

WHAT IS A DISCIPLE?

For clarity's sake, our basic working definition of disciple is as follows:

Disciple: A called follower of Jesus who loves God and obeys His Word.

Disciples are called:

They are men and women who have responded to the summons of God. Call precedes faith and represents God's sovereignty and mercy in saving people.

Mark 3:13, 8:34; Luke 5:1-11; Romans 1:1-7; 2 Timothy 1:9-10

Disciples follow Christ:

This is the substance of the call. We don't follow an idea or a body of teaching; we follow the person of Jesus Christ. The first followers followed Him in the flesh, and now disciples follow the Risen Christ through His indwelling Spirit. As the word disciple simply means 'learner who follows a master,' so we are always learning of His heart and ways. When we do so, we are transformed morally and spiritually to reflect God's holiness.

Matthew 4:19, 10:38; Mark 2:14; Luke 9:23; John 1:43; Romans 12:1-2

Disciples love God:

Following Jesus, disciples do what Jesus did in loving His Father with His whole being. In Christ, we see what love is truly like – sacrificial, trusting, and personal. The call to love God is inlaid with the invitation to prayerfully remain in Him by the gift of the Holy Spirit, participate in glad worship, and practice spiritual disciplines to foster growth. We also recognize the vital role of the church community since God has created people to know and love Him through our relationships with one another.

Psalm 34:1-8; Mark 12:28-34; John 13:34-35, John 14:15-18, John 15:1-8; 1 John 4:12-16; Acts 2:42-47

Disciples obey God's Word:

This obedience flows from love, demonstrates love and signals our deep trust in God's wisdom and truth. In cheerful submission to God's Word, we seek to proclaim the Kingdom in word and deed for its increase and God's glory. Toward this end, we steward the gifts and resources we have received for the sake of the works God has prepared for us; we walk in paths of righteousness, seeking to bring God's shalom for the common good; and we engage as witnesses of Christ in God's mission to seek and save the lost.

Genesis 1:28; Psalm 23:3; Luke 19:10; John 14:6, Ephesians 2:10; 1 Peter 4:7-11