

Part 1—What Does It Mean to be a Follower of Jesus?

This Bible study is designed to teach you what it means to be a follower of Jesus. The questions you may want to ask yourself as you read the Bible passages are: Do I believe what these passages say? Do I understand what it means to be a follower of Jesus? Do I want to be a follower of Jesus? Am I a follower of Jesus?

Introduction

Write down as much as you know about what the Bible teaches about Jesus. If someone asked you, "Who do you think Jesus is?" or "What do you believe to be true about Jesus?" how would you answer? Think about that for a moment and write down your answer below.

Now read the following Bible passages and answer the questions that follow each passage.

HEBREWS 1:1–3

Verse 1—How does this verse say that God spoke?

Verse 2—How else has God spoken?

Verses 2-3—What do we learn about the Son of God in these verses? Who do you think the Son is? Why?

JOHN 3:16–17

What do these verses teach us about God?

What do these verses teach us about the Son of God?

ROMANS 3:21–26

Verse 23—What has happened to all people, according to this verse?

Explain what the word "sin" means. If people have sinned, they do not have a right (good) relationship with God. Read the following verses and tell how God makes people right with himself.

Verse 22:

Verse 24:

Verse 25:

ROMANS 6:23

What does a person deserve because of sin?

But what does God give people?

1 TIMOTHY 1:15

What is the truth this verse says you should accept?

ROMANS 5:6-8

According to these verses, what kind of people were we when Jesus Christ died?

ROMANS 4:25

Why did Jesus die? Why was Jesus raised from the dead?

ACTS 16:1-34

Why were Paul and Silas in jail?

What unusual thing happened while Paul and Silas were in jail?

Verse 30—What did the jailer ask Paul and Silas?

Verse 34—How did the jailer and his family feel after these events? Why?

All of the above Bible passages teach us things that a follower of Jesus should agree with and believe. Look back through the answers you wrote. Write a brief summary of your answers below.

What does a follower of Jesus believe?

Do you think of yourself as a follower of Jesus? If you're not sure, part 2 will help you.

Part 2—How Do I Become a Follower of Jesus?

The Bible says: *"If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives."* **1 John 1:8–10**

This passage teaches us that you must admit to God and yourself that "I am a sinner." You may not be a criminal, but you have had the wrong attitudes in your heart, and you've done things, or failed to do things, that are not pleasing to God. And so we confess to God: "I am sorry for my sins."

The Bible says: As we read in part 1 of this study, in Acts 16 there was a jailer in Philippi who was not a follower of Jesus. But he quickly came to the understanding that he needed God when he experienced a violent earthquake while doing his job. Immediately he asked two followers of Jesus, Paul and Silas, who were in his jail, *"What must I do to be saved?"* They replied, *"Believe in the Lord Jesus and you will be saved—you and your household."*

By that, they meant that you must believe in your heart the following: that Jesus Christ is true God and true man; that he lived a perfect life (no sins); that through his death he took away your sins by paying the penalty that God demanded for the wrong things you have done; that God raised Jesus from the dead on the third day and through him also gives you eternal life.

The Bible says: In the New Testament book of Romans, chapter 10:9-13, God's Spirit moved St. Paul to write: *"That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, 'Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.' For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile—the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for 'Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.'"*

You must confess with your mouth that "Jesus is Lord." That means he is above all rulers and kings in this world; above all spiritual beings; that he is the ruler of this world and of everything in it. God's promise is that *"everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."* Calling on God means not only praying to him but trusting his promises to you.

If the following statement is a sincere expression of what you believe about Jesus, then use it as your prayer. If it is not, then call on God to help you to believe in him and to claim him as your Lord and Savior! *"Lord Jesus, I know that I need you. I am not a good person without you. Thank you for living the perfect life that I could never live to please God. Thank you for dying on*

the cross for my sins. Thank you that your resurrection gives me hope for new life. Through you, I have the complete forgiveness of my sins and eternal life. Help me to follow you as my Lord. Amen!" If you can say these words sincerely and truthfully, then you are a follower of Jesus!

The Bible says: In Act 16, when Peter told the people how they had sinned, they wanted to know what they should do. *"Peter replied, 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.'"*

God's promise is that when you turn from a life of sin to following Jesus (repentance) and you are baptized, your sins are forgiven and the Holy Spirit—who will help you follow Christ—is received inside you. If you desire to be baptized, tell the pastor or the leader of this study. That person will help you make the necessary arrangements.

To grow as a follower of Jesus Christ, continue with the next part of this study.

Part 3—Living as a Follower of Jesus

As a follower of Jesus you will want to grow in your ability to live in a life that mimics his life. Carefully reading and studying the Bible is the best way to grow in your faith. A good place to start is by reading the book of Acts in the New Testament. The book of Acts was written by a doctor named Luke. It is a record of the early Christian church. Although you will want to read the whole book, to begin, we will simply look at a few sections.

ACTS 1:1–11

What do you learn about Jesus in these verses?

ACTS 1:12–26

What important things happen in these verses?

ACTS 2:1–13

What unusual things happened in these verses?

ACTS 2:14–37

Verses 22–24: What do you find here about Jesus?

Verses 29–36:

How is Jesus different from King David? (Note: David was the greatest king in the Old Testament.)

Verse 36: What did God make Jesus?

Verse 37: How did the people feel when they heard Peter's message? What did the people ask Peter?

ACTS 2:38–47

Verses 38–41: What was Peter's answer to the question, "What shall we do?" Why should they be baptized? What gift would they receive? Who is this promise for?

Verse 42: What did these new followers of Jesus spend their time doing?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Verses 43–47:

How else did these new followers of Jesus live?

ACTS 11:26

Later on in the book of Acts, the followers of Jesus are called Christians. This word means "Christ's Person" or "Little Christ." Still today, people who believe that Jesus Christ is God's Son and trust him as their Savior from sin and death are called Christians. Would you call yourself a "Christian?"

If you are able to call yourself a Christian, why do you think you are able to do this? If you are not able to call yourself a Christian, why do you think you are not able to do this?