

The Early Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ Called Themselves “THE WAY”

Acts 9:2, Acts 22:4, Acts 18:25, 26, Acts 19:9, 23, Acts 24:14, 22, Acts 26:13,
Jesus said, “I Am The Way” John 14:6
Genesis 24:27

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The only “Bible” the early Church had was what we call the “Old Testament”. When the apostle Paul and the other apostles went preaching from synagogue to synagogue, they preached from what we call the “Old Testament”. Acts 13:5, 14, 42, 14:1.

To understand why the early believers called themselves “The Way”, we have to look into the Old Testament, as we call it. For some years, disciples of Jesus were called “The Way”, before they were called “Christian”. Acts 11:26, Galatians 1:11-21.

When John the Baptist was imprisoned by King Herod, he, John, heard the reports of what Jesus was doing as He preached the Gospel and worked many mighty miracles.

John called two of his disciples and sent them to Jesus to ask Him, “Are You He that should come? or should we look for another?” Luke 7:19, 20.

In other words, they were asking Jesus, “Are You the promised Messiah, or is He yet to come?” Zechariah 9:9, Jeremiah 23:5, 6. (Messiah means anointed, which in the New Testament is translated Christ.)

“At that time Jesus cured many of their infirmities and diseases, and evil spirits, and to many who were blind He restored their sight.” Luke 7:21.

So Jesus said to the disciples of John, “Go your way and tell John what things you have seen and heard: how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached and blessed is he that is not offended in Me.” Luke 7:22, 23.

Now to those who loved God’s Word, and only had the “Old Testament” as we call it, when Jesus quoted this passage the believers knew immediately what Jesus was saying, because He quoted a major passage of Isaiah which described the ministry of the **COMING MESSIAH**.

To identify Himself to John, Jesus quoted a major **MESSIANIC PROFILE** of the Scriptures, which we call, “Isaiah 35:3 – 10.”

The “Old Testament” as we know it, was not called the “Old Testament” in Jesus’ day, because it was all they had of God’s Word. In Luke 24:25, 26, 27, 44, Jesus said that He spoke from: “Moses, all the prophets, and all the Scriptures, and from the Psalms”.

Remember that there were no chapters or verses in the scrolls of Isaiah which were kept in the Synagogues.

Remember also that there were no copies of Isaiah in the form of a book like we have.

The believers had to commit the Scriptures to memory, **far more than we have to today**.

In Luke 7:22, when Jesus told the disciples of John the Baptist what He was doing, He was telling them Who He was, as it was prophesied in Isaiah 35:3 – 10.

And at the heart of this prophecy there is a HIGHWAY, THE HIGHWAY OF HOLINESS. Isaiah 35:8, 9, 10.
THE WAY

And it leads to Zion, the CITY OF OUR GOD. Psalm 48:1 – 14, Hebrews 11:8 – 10, Psalm 87:1-7.

So the early New Testament believers called themselves, “The Way”, or “The believers of the Way”.

There are two essentials necessary to be accepted by God and “Go to heaven”. Acts 26:18, **Forgiveness and holiness.**

Firstly we must receive the forgiveness of our sins through faith in the Blood of Jesus Christ and His sacrifice on the Cross. 1Corinthians 15:3, Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:14, Acts 26:18. This is Justification. Romans 5:1, Romans 5:9..

Secondly we must be set free from the power and habits of sin; we must be sanctified and set apart unto God, by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We must be holy. “For without holiness no one will see the Lord.” Hebrews 12:14, 1 Thessalonians 4:3, 4, 7, 1Thessalonians 5:23, 24, 2Corinthians 7:1, 1Peter 1:15, 16, 1John 3:3, 2:6, 1Peter 1:2, Romans 6:1 -14, 1Corinth 6:11, The noun translated “**holiness**”, (Greek- *hagiasmos*), and the noun translated “**sanctification**”, (Greek-*hagiasmos*), is the same Greek word. (Vines- Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words.) **Believers in Jesus must not go on living in sin.**

BE YE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY, SAYS THE LORD. 1Peter 1:15, 16.