

Daily Devotional, April 15, 2020

“Called Christians”, (Acts 11:26, NKJV)

“And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11:26).

The gospel of Jesus Christ had gone out from the first church at Jerusalem, to Samaria, and finally to the Gentile regions. A great revival occurred at a city called Antioch, and Barnabas and Saul (Paul) ministered in the church there, encouraging and teaching the multitudes. These disciples were the first to be “called Christians.” They were called followers of Christ Jesus by others because of their good testimony, and they took well to the name. What a privilege to be called after the name of the Lord who died for them and gave them salvation! Now I shall set two very personal challenges before you. They relate to you, and not another. Please allow others to take their own inventory, as you take your own inventory. “To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand” (Romans 14:4).

What do other people call you? Do they look at your testimony, and see an inconsistent testimony, or a person no different than the heathens, and call you ‘hypocrite?’ Or do they see your good works, and then are unable to deny that your works back up your words? “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).

How do you feel about being called a Christian? Do you make your faith known to others, or are you a secret disciple? It is fashionable for certain fearers of men to subscribe to ‘lifestyle evangelism’ only, giving them a pitiful excuse to not share the gospel using words. Let us remember that “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). Do you deny Jesus consistently before men, and fail to speak up for Him when God gives you an open door to do so? Granted even Peter failed on this point, thrice denying His Lord. But Peter came back to Jesus contrite, and found forgiveness and restoration. And so can we. None of us is perfect. None have arrived. Let us take up the challenge, praying to the Lord always, and redouble our efforts to promote the life-giving gospel of Jesus Christ. Let us conduct ourselves such that we are worthy to be “called Christians.”