

9 – Loves Fellow Disciples

John 13:34–35 “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another [your fellow brothers and sisters in Christ], even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

- Jesus’ love for us had no limits; He endured His worst for our best! We are called to do the same for all fellow followers of Jesus!
- How will people know we are followers of Jesus? When they see how we act sacrificially to show love for each other!

10 – Bears Fruit and Serves Others

John 15:5 “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.”

- What is the source of our fruit? Abiding in Christ—remaining in Him by faith!
- What is our fruit? The attitudes, words, actions, service, witness, and good works that the Holy Spirit produces in us as followers, disciples of Jesus!

John 15:8 “My Father is glorified [made great in the sight of others] by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.” // Since God is totally worthy, may the producing of much fruit be our goal!

Mark 10:45 “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” // Since the Son of God became the greatest servant, let us also serve in extraordinary ways!

11 – Confesses Christ to Others

Acts 1:8 [Jesus said to His disciples:] “you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you [fulfilled ten days later on the Day of Pentecost]; and you shall be My witnesses...” // How are we to be witnesses? We are to tell others what we believe!

1 Peter 3:15 “but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts [so, let us regard Christ as holy and at the center of our faith, thinking, desires, and decisions], always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence...” // We, as disciples, are saved through Christ, so let us live without fear and seize every witnessing opportunity!

12 – Helps Make and Strengthen Other Disciples

Matthew 28:19 “Go... and make disciples of all the nations...” // Christ makes disciples through His Church as the Gospel is proclaimed and people are baptized and taught; the Holy Spirit creates and strengthens faith through those means.

Acts 14:21–22 “After [Paul and Barnabas] ...had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples...” //

So, let us keep encouraging disciples to grow – as noted in Matthew 28 above.

2 Timothy 2:2 “The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” // Our entrusting should be thorough to enable continuance, then, knowing, they can pass it on.

- Paul equipped Timothy.
- Timothy equipped others.
- Others equipped still others.

Note: None of the **12 points** earn or preserve salvation. We are justified by grace through faith in Christ alone. Those points describe the Christian life that flows from God’s saving grace; even our good works are fruits of faith produced by the Holy Spirit.

Conclusion

For much more on this important topic, join us in Bible Class – Saturdays at 3:00, Sundays at 10:30, beginning on 9/19/26.

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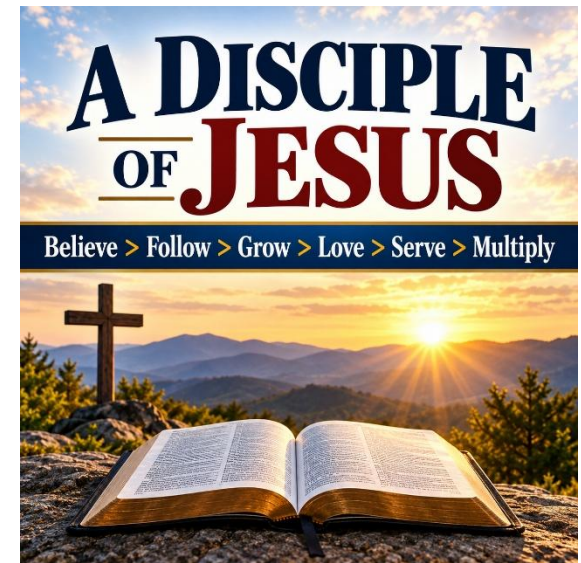
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(Written: 9-26)



Introduction

Dear Friends: These are the results of the recent Bethlehem survey:

1. Are Christians and Disciples the same? 60% indicated “yes” (see below)
2. Are Disciples and Apostles the same? 74% indicated “yes” (no, apostles are personally called and taught by Jesus)
3. Which term is more common in the New Testament – Christian or Disciple? 80% indicated Disciple (correct)
4. Do all Disciples continue in God’s word? 36% indicated “yes” (see below)
5. How can we know someone is a Christian – by what he knows or does? 93% indicated “does” (yes, but...)

Important: Outward works can give evidence of faith, but they do not make us Christians or justify us before God; salvation is by grace through faith in Christ.

Get this regarding the New Testament:

- “Christian” appears 3 times.
- “Disciple” appears over 250 times!

Understand this:

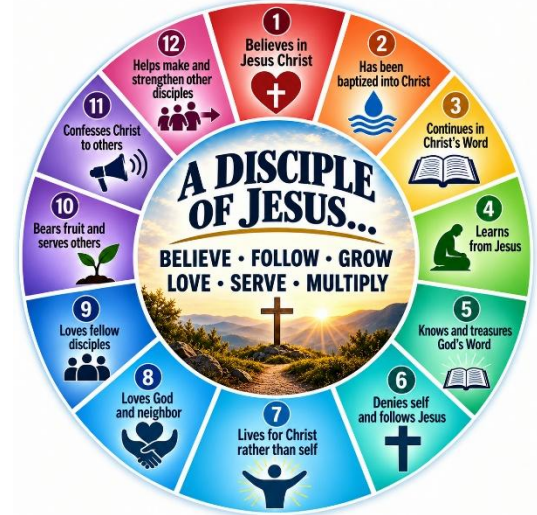
- **Christian** = a person who belongs to Christ through faith.
- **Disciple** = that Christian viewed as one who follows and learns from Christ.

The terms: They normally describe the SAME BELIEVER but emphasize different aspects of the Christian life.

Note: A disciple must continue in Christ's Word and faith, for Scripture warns that a believer can fall away (Lk. 8:13; Heb. 3:12).

Now: A 12-point definition...

A DISCIPLE OF JESUS...



1 – Believes in Jesus Christ

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” // God loved, so He gave. The Holy Spirit works through God’s

Word to reveal our need, call us to repentance, and create and sustain faith in Jesus for eternal life.

Acts 16:31 [To the Philippian jailer desiring salvation, Paul and Silas responded:] “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved...” // What does it mean to believe? Two definitions:

- **KAT** – **K**nowledge (knowing God’s word), **A**greement (agreeing that what we know is true), and **T**rust (trusting in Jesus for eternal life).
- **FAITH** – **F**orsaking **A**ll confidence in myself, **I** **T**rust **H**im. Saving faith itself is trust in Christ and His promise, created by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel.

2 – Has been Baptized into Christ

Matthew 28:19-20 [Jesus told of His complete authority, then He commanded:] “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them... [and] teaching them...” // In Baptism, God joins us to Christ and His saving death and resurrection and gives the forgiveness and new life He promises (Romans 6:3–4; Acts 2:38).

3 – Continues in Christ's Word

John 8:31–32 “...Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, ‘If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine...’” // What does it mean to continue in His word?

- Keep hearing it!
- Keep learning it!
- Keep believing it!
- Keep living it!

4 – Learns from Jesus

Matthew 11:29 “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me [follow Me, submit to My instruction, and let me be your guide], for I am gentle and humble in heart [compassionate and approachable], and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS [forgiveness, relief from earning God’s acceptance, and peace with God].”

5 – Knows and Treasures God's Word

Psalms 119:11 “Your word I have treasured [highly valued] in my heart, That I may not sin against You.” // Disciples treasure God’s word more than temporal sinful pleasures.

Colossians 3:16 “Let the word of Christ richly [abundantly] dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God.” // The word imparts wisdom, caution, advice, and encouragement, which moves us to give thanks.

6 – Denies Self and Follows Jesus

Luke 9:23 [Jesus said:] “If anyone wishes to come after Me [as My disciple], he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.” // The life of being a disciple of Jesus:

- **Deny self** – say “no” to our will.
- **Take up cross daily** – willing to bear the suffering and loss that come with faithfully following Christ, even death.

- **Follow Jesus** – say “yes” to His will as we live our daily lives.

7 – Lives for Christ rather than Self

2 Corinthians 5:15 “[Jesus] died for all [for everyone], so that they who live [that is, spiritually, by grace through faith] might no longer live for themselves [following their own desires], but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.” // Due to sin – inherited and committed, we were spiritually dead and hell-bound but now, through Jesus, we are spiritually alive and heaven-bound. So, as He died for us, let us live for Him.

8 – Loves God and Neighbor

Matthew 22:37 [Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:5:] “YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.”

- **HEART** – what I love and desire
- **SOUL** – who I am and how I live
- **MIND** – what I think and believe

Matthew 22:39 [Jesus quoted Leviticus 19:18:] “YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.” // So, how do we love ourselves? We see our needs and try to satisfy them:

- Hungry – we seek food
- Cold – we seek more clothes
- Confused – we seek truth
- Guilty – we seek forgiveness

Therefore, let us pay attention to others and seek their good in body and soul—helping with physical needs, speaking God’s truth, and sharing Christ’s forgiveness and hope.