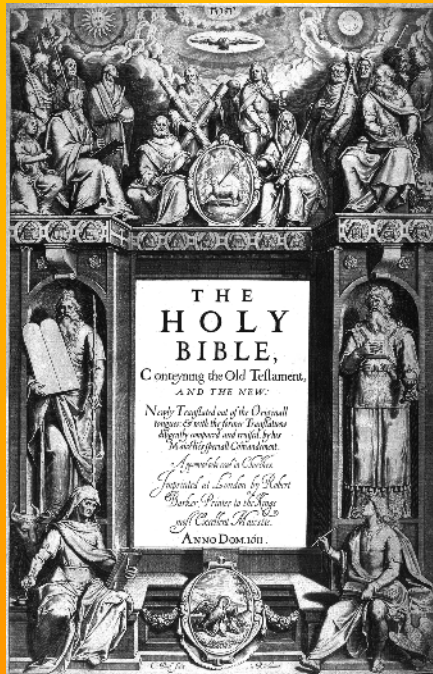


They and You Are Called Christians Why?



They and You Are Called "Christians:" Why? By Ed Robinson

And the disciples were called Christians first at Antioch
(Acts 11:26).

WE ALL UNDERSTAND THIS VERSE—or do we? Obviously it means that the name "Christian" was not applied to anyone until it was given to the Israelite Disciples of Christ that day in Antioch. But **WHO CALLED THEM CHRISTIANS?** Did the Jews? Did the Romans? Or did GOD call them Christians?

God speaks to His people in **Isaiah 62:2** — "—And thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." And in Isaiah 65:15 God tells Israel through the prophet Isaiah that HE will ". . . call his servants by another name."

As good as our various English translations of the Bible may be, they are unable to bring out all that is in the Greek. In his book **THE MINISTER AND HIS GREEK NEW TESTAMENT**, A. T. Robertson says, regarding our English translations, "It is not possible to reproduce the delicate turns of thought, the nuances of language, in translation (to English). The freshness of the strawberry cannot be preserved in any extract."

This does not mean or even imply that our Authorized King James Version or other translations are not good. On the contrary the Authorized Version and some other translations are excellent. They just do not show all the delicate shades of meaning, vivid word pictures, language idioms, etc. that are inherent in the Greek language. Therefore, to get a fuller

understanding of a certain word or phrase in Scripture we must turn to the original text of the New Testament, the Greek. With the aid of a good Bible concordance even the layman, who may know nothing about Greek, can study the meaning of the original Greek words involved.

Now then, let us return to Acts 11:26 and try to determine **Who Called** the disciples Christians.

The English word "Called" is in the King James New Testament no less than 227 times, and it is translated from 27 different Greek words, each having a distinctive meaning of its own. In the subject verse of this study (Acts 11:26) the word **Called** is translated from the Greek word "chrematizo," which is pronounced **Khray-mat-id'-zo**. Although this Greek word appears eight times in the Greek New Testament texts, it was translated **Called** only twice, one of which is in our subject text, Acts 11:26. We shall discuss this further in a moment. But first let us compare a few of the other words that are translated into our English word, **Called**.

The word "kaleo" appears in the Greek text, and is translated **Called** a total of 102 times. Strong's Concordance defines this word to mean "to call, bid, name," e.g. "And he **Called** (kaleo) his ten servants" --- (Luke 19:13), ". . . and he **Called** (kaleo) his name Jesus" (Matt. 1:25).

In 11 places **Called** comes from "kletos," which means "invited, or appointed," e.g. ". . . many are **Called** (kletos) but few are chosen" (Matt. 22:14), and ". . . to them who are the **Called** (kletos) according to his purpose" (Rom. 8:28).

The Greek word "lego" is translated **Called** 37 times and is used in verses like Matt. 27:33—"unto a place **Called** (lego) Golgatha ..." and "... himself above all that is **Called** (lego) God —" (2 Thess. 2:4).

Twenty five times the word **Called** is translated from the Greek word "proskaleomai" and is sometimes used as follows: "Then Paul **Called** (proskaleomai) one of the centurions unto him ... " (Acts 23:17).

"Pheno" is translated **Called** 16 times, and one of its meanings is "to address in words or by name" (Strong's Concordance), e.g. "—when he **Called** (pheno) Lazarus out of his grave—" (John 12:17).

The above are just a few of the many words with their various meanings that are translated into the single English word **Called**. A good Bible concordance will supply (to those interested) a complete list of references of the various words and their meanings.

Regarding our word "chrematizo" as it appears in Acts 11:26 about the Israelite believers, "—the disciples were **Called** Christians first in Antioch," we find that most authorities interpret this to mean that they were called Christians, because, they say, that was the chief, or primary, business (calling) of the disciples; i.e., they were followers of Christ.

Now it is sad, but true, that most authorities have a tendency to let their own preconceived ideas of Bible doctrine influence their judgment in the translation and/or interpretation of the various passages of Scripture. (This is admittedly a very

difficult practice to avoid). And it is true that in certain contexts the above interpretation of Acts 11:26 could be accurate. However, a closer examination of the meaning and usage of this word "chrematizo" in the original Greek text seems to indicate it means much more than that.

In Strong's Concordance the word "chrematizo" is word number 5537. Its complete definition is as follows:

"from 5536; to utter an **Oracle** (completes the original sense of 5530), i.e. divinely intimate; by implication (completes the secular sense of 5532) to constitute a firm for business, i.e. (genative case) bear as a title;—be called, be admonished (warned) of God, reveal, speak."

Webster's Dictionary defines "Oracle" as "the response of a deity to some inquiry; one who speaks with inspiration or authority; the answer or judgment by an oracle."

Thus "chrematizo" seems to denote divine revelation.

It was mentioned earlier that "chrematizo" is translated into our English word **Called** only twice. However, this same word appears six other times in the Greek text of the New Testament. It is rendered "warned" four times, "reveal" once, and "spice" once.

In **Acts 10:22** Cornelius, the centurion, was said to have been "**Warned from God** by an holy angel to send for thee (Peter) ——" In Matthew 2:12 the wise men were "warned of God" in a dream not to return to Herod. In Matthew 2:22 Joseph was "warned of God" in a dream, and he went into Galilee. And in

Hebrews 11:7, on the subject of faith, Noah was "warned of God." In each case they received divine revelation.

In Luke 2:26 "—it was **Revealed** (chrematizo) unto him (Simeon) **by the Holy Ghost** that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ." Simeon received divine revelation.

In Hebrews 12:25 "—For if they escaped not who refused him (Christ) that **Spake** (chrematizo—revealed God) on earth . . ." Again, Christ spoke divine revelation.

The only other place where **Called** is translated from "chrematizo" (other than Acts 11:26) is in Romans 7:3—"So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be **Called** (chrematizo) an adulteress ..." Is such a woman an adulteress because **Men** call her such? No, it is because God defines adultery in His Law, "for by the Law is the knowledge of sin." Jesus referred to this Law in Matt. 5:32—"—but **I Say** unto you, that whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery" —Jesus' words in the New Testament constitute divine revelation.

If we were to apply to "chrematizo" in Romans 7:3 the same interpretation that many authorities apply to it in Acts 11:26 (i.e. **Called** Christians because that was their chief, or primary business, or calling) we would have the woman being **Called** an adulteress—because that was her chief, or primary business, or calling. In other words, that interpretation makes her out to be a professional harlot or prostitute, and neither Jesus in Matthew 5 nor Paul in Romans 7 say or imply any such thing.

Both are only talking about marriage and divorce. Therefore, the common interpretation of the passage in Acts 11:26 must be inaccurate.

"Chrematismos" is a Greek word derived from "chrematizo," and it is used only once in the entire Bible. It is defined in Strong's Concordance: "from 5537; a divine response or revelation:—answer of God." The only time this word is used is in Romans 11:4—"But what saith the **Answer of God** (chrematismos) unto him?"

After considering the context of the above references, and the very relationship to God Himself in each case, it seems even more likely that "divinely revealed" is the meaning of "chrematizo" in Acts 11:26.

If the disciples were merely given the name "Christians" by the other people around them, Luke would have used a word like "lego," which he also used in Acts 6:9—"Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is **Called** (lego) the synagogue of the Libertines—" or one of the 25 other Greek words that are translated **Called** in our English Bible. In using "chrematizo" in Acts 11:26 Luke must have meant to show that God was the originator of the name "Christian," for "chrematizo" indicates divine revelation.

Therefore, we can read the full meaning of Acts 11:26 thus: "—And the disciples were (by the mouth of God) called Christians first in Antioch."

And that leads us to the important question: Why should God be so concerned about giving these Israelites a new name?

We find part of the answer in Isaiah 62:2, where the prophet is speaking to ten-tribed Israel (as distinct from the House of Judah), saying, "—thou shalt be called by a **New Name**, which the Mouth of the Lord Shall Name." Also, in Isaiah 65:15 we read that God shall —“call his servants by **Another Name**.” That "new name" and "another name" mentioned must be **Christian**—they "were **Called Christians** first in Antioch."

Consider also the prophesy in Hosea 1:10, where God is speaking through Hosea to (ten-tribed) Israel. He says, "... and it shall come to pass that in the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, ye are the **Sons of the Living God**." It is strange, but nevertheless true, that God's servant people, the Christians, have been and are being told by their ministers and Bible teachers that they are **Not** Israel; that they are **Not** God's chosen people, but that they **ARE** the sons of God. They preach to their congregations 1 John 3:1-2 where John, writing to the Christians, said, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the **Sons of God** ...

Yet they say we are not descendants of the people to whom Hosea prophesied.

There are many proofs the Christian peoples (generally speaking) are descended from Israelites. Space does not allow us here to repeat historical and archeological proof that great multitudes of Israelites migrated into Europe many centuries before Christ, nor to give other Biblical arguments. But the fact that "Christian" is the "new name" for Israelites, and the name "Christian" is applied to our peoples and nations should make you investigate this matter further.

The Bible is written to, for, and about, Israel, yet we are the people who print it, distribute it, protect it, and use it more than any other Race. It may be time for you to heed God's call to "Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you" (Isa. 51:2).

God said through Moses, the prophet:

"... On this wise shall ye bless the children of Israel, saying unto them, The Lord bless thee, and keep thee: The Lord make His face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee; The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee and give thee peace. And they shall put MY NAME upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them" (Numbers 6:23-27).

NOTE BY PASTOR EMRY

This article was written by a man from North Carolina. If he has made you curious why our Race is "named" with a name God placed upon the Israelites, you should write for the highly informative tracts below:

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