

# **You are already a heretic**

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It doesn't matter what your theological views are, nor does it matter what denomination your church is; no matter who you are, you are considered a heretic by some other group of Christians out there.

What most people don't realize is that the definition of "heresy" isn't "false teaching," just as the word "orthodoxy" doesn't mean "truth." In fact, the meaning of the Greek word αἵρεσις/"hah'-ee-res-is" that is transliterated as "heresies" in some versions of the Bible simply meant "sects" (or "divisions") and not "incorrect doctrine" at all, and "orthodox" only means "that which is commonly accepted," and there's always been plenty of commonly accepted error out there.

For example, Galileo was technically a heretic because he taught that the Earth wasn't the centre of the universe,<sup>1</sup> but he was still quite correct that it wasn't. Meanwhile, the Institutional Church considered their view that our planet was the centre of the universe to be the orthodox one, but they were entirely incorrect. So remember that just because something is "heretical" doesn't mean it's incorrect, and something being "orthodox" doesn't make it true (and also that the heresies referred to by that label in the Bible are something entirely different from what most people mean when they use the word "heresy"). In fact, both Jesus and Paul were considered to be heretics by the orthodoxy of their day, so consider yourself in good company when someone calls you a heretic, and remember the words a wise theologian once wrote: "Heretic" is the highest earthly title which can be bestowed at this time.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/galileo-is-accused-of-heresy>