

What is a Christian

In your lessons at school, you should have some understanding about Christianity and Christians. There are lots of things said about Christians but what does it really mean and what's it all about anyway?

This can be done as an assembly – or even as an overview of Christianity in the context of a lesson.

Beliefs

There are lots of different beliefs in the world around us. Some people believe in one God; some people believe in lots of gods; some people believe there is no God and other people don't know or don't really care!

All of these belief systems have a name and affect how people live their lives. What you believe always shows in the way you live life and the things that you do.

So for example if someone says they're a footballer, you'd expect that they had a football kit, practice football and play for a team. If someone says they like a certain kind of music, they will know about it, stream music from bands that play that kind of music and probably hang out with others who like that music. If someone says they are interested in the environment then they will probably spend their time and money thinking and talking about it, supporting environmental causes and reading and listening to people who are environmentalists.

Christians

If someone says they are a Christian and believe in God then they will probably be someone who spends time reading what they believe God says and spend their time and money and life doing the kinds of things that would identify them as being a Christian. They will probably go to church – church is just a place where people who believe in God meet together. It's not a building but the people.

Christians believe that there is a God who loves us. Many people say there is no evidence for God. But there is loads of evidence for God – like the Bible; the lives of Christians; the change that takes place when someone becomes a Christian; archaeological evidence; predictions about the future that came true exactly; the beauty of creation; the mess the world is in; and the perfect balance of billions of things in our world that are required for there to be life and for life to keep on existing.

Christians believe that God loves us and because God loves us, he wants us to be the best version of us that we can be. God is a Father who sent his son called Jesus to come along and 'buy' us back from a life that is messed up, chasing the wrong things, going the wrong way – and bring us into a life that has meaning, value, purpose and explains the reason for our existence and our future.

But the Christian message is hard for some people to believe because it goes beyond what we can see, think, hear and smell. It touches a deep part of us that many people don't want touched.

There is a famous story about a man who volunteered to be executed in a Japanese Prisoner of War camp in World War Two. He stepped forward even though he wasn't guilty and gave his life to save the lives of other people because he chose to. That is what Christians believe Jesus did for you and me because of his love for us. But he didn't stay dead. He rose again from the dead. But this means that now through Jesus there is hope for people in this life and beyond this life.

Here's 2 minutes audio on what Christianity really is

(The word 'Gospel' means 'good news' about God)

Someone called Sarah Yardley, who runs an event in Cornwall for young people called ['Creation Fest'](#) says this:

Link - <https://myfishbites.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Sarah-Yardley-Gospel.mp3>

Relationship not Religion

A Christian is not someone who is religious. Being religious is about obeying a set of rules or following a certain lifestyle or doing / not doing things that they believe they should or should not do. Many religious groups have leaders and teachers who they follow. (Even people who don't believe in God do the same kinds of things!)

Christians are involved in helping people, serving people, giving, making a difference and wanting to bring good instead of evil. In fact the church is the only organisation that exists for the benefit of those outside of the organisation!

Christianity is different. It is not about rules, laws and having to do things. It is about being changed on the inside of a person and then that change showing itself on the outside – in their actions, words and lifestyle. Religion is the opposite. Religion says 'obey the rules and then you can be part of the religion'.

Religion is about what you do. Christianity is about who you are.

You are not born a Christian and you don't sign some documents to become a Christian. You're not one because your family is or because of where you live.

Being a Christian only happens if a person makes a choice and says, 'Yes God I believe in you. Show yourself to me, change me, replace the mess with your goodness and fill me with your life and love.'

Video – a caterpillar becomes a butterfly

Link – https://youtu.be/0Fjld_tIpPk

The video shows an example of what happens when someone becomes a Christian. In the video, we see a caterpillar become a butterfly. The caterpillar doesn't become a better caterpillar but instead it changes from the inside and becomes a new 'creature'.

The Bible says this: "Anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!"

Being a Christian is not about being weak or about being pathetic. In fact Christians are persecuted and abused more than any other group across the world with thousands being tortured and killed. But Christians believe that knowing God is about loving others and showing God's love.

Christianity is not about being a bigot, or hating people or telling people what to do. Many people will tell you all kinds of bad things about Christians but it's often due to misunderstanding or because they disagree with Christian viewpoints. But Christianity is a force for good and not there to judge or hate on people! It's about faith, forgiveness and following God.

We hope this assembly shows what Christians are and are not about and gives you some understanding. Hey – if you don't know what something really is, you'll never know if it's for you!