

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN

Acts 11:19-26

Acts 11:26 (NASB)

²⁶“And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. And for an entire year they met with the church and taught considerable numbers; and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch.”

Christians (**Χριστιανός**) **Χριστιανός**, *Christianos* = *followers of Christ*

Luke then adds the historical footnote that the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. The term means “of the party of Christ” and was used in derision. Peter encouraged those who suffered “as a Christian,” to “not feel ashamed, but in that name [to] glorify God” (1 Peter 4:16).

1 Peter 4:16 (NASB)

¹⁶“But if *anyone suffers* as a Christian, he is not to be ashamed, but in that name is to glorify God in this name.”

What was a term of derision, though, soon became a badge of honor to the early church. The historian Eusebius relates the account of the martyr Sanctus, who replied to all his torturers’ questions simply, “I am a Christian” (*Ecclesiastical History V, I* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973], 172).