

WHY ARE WE CALLED CHRISTIANS?

Χριστιανός

Christianos

the Greek–Latin hybrid word of Acts 11:26

A name coined by outsiders in Antioch. Its meaning was fixed at the Jordan, and sealed in every baptism since.

3

TIMES THE WORD APPEARS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1

CITY WHERE THE NAME WAS FIRST SPOKEN: ANTIOCH

2

LANGUAGES FUSED IN THE WORD ITSELF

1

ANOINTING SHARED BETWEEN CHRIST AND THE BAPTIZED

I THE LINGUISTIC ARCHITECTURE

The title Christian rests on a single Greek root. Four words descend from one verb, and each step names something God has done.

χρίω

chriō

to anoint



Χριστός

Christos

the Anointed One



χρίσμα

chrisma

the anointing, 1 Jn 2:20, 27



Χριστιανός

Christianos

a little anointed one

II FROM ANTIOCH TO THE JORDAN

In Acts 11:26, Antioch's outsiders minted a hybrid word — a Greek root wearing a Latin ending, the same pattern Rome used to name a leader's followers.

Χριστός

GREEK ROOT · “CHRIST”

+

-ιανός

LATIN SUFFIX · “BELONGING TO”

=

Χριστιανός

A GREEK–LATIN HYBRID

THE SAME PATTERN NAMED HERODIANS (FOLLOWERS OF HEROD) AND AUGUSTINIANS (FOLLOWERS OF AUGUSTUS)

“In Antioch the disciples were for the first time called Christians” (Acts 11:26).

Christ was not born with a surname. He earned the title because God anointed Him visibly, at His baptism in the Jordan, with the Holy Spirit and power (Acts 10:38).

JESUS

Anointed with the Spirit at His own baptism

TO BECOME

Christos

THE BELIEVER

Anointed with that same Spirit in his own baptism

TO BECOME

Christianos

III THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

In the Old Testament, the holy anointing oil was reserved for three offices.

PROPHET

1 Kings 19:16

Consecrated to speak God’s word

PRIEST

Exodus 28:41; Leviticus 8:12

Consecrated to offer sacrifice

KING

1 Samuel 16:13; 2 Samuel 2:4

Consecrated to rule under the Lord



CHRIST, ALL THREE AT ONCE – PROPHET, PRIEST, AND KING



THE BAPTIZED SHARE THIS ANOINTED LIFE

As little anointed ones, Christians no longer offer animal sacrifice. Instead, they offer prayer, praise, and love of neighbor, and they approach the Father freely, through the blood of the Lamb.

To bear the name Christian is to carry the mark of ownership, the seal of the Spirit, and a share in the King’s own anointing.

ANOINTED IN BAPTISM · SEALED BY THE SPIRIT · SOLI DEO GLORIA

“As a consequence of Christ’s chrisma, or chrism, all Christians have their name.”

MARTIN LUTHER

“And the One who establishes us together with you into Christ and has anointed us is God, who has also sealed us and given us the deposit of the Spirit in our hearts.”

2 CORINTHIANS 1:21–22

“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession.”

1 PETER 2:9