

## You Belong - July 9-15

### **Q 32. But why are you called a Christian?**

A. Because by faith I am a member of Christ and so I share in his anointing. I am anointed to confess his name, to present myself to him as a living sacrifice of thanks, to strive with a free conscience against sin and the devil in this life, and afterward to reign with Christ over all creation for eternity.

**Memory verse: If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. – Romans 10.9-10**

Devotion 1. The word Christian comes to us from a Greek word, and one way that it can be translated means “little Christ.” So the catechism wants to ask what makes people “little Christs”? Consider this scenario: Jane becomes friends with a girl down the street who is a few years older named Ruth. As they get to know each other, Jane begins to say things with the same tone and inflection as Ruth. They both say “cool” drawn way out, “coooooooooool.” As they spend more time together, Jane wants to get a dark blue baseball cap to wear, just like Ruth. This leads Jane’s mom to say, “Jane is like a little version of Ruth!” Jane is a “little Ruth” because she looks, walks, and talks like Ruth. When we are called “little Christs” it means that we look and act like Christ. There are a couple differences between being a “little Ruth” and a “little Christ” though. One is that we don’t just decide to imitate Christ as a role model, but Christ makes us “little Christs” through the gift of faith. Christ anoints us as members of his body to call him Lord so we can be saved and experience all the benefits of a life united to Jesus. Also, for Jane, she will grow up or Ruth will move away, and she will no longer be a “little Ruth.” She will just be Jane. But for the “little Christ,” we become more and more like Christ until he comes again and we “reign with him over all creation for eternity.” So be “little Christs” today. Because of his grace, we can be more and more like Jesus and confess his name with gratitude.

**Prayer: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thank you for making me a member of your body and calling me your own child. Help me to live like Jesus in everything I do. Amen.**

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### Devotion 2

This Q and A from the catechism packs so much into this little word “Christian.” Its packs it in, but its not packed stressfully like your suitcase you can barely zip shut on the eve of your vacation. It is packed thoughtfully, carefully, and with plenty of room to grow into. The writers of the catechism make the claim that calling yourself a Christian means something for all of creation and all of eternity. That is a lot of space and time for just one word, but it seems like God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is in the habit of packing eternity into a word. God called the creation into being with a word: “Let there be” (which is one word in Hebrew). God looked over his creation and described it with a word: “Good.” Jesus is the Word of God himself, the word became flesh and dwelt among us. And when the Bible describes how things will be when Christ comes again it uses a word: “New” (or “renewed”). So for us, when we are called or when we call ourselves a Christian, we claim an identity and a life in Christ with a holistic reach and an eternal shelf life. Being a Christian encompasses our whole lives. It affects our spirits, minds, and bodies. So carry the moniker of “Christian” with courage and with hope. It’s a small word but through God’s grace and steadfast love it can transform our lives and renew the world.

**Prayer: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, thank you for giving us Jesus for our salvation. Guide us as we walk around this world confessing your name until you come again. Amen.**