

SALVATION & DISCIPLESHIP

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There is a difference between salvation and discipleship, but it is also clear in the Bible that discipleship and salvation are not disconnected.

SALVATION: a saving or being saved; a person or thing that saves; deliverance from sin and from the penalties of sin; redemption; the act of preservation; deliverance; emancipation; rescue; safeguard; assurance; protection.

Romans 7:24-25 What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

JESUS CHRIST: transliterated from Hebrew and Aramaic, the name Yeshua means, "Yahweh saves" or "Yahweh (the LORD) is salvation". "Christ" is not Jesus' last name. It is a title. "Christ" comes from the Greek "Christos", which translates to "Messiah" in Hebrew. Both Christos and Messiah mean "anointed one". God sent His anointed son, Jesus, to save us.

Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.

We receive the gift of salvation, offered by God, by faith alone. There is no other salvation that assures us eternity with our Father in heaven, except Jesus!

John 3:17-18 For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him. Whoever believes in Him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

DISCIPLE: a pupil or follower of any teacher or school; (an early) follower of Jesus; pupil; believer; apostle; someone who adheres completely to the teachings of another.

Jesus' first disciples were committed to following His teachings. It was not immediately revealed to them that Jesus was the Messiah, nor did Jesus perform miracles early on to convince them otherwise. The men became His students, His disciples, before they believed that their Rabbi Jesus truly was the Son of God.

John 6:60-69 On hearing it, many of his disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?"

Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this offend you? Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you—they are full of the Spirit and life.

(John 6 - continued)

Yet there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray him. He went on to say, “This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled them.”

From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him.

“You do not want to leave too, do you?” Jesus asked the Twelve.

Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God.”

When we accept Jesus as Lord and Savior, the Spirit of the Lord enables us to pick up our cross daily and live as an obedient disciple of Jesus. Judas Iscariot is an example of what not to do. Believe Jesus and do what He says!

John 14:6 Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but through me”.

Christian Discipleship requires a committed life:

Luke 14:33 In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples.

Sacrifice is expected:

Matthew 16:24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me”.

Salvation by faith, and spiritual growth through discipleship:

1 Peter 3:15 But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect.

5 Characteristics of Christian Discipleship

1. Putting Jesus first in all things (Mark 8:34–38)
2. Following Jesus’ teachings
(John 8:31–32, James 1:22, 1 Samuel 28:18, John 14:21, Philippians 2:6–8)
3. Bearing fruit (John 15:1–8, Hebrews 12:11)
4. Loving other disciples
(John 13:34–35, 1 John 3:10, 1 Corinthians 13:1–13, Philippians 2:3–4, 1 Peter 4:8)
5. Making disciples of others (Matthew 28:18–20, 2 Timothy 2:2)

A disciple of Jesus is one who puts Jesus first, obeys the Lord, produces good fruit, loves others, and makes more disciples. Let us never forget the freedom we felt when we first believed in Jesus. Let us share the good news to the lost. Let us make an impact in this fallen world for the glory of God. Amen