

## Who Is A Disciple? Am I A Disciple?

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Jesus calls us to be disciples who make disciples. The Great Commission says: wherever you go, as you are going, make disciples. The primary command is to make disciples. Be disciples, make disciples. Be disciples who make disciples.

A primary problem the church faces in making disciples is lack of clarity about who is a disciple. Consider a few answers I have compiled from reading and asking people the question.

- Every believer in Jesus is a disciple.
- A disciple is someone who believes and has been baptized.
- Disciples are those who have met the requirements to be a church member.
- Disciples are those who have completed the church's discipleship course.
- Disciples are simply learners.

None of these descriptions, standing alone, fully reflects what the Bible says about discipleship and being a genuine disciple of Jesus Christ.

Answering the two questions in the title begins with a clear definition. Without a clear idea of the goal, understanding discipleship and making more disciples are difficult. Perhaps every definition will be incomplete and lacking, but a definition I find helpful is this: "A disciple is a committed follower of Jesus Christ who is intentionally growing to become more like Him, extending His mission."

A disciple is a committed follower of Jesus Christ. Discipleship is intentional. A disciple does not stumble into the faith. Disciples live intentionally. A disciple develops a genuine commitment to Jesus, lived out in a surrendered life. That commitment places Jesus at the center of life, above all else, and embraces the reality that we no longer live for ourselves but for our Lord.

A disciple intentionally grows to be more like Jesus. In the first century, disciples of a rabbi committed themselves to the rabbi by studying his teachings so they understood them and could explain them. They were recognized as disciples because they lived out the teachings of the rabbi. The great goal of a disciple of Jesus is to become more like Jesus every day. A disciple focuses on being like Jesus in character, conduct, and daily habits.

Disciples extend Jesus' mission "as they are going, wherever they go." Authentic disciples are never not disciples. Disciples are purpose-driven by God's eternal purpose, taking the message of Jesus to others, helping others become disciples of Jesus.

What would you add?