

# The Importance of a Name

August 27, 2006

## Acts 1.26c

*"And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."* Acts 11:26c

"What's in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet." These words from Shakespeare's play, **Romeo and Juliet** not only ask an important question, but also imply an interesting answer. The answer which Shakespeare assumed is probably the same answer you would find prevalent today. Most people, like Shakespeare, would say that there is really not much in a name. After all, a rose would smell as sweet no matter what you called it.

It is said that Abraham Lincoln asked some of his associates an interesting question along these lines. He said, "If you call a dog's tail a leg, how many legs would the dog have?" They replied, "Five." He said, "No. That's wrong. The answer is four. You can call a dog's tail a leg if you like, but it's still a tail." The point is that things are what they are, no matter what they're called. So, what's in a name? Do names matter then? Or are they unimportant?

Regardless of what some people think today, there is much, Biblically speaking, involved in names. As we open the pages of the First Testament, we find that names are very significant. Names mean something. Here in our text, we come upon a name by which we are all known today as believers in Jesus. It is the name **Christian**. What does it mean to you to be called a Christian?

### ***There is a Central Truth to Understand***

We need to see that in the Bible, **names are symbolic**.

*"For to us a child is born,  
to us a son is given,  
and the government will be on his shoulders.*

#### ***And he will be called***

*Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."* Isaiah 9.6

But names in Scripture are also **significant**.

### ***There is a Characteristic Value to the Name "Christian"***

The word "Christian" literally means "belonging to the party of Christ." One of the main reasons why I believe this term was applied to these believers is that they were thoroughly of Christ.

They were thoroughly Christian in **word**.

But they were also Christians in **walk**.

### ***Therefore, Thoughtful Consideration Is Demanded***

*"You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain."* Exodus 20.7 NASB

*"I know where you live—where Satan has his throne. Yet you remain true to my name."* Revelation 2.13

*"I know your deeds. See, I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut. I know that you have little strength, yet you have kept my word and have not denied my name."* Revelation 3.8

*"Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads."* Revelation 14.1

*"No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads."* Revelation 22.3-4