Long Story Short: Branded a Christian!

Reflect

1. In your view what is a “cultural” Christian?
2. What are the differences between a cultural Christian and a follower of Christ?
3. In your own words define what a Christian is according to the Word of God?
4. In your own life what would say “brands” you as a Christian?

Read Your Bible

- Acts 11:19-26
- Mark 1:16-20

Apply God’s Word to Your Life

1. See Acts. God’s plan to reach the world with the Good News of Jesus takes a turn in Antioch as Gentiles, (non-Jews), are hearing the word of God and coming to faith in Jesus. This was a radical turn of events as Gentiles were very different from Jews in lifestyle and beliefs. We live in a divisive culture today, much like the Gentiles and Jews of biblical times. Reflect on all the things that divide people creating conflict and discord in our lives. Why do you think this is?
2. Unity is difficult in the church and in the world. Name what unites all those who are marked with the cross of Christ as Christians?
3. Why is it critical for us as a church and as individual followers of Jesus to stay focused on what unites us as Christians?
4. If you read the whole book of Acts, you will see that when the Good News of Jesus is proclaimed to Jews or Gentiles the resurrection is the center of the message. Why must the resurrection be at the center of what it means to be a Christian?
5. See Mark. The first disciples dropped everything and walked away from their old life into a new calling to follow Jesus. When you are branded as a Christian a transformation begins in your life. Reflect on the transformation you have experienced as a follower of Jesus.

People from all walks of life who have different political views or who come from different cultures are bound together by the call they have heard and embraced to become a Christian. The life, teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus is what both defines us and unites us in a common endeavor, to encourage all people to know the love of Christ.” And when we live as a follower of Jesus it changes us and the way we look at others for God so loved the world that He sent His only Son to save us all.

Pray

Heavenly Father, You have branded me and marked me with the cross of Christ forever. And so, I pray that You would open my eyes and my heart to live into this high calling that others may know I am a Christian by my love for You and one another following the great commandment of Your Son. Use me to bring unity to Your church and Your cause. In Jesus’ name. Amen.