
Are You A Christian Or A Jesus Follower?

What is a Christian?

Definition: relating to or professing Christianity or its teachings.

What is a Disciple (Jesus Follower)?

Luke 5:1-11

1. **PERSONAL ENCOUNTER** with Jesus
2. **SELF-DENIAL**
3. **PURSUIT** of His character
4. Holistic **TRANSFORMATION**
5. Biblical **LASIK**
6. **ABIDE**
7. **ADVANCE** the Kingdom

Food for Thought

For the week of July 12, 2020

(Questions and Scriptures for further study & discussion)

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, we have adjusted the Food for Thought format so the questions can be used for group discussion as well as personal study and reflection.

WHAT'S YOUR HIGHLIGHT?

Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or something that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

In this weekend's sermon, we learned about the seven defining marks of being a disciple. Looking back at that list, rank each of them on a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being the lowest) on how well that mark is being exhibited in your life right now. What did you learn might need your attention from doing this ranking?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. This weekend we heard that one of the marks of a disciple is abiding. Jesus uses a vineyard analogy in John 15:1-8 to show us what it takes to stay connected to Him so we can experience the power to live an abundant life. Read the passage and jot down the roles each of the main characters (God, Jesus and the believer) play and the responsibility each of them has in the spiritual growth process.

John 15:1-8 New International Version (NIV)

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³ You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴ Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. ⁵ "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷ If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

How could understanding these differing roles and responsibilities affect your spiritual growth?

What are some challenges for you to consistently remain in Christ?

2. Consistently living as a follower of Jesus can be challenging. It's easy to wonder, "How can we expect to be able to act like the sinless Savior of the world when we live in a fallen world and we have a sin nature?" What insights and encouragement do the following passages provide for why following Jesus is possible and why we don't have to accomplish it by sheer determination alone?

Acts 1:8 New International Version (NIV)

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

John 16:7 New International Version (NIV)

⁷ But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.

Galatians 5:16-26 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁶ So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever^[c] you want. ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. ¹⁹ The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰ idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. ²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit. ²⁶ Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

3. Another one of the marks of being a disciple is to pursue Jesus' character. In 2 Peter 1:3-9, the Apostle Peter gives a list of character qualities he calls us to develop so we can be more like Jesus. As you look at the list, are there any that you've specifically worked on in the past or been challenged to put into action?

2 Peter 1:3-9 New International Version (NIV)

³ His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. ⁵ For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; ⁶ and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷ and to godliness, mutual affection; and to mutual affection, love. ⁸ For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ But whoever does not have them is nearsighted and blind, forgetting that they have been cleansed from their past sins.

Is there one quality you think you need to be more intentional at putting into action?

Can you think of any potential roadblocks that keep you from developing godly character?

How could Philippians 2:12-13 help you maintain balance as you pursue character growth?

Philippians 2:12-13 New International Version (NIV)

¹² Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, ¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.



NORTH COAST SUMMER SERIES & CLASSES

Check out our website for updates as more details will be added in the weeks to come. northcoastchurch.com/classes

Summer Study Series

We have three incredible virtual events lined up this summer by each of our teaching pastors! You will be able to watch these free classes as they stream at the times listed below on our Facebook page and YouTube Channel. They will also be available on our website on the dates listed below so you can view them when convenient. No registration required.

- **The Only Legacy That Really Matters: *Parenting for the Long-Haul*** with Dr. Larry Osborne, Friday, July 17 at 7pm
- **Is God Evil?** with Pastor Christopher Hilken, Friday, August 14 at 7pm
- **An Open Conversation About RACE, Part 1** with Pastor Chris Brown, now available to watch at northcoastchurch.com/conversations

Summer Classes – Register for these classes online at northcoastchurch.com/classes

We are putting together a great collection of virtual classes and webinars on a variety of topics that will be offered throughout the summer. Here are some of the classes we have planned:

- **Finding Balance through COVID and Everyday Life:** Monday, July 13
- **Parents of Young Kids Parenting through Pandemic:** Wednesday, July 22
- **Parents of Teens Parenting through Pandemic:** Thursday, July 23
- **Self-Leadership:** Thursday, August 6

Check our website for more details on classes.



Summer Connection Intro Life Groups

New to North Coast or never been in a Life Group? Curious what being part of a Life Group is all about? Summer Connection Intro Life Groups started **Thursday, July 9** and will continue to meet for the next two weeks. This is a great opportunity to find out what Life Groups are like with minimum commitment. You can still register at northcoastchurch.com/classes