

A Christian Just as Paul Was

One of the great truths of the Bible is that people of today can be simple New Testament Christians just as Paul was. Please read the great speech that Paul made before King Agrippa in Acts 26. Paul did all that he could do to convert the young king to the Lord Jesus. As Paul concluded he told Agrippa, "I would to God . . . that all that hear me this day, might become such as I am (Acts 26:29)." We all can be Christians just as Paul was. Let us consider what the Bible teaches.

First, the Bible teaches that to be a Christian just as Paul was, we must obey the gospel just as Paul did. Three chapters in Acts tell about Paul's conversion (Acts 9, 22, and 26). From these accounts we learn that Paul heard the word (Acts 9:4), believed in Christ (Acts 9:6), and repented of his sins (Acts 9:9; Acts 17:30). He must have confessed his faith in Christ because he later wrote, "Confession with the mouth is unto salvation (Rom. 10:10)." Paul also submitted to baptism to wash away his sins. Ananias "Now why do you tarry? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name (Acts 22:16)." We can all obey these requirements of the gospel just as Paul did.

Second, Paul's conversion is an example for all who want to be saved just as Paul was saved. When Paul became a Christians, he did not make a decision for Christ, leaving out one or more of the above requirements. He did not become a Christian by faith only or by grace only or by any other man-made plan. He did not sign a pledge card giving himself to the Lord or raise his hand to indicate that he wanted to be saved. Paul became a Christian by obeying the gospel and being born again (Rom. 6:16-19; Col. 1:13; John 3:5).

Third, when we obey the gospel just as Paul obeyed the gospel we can wear the name *Christian* (Acts 11:26), just as Paul wore the name *Christian*. Paul urged Agrippa and all who heard his word to wear the name *Christian* (Acts 26:28-29). Paul condemned the wearing of human names in 1 Cor. 1:10-16). Peter wrote, "And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved (Acts 4:12)." We can wear the name *Christian*, just as Paul did.

In summary, we can be Christians just as Paul was by obeying the same commands of the gospel that he obeyed. We can obey these commands and be saved just as Paul was saved. We can wear the name *Christian*, just as Paul wore that name. We can know that salvation is in the name of Christ; and his name, alone, saves us. We can be Christians just as Paul was a Christian.