1:3 says, **“All things were made through Him, and without Him was not any thing made that was made.”** Jesus Christ who in John 1:1 is called **“The Word”** the eternal word, created everything in the universe. Colossians 1:16 reminds us that **“by Him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things were created through Him and for Him.”** So not only is everything created *by* Him (and by everything we are talking both in the physical realm and spiritual realm) but everything is created *for* Him.

This therefore means that He also owns everything and He rules over everything. Psalm 103:19 says, **“The LORD has established His throne in the heavens, and His kingdom rules over all.”** What does this mean? It means that He has authority over our lives and we therefore owe Him absolute allegiance, obedience, and worship.

We are a casual and juvenile people so we do not like the thought of having allegiance to anything, or being obedient to anyone, and we certainly do not want to worship anything other than our favorite sports teams. But in order to truly understand what it means to be a Christian one has to first understand who God is. God is not your buddy. God is not a kindly and somewhat senile grandfather who laughs at your sin. God is not a self-help guru. He is the sovereign God of the

universe and as such He demands our absolute allegiance, obedience, and worship.

Next we will look at the one overriding characteristic that God has.