

How do I know I'm a Christian?

There are a number of ways we could answer that, but one letter in the New Testament – 1 John - was written, specifically, with this in mind.

As he draws his letter to a close, John writes in 1 John 5:13 that his purpose in writing is that his readers 'may know that you have eternal life' (1 John 5:13) – that we might have an assurance of our salvation, that we might know that we are Christians.

Consistent with this aim, John gives us numerous 'evidences' that we should expect to find in our lives, if we are Christians. I've grouped them together under six headings:

1. We believe, and confess, Jesus as Messiah and Son of God:

1 John 3:19, 23; 4:15; 5:1

2. We love God:

1 John 4:20-1; 5:1-2

3. We have the Holy Spirit abiding in us:

1 John 3:24; 4:13 (see also: Romans 8:15-16)

4. We love our fellow Christians:

1 John 2:9-11; 3:10, 14; 4:7, 12, 19-21

5. We turn away from sin and walk in obedience:

1 John 1:6-9; 2:4-6; 3:4-10; 5:18

6. We listen to, and heed, the apostolic teaching:

1 John 4:6

John's intention is that if, as we survey our lives, we see a love for God and faith in Jesus, a love for fellow Christians, a turning away from sin, and a willingness to accept, and humble ourselves under, the historic, apostolic teaching, then we can have an assurance that God is indeed living in us, that we have been born of God, and that we are genuine Christians.