

Terminology Used to Identify God's People

Jesus' terminology in Luke	Terminology in Acts	God's people today, as we are described in the letters
<p>Preach the kingdom of God (transcendent). 4:43</p> <p>Little flock the Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom. 12:32</p> <p>The kingdom of God is within you (immanent). 17:20, 21</p> <p>Merciful believers are sons of the Most High. 6:35</p> <p>"And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be My disciple." 14:27</p> <p>Good soil. 8:15; 13:6-9</p> <p>"My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice." 8:21; 11:28</p> <p>Christians are salt and light and we help other disciples become salt and light. 8:16-18; 11:33-36; 14:34</p> <p>People of light are stewards over God's worldly wealth. They use it in their labor of love to attain a personal welcome into eternal dwellings. 16:9, 12</p> <p>You will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous. 14:14</p>	<p>Church, the saved. 2:47</p> <p>Believers. 2:44; 4:32; 5:12; 9:41; 11:2; 15:23</p> <p>Your servants. 4:29</p> <p>Church. 5:11; 8:1, 3, 13; 9:31; 11:22, 26; 12:1, 5; 13:1; 14:27; 15:3, 30; 18:22</p> <p>Churches. 16:5</p> <p>Elders in every church. 14:23. See 11:30; 15:2, 6, 22; 16:4; 20:17, 28</p> <p>Disciples. 6:1, 7; 9:10, 19, 26, 36; 11:29; 14:20-22; 18:23, 27; 19:9; 20:1; 21:4</p> <p>Disciples called Christians. 11:26</p> <p>The brothers. 15:1, 32, 33, 36; 17:10; 18:18; 21:7, 17; 28:14, 15</p> <p>Sanctified. 20:32</p> <p>No other name. 4:12, 30; 5:41; 9:14, 21, 27</p>	<p>Christians are the church, the body of Christ; a holy temple in which God dwells by His Spirit. Ephesians 1:23; 2:21, 22; 4:14-16</p> <p>We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works according to God's advanced plan. Eph. 2:10</p> <p>We are fellow citizens in God's household with people from all races and walks of life. We have personal access to the Father through Jesus' priesthood by the Holy Spirit. Eph. 2:14-17</p> <p>The manifold wisdom of God is being made known to rulers and authorities in heavenly realms through Jesus' believing, serving, sanctified disciples. Eph. 3:10, 11</p> <p>Our inner being is being strengthened to love because of our fellowship with the Holy Spirit and our faith in Christ Jesus as our Prince and Savior. Eph. 3:13-19</p> <p>Christians are God's temple on earth. We are the same people that have been transferred from Satan's kingdom and we are now being built together for a dwelling place on earth for God. He lives with us by His Spirit. Eph. 2:22; I Cor. 3:16</p> <p>We are a letter of Christ. II Cor. 3:2</p> <p>We are the "circumcision" who worships God in the Spirit. Phil. 3:3</p> <p>Our citizenship is in heaven. Phil. 3:20</p> <p>"But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the first born, whose names are written in heaven." Heb. 12:22, 23</p> <p>We are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken. Heb. 12:28</p>

Please note the heading above the three columns.

Terminology Used to Identify God's People

In the first column please note the terminology Jesus used to identify God's people with the kingdom of God. This is the terminology Luke used in his gospel.

In column two we have a list of terms used by Luke in Acts to identify people who have been called out of the world and into Christ. Usually, we call this group of people the church. This word is also used by Luke; however, we need to become fully aware of the other terms he freely used.

All of these words found in Acts are descriptive terms used to identify people who have been transferred into the kingdom of God. We should never lose the concept of God and Christ's kingdom (Eph. 5:5). God and Christ's church is properly understood in the context of Their kingdom.

In column three we have another long list of words and phrases used in the letters. The letters add other dimensions to the terms used by Jesus in the Gospels and Luke's Acts. All of these beautiful words tell Christians who we are or what we ought to be.

The term "church of Christ" is not a proper name for a group of people (Rom. 16:16). We are a group of people who were "called out." We were called out of Satan's kingdom by the gospel of Christ (Rom. 1:16; Acts 19:6). We have been added to the saved in the kingdom of God (Acts 2:47). We are the church of God in Christ (I Thess. 2:14).

Questions for Discussion

A. Jesus' terminology in Luke

1. How did the Father give the kingdom to the little flock?
2. When a Christian accepts the kingdom what does he or she accept?
3. What is a disciple and what is his or her cross?
4. What do the four soils represent?
5. What concept of the church did Jesus foreshadow in Luke 8:21?
6. To whom are Christians salt and light?
7. Over what are Christians stewards?

8. Please consider all your answers to the foregoing questions and write a summary paragraph depicting Jesus' view of the church He planned to build.

9. When will "pay day" come for faithful Christians?

B. Terminology in Acts. In Column number two we find the terms Luke used to identify a member of the church of Christ. Please note how they match up with how Jesus identified Christians. Where were the members first called Christians?

C. God's people today. A church does not exist separate and apart from the members. A church is a group of people. It consists of two or more people; therefore, a description of any given congregation is understood by a description of the spiritual condition of the people. In this lesson we want to learn Jesus' description of a Christian and how they were identified in Acts after He became Prince and Savior. In this part of our study we can learn how the information in the two columns was worked out in Christians as they functioned in a church.

1. Explain how Christians are God's workmanship. How can we determine if His program is working in us? What will a church be doing if God's program is working in the members?
2. How does God put His seal on each member of a church of Christ? How does this form His temple in this world?
3. In order for God to manifest His wisdom to rulers and authorities in heavenly realms, whose wisdom must Christians be applying to our decisions and judgments?
4. We sometimes hear the phrase, "I read you." In the context of communication it means I understand you. When people read Christians what or who do they understand?
5. The word circumcision is used in the Bible to suggest a removal of something that is not useful.

When Christians are identified as the "circumcision," what is one of the things it says about us?

6. Identification is so very crucial to the development of human beings. Upon what aspect of human life do Christians focus in order to lay our treasures, if we have membership in the church that is described in Hebrews 12:22, 23?