

An open book with aged, yellowed pages lies flat on a dark wooden floor. The background is a wall of dark, vertical wooden planks with visible grain and knots. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the wood and the pages of the book.

What does it really mean  
to be a Christian?

# How would you define the word “Christian?”

- I’m a Christian because I believe in Jesus
- I’m a Christian because I’ve been saved
- I’m a Christian because I’ve obeyed the gospel
- I’m a Christian because I belong to this group
- I’m a Christian because I follow the “right” doctrine
- I’m a Christian because I model my worldview after Christ’s teachings
- I’m a Christian because I go to church regularly
- I’m a Christian because that’s how I was raised

Being a Christian is often about how I see myself



# Isaiah 61-62: the “renaming of God’s people

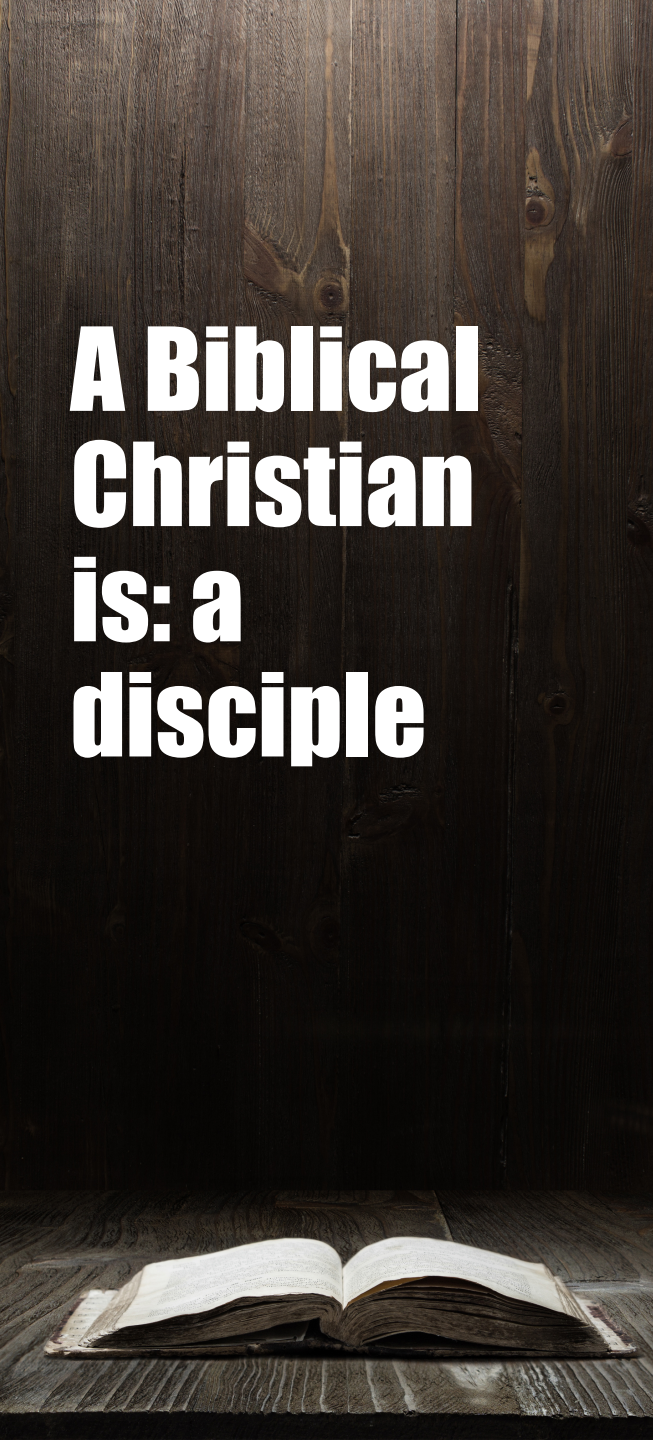
- Isaiah 61:1-3 - “... that they may be called **oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord**, that he may be glorified.”
- V. 9 - “... **all who see them shall acknowledge them**, that they are an offspring the Lord has blessed.”
- Isaiah 62:1-4 - “The **nations shall see your righteousness**, and all the kings your glory, and you shall be called by **a new name that the mouth of the Lord will give**. ... You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate, but **you shall be called My Delight Is in Her, and your land Married**.”
- V. 10-12 - “And they shall be **called The Holy People, The Redeemed of the Lord**; and you shall be called **Sought Out, A City Not Forsaken**.”

It’s not about the name ... it’s about who we are to God, and how we live in the world



# What does the Bible say?

- Peter (1 Peter 4:13-16)
  - Joyfully willing to undergo persecution and hardship in the name of Jesus
- Paul and Agrippa (Acts 26)
  - Believed the promises of the redemption of God's people through the resurrection
  - Turned from darkness to light, received forgiveness and a place among the sanctified
  - Performed deeds in keeping with repentance
- Antioch (Acts 11:19-26)
  - People who believed the Gospel message and turned (repented) to the Lord
  - They were told to "remain faithful with a steadfast purpose"
  - They were students of the word of God
  - They assembled together regularly
  - Their lives were such that people could identify them enough to call them "Christian", or "Christ-like"
  - They were *disciples*

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**A Biblical  
Christian  
is: a  
disciple**

You will be a sanctified people to God

You will turn from darkness to light

You will strive to learn and grow in  
Christ

You will be recognizable as belonging  
to the Lord!


You will be willing to suffer hardship  
in following Jesus

# What do disciples look like?

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God**, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewal of your mind**, that by testing you may **discern what is the will of God**, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” -

Romans 12:1-2

- I am called to a constant state of sacrifice
- I am called to changed through a different way of thinking
- This will not happen by accident!



## Can I be a disciple if:

- I'm not zealous for Jesus' teaching?
  - I can "follow" Jesus without being a disciple (John 6:14-15, 22-26, 63-66)
  - "Observing" means "doing" - Mtt. 28:20, Luke 6:46, Eph. 2:10
  - How important is applying God's word to me? Matt. 5:6
- I'm not zealous for other disciples?
  - The purpose of our assembly 1 Cor. 14:26, Heb. 10:24-25
  - Love for Jesus' disciples that goes beyond the assembly, John 13:34-35, Acts 2:44-47, Heb. 3:12-13, 1 John 3:16-18
- I'm putting other concerns above those of the kingdom?
  - How important is following Jesus to me? Luke 14:18-24, Matt. 13:44-45
  - What are we prepared to put to the side? Matthew 19:27, Phil. 3:7-11
- I'm not becoming more like my teacher?
  - What does it mean to be the light of the world? Matt. 5:14-16
  - Am I allowing the Spirit to do his work in me? Gal. 2:20, 5:22-23, 2 Peter 1:3-8
  - Am I being built up into something bigger than myself? 1 Peter 2:1-5, Eph. 4:14-15


If I start out as a disciple, does that mean I'll remain one? (Luke 8)

# What name will God give me?

- Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled; that no one is sexually immoral or unholy (*profane*) like Esau, who sold his birthright for a single meal. For you know that afterward, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no chance to repent, though he sought it with tears. Hebrews 12:12-17
- Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire. Hebrews 12:28-29





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Am I a “Christian,”  
or am I a disciple of Christ?