

# DISCIPLES *and* BELIEVERS

## IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

JESUS SAID:

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.”

-Matthew 7:21

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# DISCIPLES AND BELIEVERS: IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

Introduction, by Mason Goodnight:

When Mark told me he was writing this paper (now booklet) I asked if I could write an introduction. He graciously said he'd be fine with that. I just want to say that after reading the whole booklet I am happy to lend what little weight, if any, my opinions add to this excellent work. In short, Mark and I hold to different views in different areas of theology. Most notably, for this booklet, would be our differing soteriology. I hold a reformed understanding while Mark does not. I point that out because I want to be clear that despite that difference, we are 100% in agreement with one another in regards to the fact that according to the Bible there are only two categories of people in this world. The saved followers of Christ and the lost rebels. There is no category for saved rebels. I highly recommend anyone read this and seriously pray over what is revealed to you in these pages. Then take it to the Bible and see if it does not indeed declare the truth of God's word on this subject. Is there a difference between "believers" and "disciples"? Enjoy the read and discover the answer according to God's Word. God bless!

Before I begin to show, from the Scripture, that a believer and a disciple are actually one and the same, I want to remind ourselves that the only thing that matters is the truth as taught in the Word of God. No one's opinion matters above the Lord's. God is no respecter of persons or their opinions, or of the traditions of men. He is the final judge, for He is the Truth. It is imperative that we seek to understand what the Author meant. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the most important, foundational truth there is, for mankind, and we MUST get that right. If not, every other thing built upon it will falter. Our own, as well as the people we influence, very eternal destinies depend on it.

**"I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed."**

**-Galatians 1:6-9**

**"Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you."**

**-1 Timothy 4:16**

**"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek."**

**-Romans 1:16**

**(See also, 2 Tim. 2:15; 4:3&4; Jms. 3:1)**

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Let me also be clear, I do not believe that everyone who espouses the doctrine that I will hereafter condemn, does not love God, is ungodly, is not following Jesus as a disciple themselves, or is not a true believer. I know and love many true, well-meaning believers that teach a diluted gospel. My purpose here, is not to condemn those who teach these things, but to do as 2 Tim. 3:16 & 17 instructs us: “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” I desire nothing more than that the true, incorruptible and unadulterated Gospel of Jesus Christ be proclaimed and His people be conformed into the image of Christ, bearing fruit and glorifying our Father in Heaven. I believe that the things that I am about to write against is a wide-spread deception that has crept into the church in the last century, virtually unnoticed and undiscerned, by most, because it is a pleasant doctrine and easy for our flesh to believe. Most of us are careful enough to not widen the gate, which is Jesus, but we’ve been very careless regarding the difficult path.

“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”

-Matthew 7:13-14

“Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints. For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.”

-Jude 3a-4

Those who teach that there is a difference between a born-again believer (we all agree, you must be born-again, Jn. 3:3) that doesn't bear fruit, and a disciple that does, are teaching that there are 3 categories of people from their understanding of the Bible. This is said in 3 different ways, but they all mean the same. The 3 ways are:

1. The unsaved unbeliever. The believer. and The disciple.
2. The unsaved unbeliever. One who has “accepted” Jesus as their Savior only. and One who has “accepted” Jesus as their Savior AND Lord (Who seeks to submit to His Lordship and obey Him, and bears fruit).
3. The unsaved, unbelieving, natural man. The “carnal Christian” (you are on the throne of your life), and The “spiritual Christian” (Jesus is on the throne of your life).

It is clear, in the Word of God, that there are different degrees of maturity and obedience among His children. There are babes, in Christ, that can and should only handle milk, and there are the mature, that eat the meat of the Word and obey Christ more fully. Heb. 5:12-14; 1 Jn. 2:12-17; 1 Pet. 2:2. I am not speaking of that scriptural distinction of maturity. What I am speaking

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against is making a distinction or category of professing Christians who remain in a condition, throughout their lives, of unfruitfulness and disobedience and apathy to conforming to the image of Christ. The point of this paper is to prove from scripture that there is only one category for Christians who are saved. So, again, this teaching of the notion that there are 3 categories of people can be summed up simply as:

1. The unsaved, unbelieving, natural man who is lost. Rom. 8:6-9; 1 Cor. 2:14
2. The believer who is not a disciple, but trust Jesus as Savior, only. Has not made Jesus Lord of their lives, but lives a carnal selfish lifestyle, yet has the promises and assurances of inheriting eternal life. 1 Cor. 3:1-3, 15.
3. The disciple who has “made” Jesus Lord as well as Savior and is a spiritual Christian, “putting Jesus on the throne of his life.” and enjoys the promise and assurance of eternal life. Lk. 14:25-33

There are some other variations and extremes and names for the teachings, but they are generally the same and if you address one, you’ve addressed them all. For simplicity, I will from here on refer to the supposed two Christian categories as 1-disciple and 2-believer only. (believer only, but no fruit or evidence of faith).

Those who teach the 2 categories of Christians fallacy, teach four basic things to contrast the disciple from the believer only.

Believer only:

1. Saved from the lake of fire, but not from sin’s power.
2. Lives to please self, not Christ.
3. Is saved by fire.....no fruit or works.
4. Holiness is an option, motivated by rewards and appreciation.

Disciple

1. Saved from sin’s power, as well as the lake of fire.
2. Lives to please God and is learning to please God, rather than self.
3. Fruit and works reveal evidence of salvation in spite of times of pruning. Jn. 15:1-8
4. Holiness is an essential fruit of the new birth, not an option. Heb. 5:9

What is the fruit of this doctrine? Why is it important to know if it is true or not?

1. The first and foremost concern of all Christians should be that they live a life dedicated to the glorification of God as their primary purpose. Scripture makes clear this is the chief end of man (Is. 60:21; Rom. 11:36; 1 Cor. 6:20; 10:31, and Rev. 4:11). So God would be approving of people who not only don’t necessarily glorify Him in anything, let alone everything. Worse even than that, they need not even have a desire to do that very thing God’s word declares is our top priority!

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2. If it is false, and there is no second category, millions of professing Christians, in this country alone, are deceived into believing they are secure and saved from Hell when they are actually lost and in need of true repentance and faith leading to salvation. Matt. 7:21-23; Jms. 2:14-20
3. If one teaches that obedience is optional, they end up catering to the carnal “needs” of what are actually false professors of faith rather than focusing on making disciples, equipping the saints for the work of service, and fulfilling the Great Commission. 1 Jn. 2:4; Heb. 5:9
4. The testimony of the Church is discredited and God’s name is blasphemed amongst the unbelieving rather than glorified because of disobedient church attendees who are “believers only”. Statistically, in America, there is almost no difference between how professing Christians live compared to non-Christians. Rom. 2:21-24; 1 Pet. 2:15; 1 Cor. 10:31-33; 1 Tim. 5:14; Heb. 6:6
5. The world around us no longer sees in the professing church Jesus as a Savior from sin because so many of us are still in our sins and are seeking the world’s help through psychology and pharmaceutical mind altering drugs rather than seeking God for deliverance. 2 Tim. 3:5
6. The world around us has no fear of God’s judgment and Hell. The Church sins just like the world and doesn’t seem to fear it, either. If we don’t take the sin seriously in our own midst, how can we expect them to. Mt. 5:29, 30; Mk. 12:4, 5; Lk. 12:4 & 5.
7. Many people of the world can see the hypocrisy of the “believers only” and reject the witness of Christ in true believers who are disciples because of them. Mt. 18:7-9; Lk. 17: 1, 2.
8. Judgment begins with the household of God. (1 Pet. 4:17, 18) If judgment comes to this nation, it will come because of us, primarily, not whoever is President., the corrupt politicians, the ACLU, the abortionists, the homosexuals, etc....WE are the salt of the earth and have lost our saltiness, becoming good for nothing but to be trampled under foot by men. Matt. 5:13; Gen. 18:20-33; Jer. 18:7-10.

Before I begin to show, from the Scripture, that a believer and a disciple are one and the same, I want to make it clear what I am NOT saying.

Things I am NOT saying:

1. I am not saying that a true believer/disciple of Jesus Christ cannot sin. We all sin, repent, confess our sins and He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 Jn. 1:8 & 9; Jms. 5:16; Ecc. 7:20; Rom. 3:9-23

I am not saying that a true believer cannot sin horribly. Sadly, it does happen. The key is, that a true believer repents and does not practice sin as a lifestyle. Because he is a child of God, he will surely be disciplined and then yield “the peaceful fruit of righteousness.” If we are without discipline, we are not sons.

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Heb. 12:3-11; 1 Jn. 3:6-10; Eph. 5:5; Gal. 5:19-21; 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Rom. 6:14-22 Peter's denial of Christ (Mt. 26:75) and playing the hypocrite (Gal. 2:11-16) and David committing adultery and covering it up with the murder of Uriah (2 Sam. 11-12:1-4) are two examples, for our instruction, of men who were saved and yet fell into gross sin.

2. The issue is NOT dependent on whether you believe a believer can lose their salvation or not, but only on how you end your life. The Word of God is clear, only those who endure to the end shall be saved. Heb. 3:6; Rom. 11:22; Mt. 24:13; 10:22; Heb. 10:36-39; Col. 1:22 & 23; Ezek. 18:21-32; 1 Cor. 15:2

This is what I am saying, and will expound upon, later...

1. The scriptures make a distinction between a disciple who falls into sin and is in need of loving restoration (Gal. 6:1 & 2; Jms. 5:15 & 16; Matt. 18:15-17 and the false Christian "believer" who has no intention of repenting and should be put out of the church, while still hoping and praying for their repentance. 1 Cor. 5:1-7, 9-13; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Matt. 13:47-50; 24:45-51)

2. This IS really all about the true gospel of Jesus Christ, the way He preached it. This is about the need for repentance and faith. (Mk. 1:14 & 15) This is about repentance and faith being two sides of the same coin. True faith includes repentance, which is not just a change of mind about Jesus being the only way, but a willingness to change one's behavior and turn from the sin that caused Him to have to die for us. God provides the grace to carry out the fruit of our repentance by the indwelling Spirit's power. This is about the continuance of repentance and faith in the Christian walk to the end of our lives. "As you, therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him..." (Col. 2:6). Mk. 1:14 & 15; Acts 20:19-21; 26:19 & 20; Mt. 4:8-10, 17; 2 Cor. 7:9-11; Lk. 3:7-14; 13:1-9; 24:46-48

3. This IS about people who profess to believe and have no fruit of repentance, practicing a sinful, carnal, selfish lifestyle, and who resist the truth when it is spoken to them. We have no basis to give them assurance of salvation or call them fellow believers. Instead, we should be exhorting them to examine themselves to see if they are in the faith, whether Jesus Christ is truly in them, lest they find themselves failing the test or are disqualified (2 Cor. 13:5). 1 Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:5 & 6; Rev. 21:8; 1 Jn. 3:6-10; 2:3-6; Mt. 7:21-23; Jms. 2:14-20; Rom. 6:1-23

4. This IS about salvation by grace and not works and what true grace is and produces. Eph. 2:8-10; Gal. 2:16; Titus 3:5; Rom. 4:4-8. The true grace of God, produces fruits of repentance and obedience to Christ. 1 Jn. 3:1-10; Ezek. 36:25-28; Titus 2:11-14; Mt. 7:17-23; Jms. 2:14-20. The "grace" that the doctrine of "believer only" teaches does not conform to godliness. (1 Tim. 6:3 & 4) and "turn(s) the grace of our God into lewdness." (Jude 4), and I believe is a false gospel. (Gal. 1:6-9)

5. This IS about what Jesus said, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen." Mt. 28:19, 20.

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He said to make disciples and He never told us to make it easy or dumb it down and make 2 classes of Christians. Never. We are never taught, in Scripture, to tickle itching ears (2 Tim. 4:3,4), or be politically correct to accommodate and make two classes of Christians, so as not to offend anyone, (Lk. 6:26; Jer. 6:14). Jesus offended people and didn't make it easy so as to accommodate everyone. You may be surprised, but He didn't come to bring peace on earth but division.

**“Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division. For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”**

**-Luke 12:51-53**

(See also: Mt. 10:34-39)

Why He did this was in order to test us and reveal our hearts to ourselves, as to which kingdom we are living for. (Jn. 6:44-66, 67; Lk. 4:16-29; 9:59-62; Lk. 14:25-33; Mt. 15:12; 12:30) . It is only those who have a love for the Truth who will be saved (2 Thess. 2:10).

I will now attempt to judge, according to scripture, this teaching as it is taught in the discipleship manual, “His Final Words” by Travis Hunt. I have chosen this particular book because I have personally talked with the author, as well as did another brother before me, about this doctrinal issue, and have expressed to him that I believe he is in error. Also, I was on the board of The Master’s Bible School that is promoting this book, here and around the world. Also, I personally love and care for the author and have told him I would write this in response to our conversation, in hopes of helping him understand more fully, his error.

In chapter 1 pages 7-9, we read:

“Being a disciple is more than being a believer. Biblically, a believer simply comes to Jesus to receive but a disciple comes to Jesus to give everything away. It is the difference between stretching out an open hand and holding it up (to receive) or holding it down (to give).

Here are some Scriptures describing a believer...

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

How do you receive salvation? By being a disciple? No, by believing in the atonement of Jesus Christ on the cross. Period. That’s grace. You are saved based on believing in the work of God, not your own. So, in this verse, a believer comes to receive eternal life.

“When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying,

‘Son of David, have mercy on us!’ And when He had come into the house,



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the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, 'Do you believe that I am able to do this?' They said to Him, 'Yes, Lord.' Matthew 9:27-28

What does He ask them? 'Do you believe...' The very next verse says that He healed them. So, we see in these verses that I can believe and receive eternal life and even healing.

Then one of the crowd answered and said, 'Teacher, I brought You my son, who has a mute spirit. And wherever it seizes him, it throws him down; he foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth, and becomes rigid. So I spoke to Your disciples, that they should cast it out, but they could not.' he answered him and said, 'O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I bear with you? Bring him to Me.' Then they brought him to Him. And when he saw Him, immediately the spirit convulsed him, and he fell on the ground and wallowed, foaming at the mouth. So He asked his father, "How long has this been happening to him?" And he said, 'From childhood. And often he has thrown him both into the fire and into the water to destroy him. But if You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.' Jesus said to him, 'If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes.' Immediately the father of the child cried out and said with tears, 'Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!'

-Mark 9:17-24

All things are possible for him who believes...What is He talking about? He was telling this man to believe that God could do what he was asking. So, we have now been shown that if we believe then God will save you, heal you and even remove a demonic spirit from your life. If you believe, you shall receive. That is a Biblical fact. We cannot even receive the Word of God unless we believe.

And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to Him from every city, He spoke by a parable: 'A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.' When He had said these things He cried, 'He who has ears to hear, let him hear!...' Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.

-Luke 8:4-8, 11-15

The ones that fell on the road were eaten and did not receive the Word of God because they never believed. If they would have believed, the Word

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would have gone in. Didn't believe; didn't receive. The second soil is actually referred to as a believer...who believe for a while, but, when the sun comes up their belief withers. They believed, and received, but the suffering was too much. The third soil also believed and received, but the cares of this world choked the fruit that their lives should've produced. Then there are the ones who have good ground and keep the Word of God ( which the Lord referred to as a disciple in Isaiah 8:16). They work through the hard times and ultimately bear fruit.

So, in this parable, we have three believers, but only one bears fruit: the disciple. What did Jesus say? [This is an even worse division than most teachers. Most teach that both the seed taken away and the plant with no root are false converts. Travis seems to say even the rootless plant is a saved believer. (My interjection.)]

By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.  
-John 15:8

What is my point? My point is that a believer is different than a disciple. I do hope that you are all believers. [Even if they are unfruitful? (Mark's, interjection)]

But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.  
-Hebrews 11:6)

You must believe that God wants to give, that He answers prayer, and does good things for those who call upon Him. You've got to believe before you can even start your walk with the Lord. However, based on the parable in Luke, I am persuaded that you can be a believer and still bear no fruit. But like every plant, I believe there is a yearning within you for the fruit that you were designed to produce. For a believer, it is that desire to be alive with the Spirit of God and to walk in His Presence daily."

End of quote from, "His Final Words".

The Manual teaches the following:

1. You can be a believer, and inherit eternal life, without being a disciple.
2. A believer is different from a disciple, in that a believer comes to God to receive from God, stretching out an open hand, whereas a disciple comes to God to give everything away. (A believer is self-centered, only getting what they want from God, but lives for self. A disciple is Christ centered and lives to please God. Parenthesis mine.)
3. A believer is anyone who believes in (gives mental assent to; parenthesis mine) the atonement of Jesus Christ on the cross. Period. If you believe, you shall receive: healing, deliverance, salvation, etc. ALL things are possible for him who believes. "That is a Biblical fact.", the Manual says.

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4. You can be a believer, bear NO fruit, and still inherit eternal life.

Let's examine closely, what the Scriptures say about each of these four teachings. In answering one question it will overlap with another one, as well, so please, read to the end to get a thorough answer to a particular question you might have.

Point # 1. You can be a believer without being a disciple.

Reasons why this is wrong (Points A-G):

A. The very premise of this doctrine is faulty from the start. There is actually no Scriptural difference between a believer and a disciple. The word disciple is used to describe what a believer IS, not a separate, higher, more spiritual category of believer. For example, we are also called "saints". All saved believers are called saints. Eph. 1:1; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:2; Acts 9:13, 32, & 41; Rom. 8:27;12:13, etc.

The word disciple, in the Greek is, "mathetes" Strong's #3101. It means, "a learner, a pupil, disciple" . Believers are called disciples, showing they are referring to ALL true believers, who will inherit eternal life.

**"Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they."  
-Acts 15:10-11**

**"Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "it is not desirable that we should leave out the word of God and serve tables....Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith"  
-Acts 6:1-2 & 7**

These are the same people who believed in Acts 2:44-47 and 4:32-37, and all were called disciples in Acts 6:1,2 & 7.

**"...So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch."  
-Acts 11:26b**

**"However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, 'We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.'....Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had**

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done with them, and that he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. So they stayed there a long time with the disciples”

-Acts 14:20-22, 27-28

(See also, Acts 11:26; 18:27; 19:1-5; 9:26)

Paul didn't make two separate groups of Christians; "disciples" and "believers only". He recognizes only one group - disciples - they are one and the same as believers.

B. The "believers" in the book of Acts were doing what Jesus said a disciple should/would do, in the Gospels. Jesus said,

"But seek the kingdom of God, and all these things shall be added to you. Do not fear, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Sell what you have and give alms; provide yourselves money bags which do not grow old, a treasure in the heavens that does not fail, where no thief approaches nor moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."

-Luke 12:31-34

"So, likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple."

-Luke 14:33

The believers in Acts did this and were called believers...

"Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common, and sold their possessions and goods, and divided them among all, as anyone had need. So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved."

-Acts 2:44-47

"Now the multitude of those who believed were of one heart and one soul' neither did anyone say that any of the things he possessed was his own, but they had all things in common. And with great power the apostles gave witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. And great grace was upon them all. Nor was there anyone among them who lacked; for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the proceeds of the things that were sold, and laid them at the apostles' feet; and they distributed to each as anyone had need. And Joses, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet."

-Acts 4:32-37)

They met the other "conditions" of what was described as a disciple, being willing to take up their cross, be persecuted, and die for their faith. (Acts 7:59-8:4, etc.)

C. If there truly is a separate categories of disciples and believers, then

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wouldn't we find an encouragement in the epistles to "go on" to become a disciple to receive a greater reward? I can't find one. Believers are never encouraged to change their "status" to the higher one of becoming a disciple. All believers are called to walk as Jesus walked and to be holy as He is holy. No exceptions. Search the scriptures and you will find it is rather like looking for "the missing link". You have to imagine that it's there.

**"Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked."**

-1 John 2:3-6

**"as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, 'Be holy, for I am holy.' And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;"**

-1 Peter 1:14-17

**"For to this you were called. Because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:"**

-1 Peter 2:21

**"Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma."**

-Ephesians 5:1-2

D. The word "believer(s)" is only used four times in the NKJV of the Bible, and only two times in the KJV. In contrast, the word disciple is used over 260 times in the New Testament. The word, "disciple" is never used in the epistles even once! Why? When Paul, Peter, James, John, Jude, etc. wrote their letters, were there no disciples to address? Who were they writing to? Believers only who were content to go to heaven and without any desire or inclination to obey as a disciple? Who are the "saints" they wrote to, in the epistles? They are mentioned over 50 times. Are they another category of believer, separate from disciples? Are they higher or lower than a disciple? It's hard to tell. Possibly higher? I think the answer is obvious. Believers, disciples, and saints are all one and the same people, who are being saved by Jesus Christ.

E. This teaching undermines the authority of Jesus' message in the gospels and makes His words optional, stripping them of all their power and authority. This gives people who are not born-again of God's Spirit and are self-centered and yet "believe" a false hope of inheriting eternal life. Should we believe that when Jesus said to the multitudes, to deny themselves and take up the cross and forsake all and follow Him, etc. that His words had no application for the unsaved people in the crowds of people He was talking to? He was addressing multitudes to come and follow Him with true and genuine faith.

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“Now great multitudes went with Him. And He turned and said to them, ‘If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple. And whoever does not bear his cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple. For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it – lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, “This man began to build and was not able to finish.” Or what king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be My disciple.”

-Luke 14:25-33

“When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, ‘Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

-Mark 8:34-38

(see also, Mt. 10:34-39)

How can this be true, when Jesus said that He came to preach the gospel...

“The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.”

-Luke 4:18

“but He said to them, “I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent.” Lk. 4:43

(See also, Mt. 4:23; 9:35)

...and call sinners to repentance...

“I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.”

-Luke 5:32

...and to seek and to save that which was lost...

“for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.”

- Luke 19:10

“Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the

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gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.”  
-Mark 1:14, 15

What Jesus preached was the gospel, as He said, and was the same gospel that Paul received from Him and also preached. (Gal. 1:11, 12). The gospel of the kingdom that Jesus preached is the same as the gospel of the grace of God. They are used interchangeably. (Acts 19:8-10; 28:23, 24-28-31)

“testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God. And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.”  
-Acts 21:21-27

What right does anyone have to say Jesus’ teaching on discipleship is NOT the gospel, but just a “deeper spiritual life” teaching for those who want greater rewards in heaven, when HE called it the gospel? If Jesus teaching was a call directed at a relatively select few to the “deeper spiritual life”, then He would be undermining His own purpose for coming to earth to save us. He would be making it harder than it needs to be if we really actually don’t need repentance to accompany our faith and are expected to bear fruit, if being a disciple is optional. Jesus said,

“Enter by the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.”  
-Matthew 7:13, 14

“Then one said to Him, ‘Lord, are there few who are saved?’ And He said to them, ‘Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know you, where you are from,’ then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’ But He will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.’ There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.”  
-Luke 13:23-28

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F. Jesus said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matt. 28:19, 20 Note, that Jesus said to make disciples of all, not some, nations and teach them to observe, or obey all, not some things, of what He has commanded them. Note, that it is not presented as an option. Note, that He does not address a supposed second class of disobedient, selfish believers, who only come to God for what they can get from Him to improve their lives or for hellfire insurance. Unfortunately, however, we are spreading our deceptive, second category, false teaching around the world, resulting in more false converts that don’t bear fruit.

Obedience is not optional if we are saved, but evidence that we are saved.

“For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one’s slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness? But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. I speak in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves of righteousness for holiness. For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end everlasting life.”

—Romans 6:14–22

(Note: The word “death” here, does not refer to physical death, since we know that even disciples die, but this refers to the second death, the lake of fire because it is contrasted with everlasting life. Rom. 6:23; Rev. 21:8; 20:11–15)

The truth is that not only is obedience evidence of our salvation, but the Scriptures teach that we are all slaves of Jesus (bond slaves, serving out of love. 1 Jn. 4:19; 1 Cor. 5:14, 15)

Note: The word, “Servant” in Greek = slave, #1401 doulos. The word, “Lord”, in Greek = master, #2962 kurios. (1 Cor. 7:22, 23; Jn. 12:26; 15:20; 13:13–17; Mt. 6:24; 25:14–30; 24:45–51; 1 Pet. 2:16; Eph. 6:5–9; Col. 4:1; 2 Pet. 1:1; Jms. 1:1; Jude 1:1; Rom. 1:1, etc.) We have been bought with a price. We are no longer our own to do as we please, but to serve Jesus as our King. (2 Pet. 2:1; 1 Pet. 1:18, 19; 1 Cor. 6:19, 20; Rom. 14:7–9). Every knee shall bow to Jesus and confess Him as Lord. Phil. 2:10, 11. The only difference will be that those who refuse to submit to Jesus’ Lordship now through discipleship will not be saved. Rom. 10:9, 10; 1 Thess. 1:7–9. Here are some additional verses showing obedience is not optional if we are saved, but the evidence of it.

“Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments.



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He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked."

-1 John 2:3-6

(If the truth (Jesus, Jn. 14:6) isn't in you, you are not saved. 1 Jn. 5:11, 12; 2 Cor. 13:5)

"And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him,"

-Hebrews 5:9

"And to whom did He swear that they would not enter His rest, but to those who did not obey?"

-Hebrews 3:18

("Rest" is referring to salvation.)

"For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works. Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you."

-Titus 2:11-15

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

-Ephesians 2:8-10

"They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work."

-Titus 1:16

(See also, John 14:21-24; 15:14; 2 Thess. 1:8)

I would never want to give the impression that I believe that any of us obey perfectly. But to live a life that refuses to obey is a sure sign of not being saved, no matter how much we profess to believe in Jesus.

Consider the following points regarding what the Scriptures teach us about people who SAY they know Jesus but do not obey Him:

- They don't love Him. Jn. 14:15, 21-24; 15:10; 1Cor. 16:22
- They aren't His friend. Jn. 15:14
- They are liars. 1 Jn. 2:3, 4; 4:20, 21; Titus 1:16
- They won't be saved. Mt. 7:19-23; 25:24-30
- We should not associate with them. 1 Cor. 5:9-15; Mt. 18:15-17

Point # 2 of what the Discipleship Manual teaches: "A believer simply comes

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to Jesus to receive...stretching out an open hand.”

This, is simply not the definition of a saved, born-again believer. According to Scripture, this person, who lives for themselves and this world rather than for God and His Kingdom, is a false believer, a false convert, is deceived and on their way to Hell.

“who ‘will render to each one according to his deeds’: eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness--indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek.”

-Romans 2:6-9

“But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. This wisdom does not descend from above, but is earthly, sensual, demonic. For where envy and self-seeking exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.

-James 3:14-16

“Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

-James 4:1-4

“If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one’s religion is useless.”

-James 1:26

“Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them. Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven.”

-Matthew 7:19-21

“When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, ‘Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?’

-Mark 8:34-36

“What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Depart in peace, be warmed and filled, but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is

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dead. But someone will say, 'You have faith, and I have works.' Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe -- and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?"  
-James 2:14-20

"Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked."  
-1 John 2:3-6

"Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world- the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life - is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it, but he who does the will of God abides forever."  
-1 John 2:15-17

"But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them."  
-Ephesians 5:3-7

"Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God."  
-1 Corinthians 6:9-11

"I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornications, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."  
-Galatians 5:16-21

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“He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

–Revelation 21:7 & 8

(See also, Titus 1:16; 1 Jn. 3:1-15; Lk. 13:23-28)

The self-centered professing “believer” who lives for this world is not what the new birth produces. The new birth produces a Christ centered life that lives for the kingdom of God. A born again believer is not without sin, but repents when he discovers he has failed to live for Jesus, and he confesses that sin and receives His forgiveness and goes on. No one can inherit eternal life without being born again. Jn. 3:1-8. The new birth happens when the Spirit of God comes into our lives to dwell in us. Those who don’t have the Spirit are not sons of God and are not saved. To be a child of God means you have the Spirit of God and are led by Him. (Rom. 8:1-9-14; Gal 5:16-25) When the Spirit of God comes into our lives He gives us the ability and desire to know, love and obey Him, by His grace. We become new creatures in Christ and old things pass away and all things become new.

“For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away’ behold, all things have become new.”

–2 Corinthians 5:14-17

“Then I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within them, and take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My judgments and do them; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God.”

–Ezekiel 11:19 & 20

“Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you ; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.”

–Ezekiel 36:25-27

“For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with them, he says: Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah– not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they did not continue in My covenant, and I disregarded them, says the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I

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will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more."

-Hebrews 8:7-12

"Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure."

-Philemon 2:12 & 13  
(See also, Heb. 13:21)

The Lord, in His mercy, tells us in the first epistle of John, what being born of God produces in the lives of those who have been made His Children, in contrast with those who are false "believers". Here is just a sampling:

"Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in him. He who says he abides in him ought himself also to walk just as He walked."

-1 John 2:3-6

"Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as he is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure. Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness. And you know that He was manifested to take away our sins, and in Him there is no sin. Whoever abides in Him does not sin. Whoever sins has neither seen Him nor known Him. Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as he is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God. In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. By this we know love, because He laid down His life for us. And we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?"

-1 John 3:2-17

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“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not know God, for God is love.”

-1 John 4:7,8

“If someone says, ‘I love God,’ and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother who he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also.”

-1 John 4:20, 21

“Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world - our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”

-1 John 5:1-5

## GOD'S PURPOSE AND DESIGN IN SAVING US FROM OUR SINS IS THREE-FOLD.

1. Justification: God saves us from the penalty of sin, ie. God's wrath and the Lake of fire, when we are justified freely by His grace, by faith, apart from any works to merit salvation. See: Eph. 2:8-10; Tit. 3:4, 5; Rom. 4:2-8; 2 Tim. 1:9; Phil. 3:8, 9

2. Sanctification: God sets us apart and saves those of us who are truly born-again from the power of sin that previously enslaved us, so that we can walk in practical righteousness, living holy and obedient lives as His disciples. This happens as a result of recognizing that we have been crucified with Christ and the Spirit giving us the ability to put to death the flesh and pick up our cross to follow Jesus. Rom. 6:6,7; Gal. 2:20; 5:24; 1 Thess. 4:3-8; 5:23, 24; Acts 3:26; Rom. 8:13; 1 Pet. 1:2; Eph. 5:26, 27; 2 Tim. 2:21; Heb. 12:14.

3. Glorification: God saves us from the presence of sin in the new heaven and earth where Satan and the curse of sin will be gone forever and we will be glorified, living with Christ in the promised land. Rev. 20:10-15; 21:1-5; Rom. 8:15-30.

God's purpose for every true believer is that all three of these happen in every true believer's lives (see: 1 Cor. 1:30; Rom 8:29, 30; 1 Thess. 5:23, 24; Phil. 1:6). No one will be saved who will not be sanctified.

“But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

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-2 Thessalonians 2:13, 14

“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness (sanctification), without which no one will see the Lord:”

-Hebrews 12:14

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God, that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.”

-1 Thessalonians 4:3-8

“But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness (sanctification), and the end, everlasting life.”

-Romans 6:22

(see also: 2 Pet. 1:2-4; Acts 3:26)

The level of sanctification will be different in different people's lives, depending on many factors (the time we have on earth, etc.), but the scriptures make it clear that people who practice, as a lifestyle, certain sinful behaviors shall not inherit the kingdom of God even though they profess faith in Christ.

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”

-1 Corinthians 6:9-11

“But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.”

-Ephesians 5:3-7

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world - the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life- is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it, but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

-1 John 2:15-17

(See also: Gal. 5:16-21; Tit. 1:16; Rev. 21:7; Jms. 1:26; 2:14-20; 1 Jn. 2:3-6)

If there is no evidence of sanctification, then there is no basis for believing one is justified. Sanctification is the evidence, that scriptures give us, of

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justification by God's grace in someone's life. We don't start out the Christian life by being justified by grace only to perfect ourselves by works of sanctification. Sanctification is just as much God's work of grace in our lives as justification and glorification. (Gal. 3:3)

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.”  
-Titus 2:11-14

“being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;”  
-Philemon 1:6

“Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.”  
-Philemon 2:12, 13

“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.”  
-1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24

“For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.”  
-Romans 8:29, 30

“But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God - and righteousness and sanctification and redemption ”  
-1 Corinthians 1:30

“To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.”  
-Acts 3:26

This should make it very clear that Point 4 and 2 of what the discipleship manual teaches, “You can bear NO fruit, and expect to inherit eternal life (be justified/saved).” and “A believer simply comes to Jesus to receive.... stretching out an open hand.” is false.

This teaching does NOT teach the grace of God, but is the denial of the true grace of God and the power of the cross to save us from sin's power. It teaches a false grace according to the opinions of men. God's grace is not dead, but is alive and powerful to save.



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“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!”

-2 Timothy 3:1-5

(see also: Jude 4; 2 Tim. 4:1-4)

Even still, there will be more to say that proves these points are wrong, later.

G. Another example in scripture where we see that Jesus' teaching on discipleship is one and the same as the gospel is where He was speaking to the rich young ruler, who was asking ONLY how to receive eternal life. He wasn't asking to become a disciple. If being saved is different than becoming a disciple, then most Christians would expect that Jesus would have told him to “believe” and simply led him in “the sinner’s prayer” (NOTE: there are NO examples in the scriptures, of Jesus or anyone using or praying a “sinner’s prayer that saves people.), but instead, He presented the Law and the area where the rich ruler fell short. If being saved is different from becoming a disciple, Jesus was preaching a “works” salvation, in some people’s eyes. Jesus was actually applying the same requirements for receiving eternal life as He did for becoming a disciple. The story of the rich young ruler is found in 3 of the Gospels: Matt. 19:16-30; Mk. 10:17-31; and Lk. 18:18-30.

“Now as he was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, ‘Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?’ So Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. You know the commandments: ‘Do not commit adultery,’ ‘Do not murder,’ ‘Do not steal,’ ‘Do not bear false witness,’ ‘Do not defraud,’ ‘Honor your father and your mother.’” And he answered and said to Him, ‘Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth.’ Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, ‘One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me.’ But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions. Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, ‘How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.’ And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, ‘Who then can be saved?’ But Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.’ Then Peter began to say to Him, ‘See, we have left all and followed You.’ So Jesus answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel’s, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time- houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions - and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first.’”

-Mark 10:17-31

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Notice, that two of the same requirements that Jesus stated for disciples in Luke 14:25-27-33, to:

1. Sell whatever you have and give to the poor and you will have treasure in Heaven.” Mk. 10:21 is a requirement in Lk. 14:33; Lk. 6:20; 12:33, 34; Mt. 13:44-46; Mt. 6:19-21; Lk. 18:22; Mt. 19:21

2. “Take up the cross and follow Me.” Mk. 10:21 is a requirement of Lk. 14:27; 9:23, 24; 17:33; Mt. 10:38, 39; 16:24-26; Mk. 8: 34-38; Jn. 12:24-26; Lk. 18:22; Mt.19:21.

This requirement is not only found in the Gospels but, throughout the New Testament. It is taught as how every believer should live their lives.

These show that a believer is the same as a disciple and that there is not two categories. Rom. 6:1-23; 12:1,2; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15; 6:9 & 10; 4:7-18; Gal. 2:20; 5:24, 16-18; 6:14; Eph. 4:17-24; Phil. 2:5-11; 2 Tim. 2:11, 12.

Since Jesus is God (Titus 2:13), the Author of our salvation (Heb. 5:9), cannot make a mistake (Deut. 32:4) and shows no partiality (Rom. 2:11), the conclusion is obvious. You cannot be saved without being willing to meet the conditions of being a disciple.

Jesus is revealing our need for initial and ongoing repentance.

The conditions of being a disciple is the degree that God wants us to repent. Not everyone who comes to Christ understands this, at first, and that is why many fall away from the faith when persecution and trials, etc. comes. It is not how we start the race that matters, according to scriptures, but how we finish. It is only those who endure to the end who will be saved (Mt. 10:22; Heb. 3:6; 10:26-39; Col. 1:22, 23; 1 Cor. 15:2; Mt. 24:13; Rom. 11:22; Ezek. 18:21-32).

To a large degree, our understanding of repentance is much different from Jesus! I say this because of our understanding of what sin is. (1 Jn. 3:4; 5:17; Jms. 4:17; Rom. 14:23). We don't think of the bad things we do to ourselves and others as rebellion towards God and following Satan as being traitors of God's Kingdom. Our self-centered “gospel“ reinforces this because we focus on what we get out of it, rather than on God. (Lk. 19:11-27; 20:11-18; Mt. 22:1-14; 25:31-46; Rev. 19:11-16; 20:11-15; Rom. 5:6-10; Eph. 2:1-5; Jms. 4:4)

When Jesus spoke of being a disciple, I believe he was talking about repentance. From God's perspective He is bringing everything back under submission to Him as King of all creation. Without a heart of complete submission from us Heaven would not remain Heaven. We would be bringing our rebellious hearts there and we would be bringing it's curse with us. This is why repentance for the new birth is so essential. (1 Cor. 15:24-28; Col. 1:19-22; Eph. 1:22; Jn. 3:3-8)

In Isaiah 53:6 we read;

**“All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”**

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“There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death”  
-Proverbs 14:12

We see that it is “our own way”, in disregard of God and others that is the root problem. I believe that is why Jesus puts us to death with Him on the cross, so that our old self might be done away with, that we should no longer live for ourselves, but for Him. (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20; 2 Cor. 5:14, 15). He gives us the ability to pick up the cross and follow Him, by His grace, in putting us to death with Him and raising us up with Him to walk in the power of the Spirit, enabling us to be His disciples. (Rom. 6:1-23; 8:1-14; Col. 3:1-11) Praise God!!! Without Him, we are truly helpless, but with Him, we can do all things (Phil. 4:13), including, being His disciples!

Not everyone will be able to meet all the conditions, all at once, of being a disciple, but everyone has to be willing to be led by Him, in order to be saved. (1 Kings 8:18, 19; Prov. 4:23) It is part of what defines repentance. Jesus knows our hearts and He is the judge, not us. Our hearts can and do deceive us. “He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, ...” Prov. 28:26a (1 Cor. 4:4, 5; Jms. 1:21-26; Jer. 17:9)

An example of one who had a willing heart but no opportunity to actually live out their walk and bear fruit was the thief on the cross (Lk. 23:32-43). Yet he showed he had a repentant heart- the heart of a disciple- when he acknowledged his sin, his deserving of punishment, and that Jesus was righteous and Lord, as he looked to Jesus for salvation. He wasn't ashamed of Jesus, but He confessed Him openly, while others around him were denying and blaspheming Jesus. These are some of the conditions of being a disciple, being met. (Mt. 10:32-39; Lk. 9:23-26; Mk. 8:34-38)

The Gadarene demoniac is another example of one who had a disciple's heart. He was willing to take up His cross and follow Jesus, begging Him to let him follow Him, but Jesus commanded him to “Go home to your friends and tell them what great things the Lord has done for you...” (Mk. 5:1-19-20) His willing heart was meeting the conditions of discipleship as per Lk. 14:27; Mt. 16:24-27; Mk. 18:32-38.

We also see in Zacchaeus a disciple's heart. He, like the rich young ruler, was a rich man. Jesus did not tell him that he had to give up all of his riches in order to receive eternal life. In fact, Jesus didn't say anything to him about what he needed to do. Jesus, who knows all men's hearts, saw his repentant and willing heart before he invited Himself over to his house. Zacchaeus displayed fruits of repentance when he stood and announced to the Lord that he would give half of his goods to the poor and would restore anything that he had taken through false pretenses, fourfold. (Lk. 19:8) It was then, that Jesus said to him, that “Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham;...” (Lk. 19:9) I think we can safely speculate, that if Jesus had asked him to give up all he had, he would have.

Joseph of Arimathea is called a rich man and a disciple.

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“Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus.”  
-Matthew 27:57

This verse instructs us that not everyone has to, literally, give up everything, to be called a disciple. But we all must be willing to obey the King of kings and Lord of lords, and do whatever He says for us to do. (Heb. 5:9)

We can also think of extra-biblical examples of people in various circumstances. For example, a mother who becomes saved, is married to an unsaved man. She is unable to sell everything in opposition to her husband, and she can't follow Jesus to the mission field. But she can daily lay down her life for others and walk with Jesus, submitting to Him as He tells her to love, respect and serve her husband and raise her children in the Lord, living a selfless life, being every bit as much of a disciple as the apostle Paul. (Mt. 22:36-38)

We need to recognize that the other conditions for discipleship, in context of Luke 14:25-33, apply as well. These same conditions are in the other Gospels, but it is not worded as a condition for discipleship, as in Luke, but as a condition of following Jesus and not losing your soul. This speaks of salvation, since losing one's soul is contrasted with saving it...

“When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?”  
-Mark 9:34-36

“Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?”  
-Matthew 16:24-26

(See also, Lk. 9:23-26; Jn. 12:24-26; Mt. 10:32-39)

Our salvation is based on us having a right relationship with God through Jesus Christ. Our salvation is not based on whether you SAY you know Jesus, but whether Jesus says HE knows YOU. This distinction makes all the difference between heaven and hell.

“And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.”  
-John 17:3

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand.”  
-Matthew 10:27, 28

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“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My laws in their mind and write them on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. None of them shall teach his neighbor, and none his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.”

-Hebrews 8:10-12

“And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life.”

-1 John 5:11, 12

“And it was told Him, by some, who said, ‘Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, desiring to see You.’ But He answered and said to them, My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it.”

-Luke 8:20, 21

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’” -Matthew 7:21-23

“Then one said to Him, ‘Lord, are there few who are saved?’ And He said to them, “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know you, where you are from,’ then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’” But He will say, “I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.” There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out.”

-Luke 13:23-28

“...And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’” But he answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.” Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.”

-Matthew 25:10- 13

From the parable of the ten virgins (Matt. 25:1-13), Jesus seems to be saying that half His visible church is waiting in vain for His coming. We must cling to Him and always seek to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Please, also see 1 Jn. 2:28.

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“For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God? Now ‘If the righteous one IS SCARCELY SAVED, Where will the ungodly and the sinner appear?’”

-1 Peter 4:17, 18 (emphasis mine)

(See also Isa. 13:6-13)

If Jesus doesn't know you, is ashamed of you and says you aren't worthy of Him and won't confess you before the Father, but denies you, YOU ARE NOT SAVED!

“For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

-Mark 8:38

“Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven. Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's enemies will be those of his own household.’ He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.”

-Matthew 10:32-39

(See also: Rom. 10:9, 10; 2 Cor. 4:13; Mt. 12:34-37; Lk. 12:8, 9; Rev. 3:4,5; Mt. 22:1-8-14; 2 Thess. 1:5, 11; Acts 13:45, 46; Heb. 11:38; 1Pet. 4:17, 18; Phil. 3:11-14; Mt. 7:14; 13:44-46)

These are the conditions of being a disciple and of salvation. The reason why Jesus said this was due to the persecution that the church was soon to face when He was gone. The disciples would be confronted with a choice between their families and possibly their lives and their faith in Jesus. They would either lay down their lives for Him or deny Him. This sort of dilemma has been common throughout Christian history. American Christianity is the exception, not the norm. Jn. 15:18, 19; Mt. 10:16-22; 2 Tim. 3:12; Acts 8:1; Mt. 24:9-13 We avoid persecution by not obeying Him. By keeping our mouths closed. By not speaking the truth. By compromise. (2 Tim. 3:12; Lk. 6:26)

Jesus said many people would “believe” in Him and even confess Him as “Lord” and even do miracles in His name and He would say, “I never knew you; depart from me you who practice lawlessness.” This obviously portrays their lack of true salvation. I fear that there are many, today, in our churches, who say they “believe” in Jesus, but do not want to be Jesus’ disciple, to whom Jesus will say, “I never knew you; depart from me.” These will find their end in hell, but their pastors or others declared them saved and secure will give an account at the judgment seat of Christ. 2 Cor. 5:10

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“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”

-Matthew 7:21-23

“and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and ON THOSE WHO DO NOT OBEY the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,...”

-2 Thessalonians 1:7-9

(see also: Lk. 13:23-28; Mt. 25:1-12; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 2:10, 11; 21:7, 8; 1 Jn. 2:3, 4; Jn. 14:15, 21; 15:10-14; 1 Jn. 5:1-3; 4:8; Jms. 2:14-20)

I believe that many of the preachers in America, today, if they did not know it was Jesus who said that this was required of the rich young ruler to inherit eternal life, would say Jesus is a heretic. They would say He is preaching a false gospel of “works salvation” like the Catholics, J.W.s, Mormons, etc. I believe that many American preachers would have told the man to “just believe” for eternal life, as is taught in the manual, and given him a false assurance of salvation. They might even make him a deacon or an elder in their church because he was a rich and important man. (Lk. 16:15.)

But Jesus didn’t do that. Why?

Because Jesus said, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” Mk. 1:15b (see also: Acts 20:21; Heb. 6:1)

We see from what Jesus said, we need to not only believe the gospel, but REPENT also.

The rich young ruler wasn’t willing to repent of his sin of loving his riches more than God. The things of this world, his money and possessions, etc. were more important to him than eternal life. We are warned in scripture that unless we repent of these things we will not be saved and inherit eternal life.

“Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, ‘How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!’ And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, ‘Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.’ And they were greatly astonished, saying among themselves, ‘Who then can be saved?’ But Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With men it is impossible, but not with God; for with God all things are possible.’ Then Peter began to say to Him, ‘See, we have left all and followed You.’ So Jesus answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or father or mother or

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wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time - houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions-- and in the age to come, eternal life.”

-Mark 10:23-30

“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”

-Matthew 6:24

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it, but he who does the will of God abides forever.”

-1 John 2:15-17

“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.”

-1 Corinthians 6:9, 10

“For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them.”

-Ephesians 5:5-7

“Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.”

-1 Timothy 6:6-10

See also: Mt. 19:23-29; 16:24-26; Lk. 6:20; 18:24-30; Mt. 22:36-40; Gal. 5:19-21; Jms. 5:1-5; 2:1-7; 3:16; 4:1-4

The word, “repent”, “repented”, or “repentance” is used over 100 times in the KJV of the Bible.

Why is repentance important?

“....there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.”

-Luke 15:7



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John the Baptist had to preach it to prepare the nation of Israel to receive Jesus as their Messiah. Mk. 1:1-4; Mt. 3; Lk. 3

In Matthew, it is written that Jesus started His ministry, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Mt. 4:17b) And He continued to preach it. Mt. 9:13; Lk. 13:35, etc.. Note, that in John's gospel, the word repent is not used, but the concept is clearly there, using different words. (Jn. 3:19-21; 10:26-28; 12:24-26; 1 Jn. 2:3, 4; 3:7-10) He also told His disciples to preach it to the world.

"Then He said to them, "Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things."

-Luke 24:46-48

And that is what they did! And so did Paul. Mk. 6:12; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:29-31; 8:22; 17:30, 31(Paul); 20:19-21 (Paul); 26:19, 20 (Paul). **IT IS A COMMAND OF GOD FOR EVERYONE TO REPENT, AND IS NOT EVER PRESENTED AS AN OPTION FOR SALVATION.**

"Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."

-Acts 17:30, 31

... "serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

-Acts. 20:19-21

Though many, today, do not think repentance is essential for salvation, according to Jesus, his apostles and the Scriptures, it is, for the following reasons:

1. Sometimes, in the Scriptures, there are occasions where people are told to "repent" only, in order to be saved, with no mention of telling the person to "believe". Please, note that this was the first recorded gospel message preached by Peter.

"Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'"

-Acts 2:37, 38

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“Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord,...”  
-Acts 3:19

See also, Acts 2:17:30, 31; Lk. 13:3, 5

2. In order for you to receive forgiveness (Acts 2:38; 3:18; Mt. 6:14, 15). It is only reasonable to desire from the person we are forgiving, that they be sorry for their actions, recognize that they were wrong, and intend to not repeat their offense.

“and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.”  
-Luke 24:47

Also, note, that forgiving others is a condition of God for us to receive His forgiveness. (Mt. 18:21-35; Mt. 6:14, 15)

3. In order for you to not perish, not just physically, but eternally, in Hell. Jesus used the word “perish”, as in Jn. 3:16 to contrast inheriting eternal life. (2 Pet. 3:9; Rom. 2:4-8; 1 Cor. 6:19-21; Ezek. 18:23; Eph. 5:5-7; Jn. 3:16)

“I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish....I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.”  
-Luke 3:3, 5

“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”  
-2 Peter 3:9

4. In order for you to find salvation. It leads to life by turning from sin to God. (Acts 5:31)

“When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, “Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.”  
-Acts 11:18

This will be expounded more fully, later, in the relationship between repentance and faith.

5. In order for us to live with God in heaven. Because sin separates us from God and brings His righteous wrath and indignation upon us. It makes God angry because it destroys His creation, His people and the plan and purpose for our lives. God has to remove sin from our lives so we can be reconciled to Him and live with Him in peace and harmony. He requires our cooperation with Him through repentance and faith in order to accomplish this for us. (Phil. 2:12, 13)

“For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, Nor shall evil dwell with You. The boastful shall not stand in Your sight; You hate all workers of iniquity.” -Psalm 5:4, 5

## DISCIPLES AND BELIEVERS: IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

“God is a just judge, And God is angry with the wicked every day.”  
-Psalm 7:11

“LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, And works righteousness, And speaks the truth in his heart; He who does not backbite with his tongue, Nor does evil to his neighbor, Nor does he take up a reproach against his friend; In whose eyes a vile person is despised, But he honors those who fear the LORD; He who swears to his own hurt and does not change; he who does not put out his money at usury, Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things shall never be moved.”

-Psalm 15:1-5

6. In order for God to give us a choice. Since God created us in His image, giving us the ability to choose, as opposed to being robots (Mt. 23:37; Lk. 7:30; Acts 7:51; Rev. 2:20-22; Gen. 4:3-7; Ex. 35:5; Deut. 11:26-28; 30:19; Josh. 24:15; 1 Kings 18:21; Jer. 18:1-10; 21:8; Isa. 1:18-20; 7:15, 16; Ezek. 20:39; Prov. 1:24-26), He doesn't force the removal of sin from our lives, but enlightens the eyes of our hearts, so that we see sin for how horrible it really is and we can choose to turn from our sin and trust Christ that we might receive the new nature to actually not sin. If we do not want to give up our sin there is no purpose for us to put our faith in Christ to be saved from it. If we are holding on to our sin, we cannot grasp onto Christ for salvation from it since salvation is from sin and not just it's penalty. If our wills are in rebellion to God's will, then we are in agreement with Satan in His rebellion against God and deserve the same Hell as he does, rather than heaven. Matt. 25:41

7. In order for God to be just. God is just, but He wouldn't be if He allowed unrepentant sinners into heaven anymore than an earthly judge would be considered just if he pardoned guilty criminals who had every intention of continuing in their crimes. He would be condoning and promoting sin and would turn heaven into a cursed place like this earth. Dt. 32:4; Ps. 89:14; 7:11

### WHAT IS TRUE REPENTANCE?

The Greek word for repentance is, “Metanoia”, which literally means “after thought” or “change of mind” (Strong's #3341 from 3340) We know from how it's used in the New Testament, it speaks of a change of purpose, a turning from sin to God, for salvation.

1- Is it just having sorrow over sin? NO Esau has sorrow, and yet was not “saved”. (Heb. 12:16, 17).

2- Is it just confessing or acknowledging our sin? NO King Saul confesses his sin and wasn't saved. (1 Sam. 15:24-31; 1 Sam. 24:16-19; 1 Sam. 26:21-25; Mt. 27:3, 4)

3- Is it just reforming ourselves and ceasing to do select sins, such as drugs or drunkenness? NO Israel tried to enter the promised land but did not turn from unbelief and complaining. (Num. 14:1-45)

## DISCIPLES AND BELIEVERS: IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

4- Is it just making restitution? NO Judas did that when he returned the 30 pieces of silver and yet wasn't saved. (Mt. 27:1-5)

5 - Is it doing some sort of penance as the Catholics teach? NO Doing any sort of work never erases a sin. (Titus 3:5; 2 Tim. 1:9; Eph. 2:8, 9; Gal 2:16)

All of these things - with the exception of penance- are good things to do and may be a fruit of repentance, but by themselves are not repentance. Even if you did ALL of them (again, excluding penance), you would not necessarily have true repentance.

## SO THEN, WHAT IS TRUE BIBLICAL REPENTANCE?

It is not just being sorry that we got caught doing our sin or that our sin didn't work out the way we had hoped it would. Repentance is having a change of mind about it in relation to God and being sorry we ever did it in the first place regardless of whether or not we suffer negative consequences from it or we experience nothing but pleasure from it (Heb. 11:25, 26). This is because we recognize we have sinned, not just against ourselves, or other people, but against a holy God and deserve nothing but His wrath and indignation and yet, in God's great love, He made a way for us to receive His mercy, forgiveness, and reconciliation, through Jesus Christ. His kindness leads us to repentance.

*“For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”*

*-Romans 5:6-10*

*“...knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?”*

*-Romans 2:4b*

*“We love Him because He first loved us.”*

*-1 John 4:19*

REPENTANCE IS A CHANGE OF MIND ABOUT SIN WHICH RESULTS IN A CHANGE OF DIRECTION IN OUR LIVES, WHERE WE TURN FROM SIN AND LIVING TO PLEASE SELF, TO LIVING TO PLEASE GOD, BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, BEARING FRUITS OF TRUE REPENTANCE, WHICH IS THE SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE OF SALVATION. We turn to God to trust in the finished work of Christ as our only hope for a right relationship with God and for the victory over the sin that previously caused separation from Him and had to be judged and was judged in Jesus Christ so that He could be both faithful AND just to forgive us our sins. Praise be to God! (1 Pet. 3:19; 2:24; 1 Cor. 5:21; 1 Jn. 1:9)

## DISCIPLES AND BELIEVERS: IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

### THE FRUITS -EVIDENCE OR PROOF- OF TRUE REPENTANCE, THE BIBLICAL EVIDENCE OF SALVATION, AND EXAMPLES OF IT:

1 - The fruit is seen in an obvious change of behavior. We become zealous to repent and be rid of the sin in our lives and to be in a right relationship to God and men.

“Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.”  
-2 Corinthians 7:9-11

“Then he said to the multitudes that came out to be baptized by him, ‘Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as our father.” For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.’ So the people asked him, saying, ‘What shall we do then?’ He answered and said to them, ‘He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.’ Then the tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, ‘Teacher, what shall we do?’ And he said to them, ‘Collect no more than what is appointed for you.’ Likewise the soldiers asked him, saying, ‘And what shall we do?’ So he said to them, Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages.”  
-Luke 3:7-15

“Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them.”  
-Matthew 7:19, 20

“To you first, God, having raised up His Servant Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.”  
-Acts 3:26

“Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.”  
-Acts 26:19, 20

“There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And Jesus answered and said to them, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.’ Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were

## DISCIPLES AND BELIEVERS: IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.' He also spoke this parable: A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. Then he said to the keeper of his vineyard, 'Look, for three years I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree and find none. Cut it down; why does it use up the ground?' But he answered and said to him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and fertilize it. And if it bears fruit, well. But if not, after that you can cut it down.'"

-Luke 13:1-9

"For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life."

-Romans 6:20-24

"Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. And those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."

-Galatians 5:19-24

Without the Spirit of God, we are not His. We are not saved.

-Romans 8:9

"Again, when I say to the wicked, 'Thou shall surely die,' if he turns from his sin and does what is lawful and right, if the wicked restores the pledge, gives back what he has stolen, and walks in the statutes of life without committing iniquity, he shall surely live; he shall not die. None of his sins which he has committed shall be remembered against him; he has done what is lawful and right; he shall surely live."

-Ezekiel 33:14-16

(See also, Ps. 1:1-3-6; Isa. 1:16-20; 55:7; Jer. 32:19; Mt. 12:33; 13:23; 25:14-30; Jn. 15:1-8, 16; 12:24; Acts 24:24, 25; Eph. 5:8-11; Rom. 7:4; Phil. 1:11; Col. 1:6, 10; Heb. 11:7-11; Jms. 3:17, 18; 2 Pet. 1:5-11; Jude 12, 13)

If Jesus, Who is God and the Author of salvation, and Paul, who understood the gospel better than anyone of us and wrote it down for us, and John the Baptist, who was the one God used to prepare the nation of Israel to receive salvation through Jesus Christ, and other writers of the Bible, all say that true repentance, that saves from Hell, MUST and WILL bear good fruit, HOW DARE ANYONE SAY THAT REPENTANCE IS A CHANGE OF MIND THAT DOESN'T PRODUCE A CHANGE IN HOW WE LIVE? (Prov. 23:7; Mt. 12:35; Mk. 7:20-23. How we think effects how we act, for good or bad, for better or for worse.)

## DISCIPLES AND BELIEVERS: IS THERE A DIFFERENCE?

The following are some examples of true, biblical repentance:

- Paul turned from being a hater of Jesus and persecutor of the church to being a lover of Jesus, being persecuted for Him and His church. Acts 9:1-30; 13-28; 2 Cor. 11:23-33.
- Peter in Mt. 26:69-75 denies Christ but later confesses Christ boldly in Acts 2:12-17; 3:12; 4:8.
- Zacchaeus is willing to restore what he had taken fourfold and give half of all he had to the poor. Lk. 19:1-10
- The Ephesians burned up all their magic books at great cost to themselves. Acts 19:17-20
- The Thessalonians turned from their idolatry to serve the living and true God. 1 Thess. 1:9.
- The prodigal son goes from being a completely selfish and ungrateful son, to becoming one who is grateful to become one of his father's servants. Lk. 15:11-17-21-24
- King David saw how He had sinned against God and not just man in Psalms 51:1-13.
- King Josiah humbles himself greatly before God and causes the nation to turn back towards God in 2 Kings 22-23:1-25.
- The Ninevites, "They turned from their evil way." Jonah. 3:1-10

This is more scriptural proof that Point #4 of the manual's teaching, "You can be a believer, bear NO fruit, and still inherit eternal life" is false.

### WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN REPENTANCE AND FAITH IN SALVATION?

The Bible makes it clear that both repentance and faith are our responsibility to exercise in order to receive salvation. Please, read Mk. 1:15; Acts 20:21; Heb. 6:1

Repentance and faith are two sides of the same coin. Notice the relationship in the wording of Hebrews 6:1 of the words "from" and "toward":

**"Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God..."**  
-Hebrews 6:1

Repentance from dead works and faith toward God. These are the two sides of the same coin, of our part in responding to God's gift of salvation.

- Repentance is the negative or preparatory side of the grace of salvation.
- Faith is the positive, receptive side of the grace of salvation.

Logically, as Jesus said, repentance comes first because you can't turn toward God, in faith, without turning away from sin first. Please, see Mk. 1:15; Acts 20:21; Heb. 6:1.

1. Repentance is the stripping of our self-righteousness, which is filthy rags

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in God's sight (Is. 64:6), in order to be clothed with the righteousness of Christ, by faith. See Phil. 3:8, 9; Rom. 6:17, 18.

2. Repentance is the breaking up of the fallow ground of our hard hearts and recognizing and turning from the weeds of sin so that God's seed of the truth of the gospel can grow. See. Hos. 10:12; Mt. 13:1-9; Jer. 4:3, 4.

3. Repentance is the "clearing away" of the known sins that prevent the Lord from coming into our lives and building His Holy temple to dwell in. See. Is. 40:3, 4; Mk. 1:2, 3; 1 Cor. 6:18-20

4. Repentance is the turning from sin as the evil master in our lives so that by faith we can receive Christ in our lives as the new Master of our souls. See Rom. 6:16-22; Rev. 3:20

5. Repentance is coming to the end of ourselves and giving up our sinful lives in exchange for His holy life, so that we will be made new creatures in Christ, by faith, in order that we might please God. See, 2 Cor. 5:17

6. Repentance is recognizing we are lost and our need to change without which we would never see our need to put faith in the Savior. See, Mk. 2:17; Jn. 16:8

At times, a verse of scripture may only mention one or the other of faith or repentance as a requirement for salvation, and that is because the one implies the other. For examples, please see, Lk. 13:3, 5; 3:7-14; 24:6-49; Acts 15:1-9; Jn. 3:16; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 16:30, 31. This is the case because the person being spoken to already has a repentant heart, or he already believes that Jesus is the Savior. An example of this would be the Philippian jailer, who when he turned to Jesus, knew the cost of following Jesus being as he was the one to put Paul and Silas in prison for their faith. Acts 16:6-30, 31-34. (Note, that in Acts 16:32; 17:30; 20:21; and 26: 19, 20, Paul MAY HAVE talked about it without it being recorded). The rich young ruler is an example of someone who believed that Jesus was the Savior, but wasn't willing to repent and give up his riches. He valued his riches more than God. See Mk. 10:21-25. They are opposite sides of the same coin - inseparable, and essential to our salvation.

Repentance is a part of saving faith because there is no purpose for us to put our faith in Christ to save us from sin we don't want to stop committing. Our wills would be in rebellion to God's will, making it impossible for us to entrust our lives to Christ for salvation.

According to the Bible, obeying God in repentance as well as faith, are not considered a "work" we do that earns us salvation. Consider what Jesus said:

**"And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he has come in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink'? Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you have**



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done all those things which you are commanded say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"  
-Luke 17:7-10

Repentance and faith are simply the means with which we receive salvation.

And yet, it may surprise you that, in scripture, faith is called a "work"...

"Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.'"  
-John 6:29

"remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father,"  
-1 Thessalonians 1:3

"Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power,"  
-2 Thessalonians 1:11

...but it is not a work that earns us salvation even though it is something we must do in order for us to receive salvation.

"He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."  
-John 3:36  
(see also: Jn. 3:18; 6:47)

In the same way, to repent, is something we must do to receive salvation, but it is NOT a work that earns us salvation. **BOTH REPENTANCE AND FAITH ARE GIFTS OF GOD'S GRACE.**

"Simon Peter answered and said, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.'" -Matthew 16:16, 17

"And a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all, able to teach, patient, in humility correcting those who are in opposition, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth, and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him to do his will."  
-2 Timothy 2:24-26

"When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, 'Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.'"  
-Acts 11:18

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“For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,”  
-Philemon 1:29

“...To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ.”  
-1 Peter 1:1b

“For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.”  
-Romans 12:3

(See also, Eph. 2:8, 9; Acts 3:16)

Salvation is all of grace (Titus 2:11; Jn. 1:9, 13) and this is seen in the fact that we were dead in trespasses and sins and not able to save ourselves (Eph. 2:1-5) Blinded to the truth by the devil (2 Cor. 4:4) and not seeking God or being able to (Rom. 3:10, 11) We would never have faith in Christ apart from His grace. The same is true of repentance. It's a work of God's grace since the scriptures teach that He is the One who convicts regarding sin, His righteousness and the judgment to come (Jn. 16:8; 1 Thess. 1:5) so that we can repent in the first place. It is God's Spirit who draws us to Himself, in fact, no one comes unless the Spirit draws them (Jn 6:44). See also, Rom. 3:11 It is God's Spirit that gives us the ability to stop sinning and bear fruits of repentance. (Rom. 8:12, 13; Jn. 8:32-36; Rom. 6:6)

Repentance and faith cannot undo the damage our sin has already done in separating us from a holy God and others, in the past (Ec. 3:15). Nor can we make ourselves good enough to earn God's favor in the present, and all of our resolutions to turn away from sin in the future are useless without God's help because our very natures are corrupt and we are all slaves of sin. See. Jn. 8:32-36; Rom. 6:6.

“The Lord looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God. They have all turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is none who does good, no, not one.”  
-Psalm 14: 2, 3

“As it is written: “There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God.”...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...” Rom. 3:10, 11 & 23.  
(see also: Jer. 17:9; Mk. 7:21-23; Rom. 6:17, 18)

All of our efforts to save ourselves are vain.

“But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags;”  
-Isaiah 64:6a

The Lord alone must save us. Just as it is useless for a drowning man to turn away from everything in his way to reach out to receive a life preserver that's not there, so too, all our repenting - turning from sin- and reaching out by

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faith to God is useless if Christ had not become our “life preserver” by dying on the cross for our sins. He did this because of His great love for us, not because we deserve it or have earned it, but purely out of His awesome mercy and grace.

“But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit...”

-Titus 3:4, 5

(see also, 2 Tim. 1:9)

It was Christ’s perfect obedience to His Father that earned salvation for us. We have nothing but disobedience or incomplete obedience to offer Him. What we have earned and deserve is condemnation and wrath, but He has freely given us salvation through bearing what we deserve on Himself.

“who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, having died to sins, might live for righteousness ---by whose stripes you were healed.”

-1 Peter 2:24

“For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man’s obedience many will be made righteous.”

-Romans 5:19

“For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.”

-2 Corinthians 5:21

This salvation that we receive from the Lord is by faith in Christ, “again, apart from our works; Gal. 2:16; Rom. 4:5) and is seen in our lives by the fruit of repentance, which is a changed life. We’ve turned from living for self and sin, by faith in Christ, to living a holy life for the Lord, as a disciple, by His grace.

Faith that doesn’t include repentance is a false faith that doesn’t come from God and doesn’t save. The faith that the discipleship manual teaches doesn’t include repentance and is a false gospel.

Point #3 A believer is anyone who believes in (gives mental assent to; parenthesis mine) the atonement of Jesus Christ on the cross, period. If you believe, you shall receive: healing, deliverance, salvation, etc.. All things are possible for Him who believes, “That is a biblical fact.”

That is the false faith that Jesus talks about, as well as the other writers of the New Testament.

“Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them. Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and

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done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”  
-Matthew 7:19-23

“They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work.”  
-Titus 1:16

“You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe-- and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?”  
-James 2:19, 20

“Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are His,’ and, ‘Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.’”  
-2 Timothy 2:19

“But whoever has this world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him? My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth. And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him.” -1 John 3:17-19

(See also: Rom. 6:14-22; 1 Jn. 2:3,4; 3:7-10; Ezek. 33:31; Acts 24:24, 25; Jms. 2:14-20; 2 Pet. 1:5-11)

## SO, WHAT IS TRUE FAITH?

“Faith“, in the Strong’s #4102, is Pistis. It means, “a firm persuasion” or “conviction of the truth of anything”, “belief”. In the New Testament, it is used regarding faith in God or Christ for salvation. It concerns the unseen things of God (Heb. 11:1). His invisible nature, the creation of the world, Christ’s work on the cross, His promises for this life and the life to come. We are asked to believe and keep on believing in God’s faithfulness to fulfill His word in us and to us (Heb. 6:11, 12; 10:35-39; 11:6; 1 Cor. 15:2; 2 Cor. 5:7).

New Testament saving faith always produces obedience to the truth believed, even though, as said before, not always perfect obedience. Just as unbelief produces disobedience, so faith produces obedience (Heb. 3:18, 19).

“But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.”  
-Romans 6:17

“Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name, among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ.”  
-Romans 1:5,6

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“Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.”

–Acts 6:7

“And having been perfected, he became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him...”

–Hebrews 5:9

“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going.”

–Hebrews 11:8

“Therefore I have reason to glory in Christ Jesus in the things which pertain to God. For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ has not accomplished through me, in word and deed, to make the Gentiles obedient--in mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God, so that from Jerusalem and round about to Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.”

–Romans 15:17–19

“...but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith---”

–Romans 16:26

(See also: Jn. 3:36; 1 Jn. 2:3, 4; 2 Pet. 1:5–11; Acts 24:24, 25)

We see in Hebrews chapter eleven, the “Hall of faith” chapter, how clearly it depicts that true faith produces obedience to the truth believed (Rom. 6:17). The phrase, “by faith” is used seventeen (17) times showing what people did, in obedience to the truth they believed. How can anyone say faith doesn’t produce works in the lives of those who possess true saving faith? Please, read Hebrews, chapter eleven, and then answer the following questions:

- Could you honestly say that Noah had faith if he hadn’t obeyed God in building the ark? (Heb. 11:7)
- Could you honestly believe Abraham had faith if he didn’t obey God by going out to the promised land? (Heb. 11:8)
- Can you honestly believe that the saints of Hebrews eleven would have been men and women of faith if they didn’t obey the truth they received from God?

The answer is obvious. Faith always produces obedience, just as James also says;

“What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Depart in peace, be

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warmed and filled,' but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, 'You have faith, and I have works.' Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe---and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead?"

-James 2:14-20

The discipleship manual teaches the powerless "demon faith" (Jms. 2:19; Lk. 4:41), which is dead and does not save.

True faith is not just acknowledging the historical facts of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection to gain entrance to heaven, "period". Jesus condemns this lip service faith:

"Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me. And in vain they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.'"

-Matthew 15:7-9

(See also, Ezek. 33:31)

It is actually unbelief to not submit to His Lordship. He is Lord whether we believe in Him or not. He is Lord of lords and King of kings (Rev. 19:16). He is God, the sovereign Ruler of the universe (Col. 1:16, 17; Rev. 1:8) Those who do not receive Him for who and what He is are rejecting HIM. They are rejecting His sovereign authority over their lives and are in rebellion and exercising unbelief, NOT faith.

This name it and claim it faith the discipleship manual teaches is no different than what the prosperity preachers preach, with the exception that it doesn't directly mention getting rich, but it does say, "If you believe you shall receive." and "all things are possible for him who believes." without any conditions stated. This is actually more dangerous to the souls of men than the prosperity gospel because it's more subtle in it's deception and has reached far more people with it's lie. You can have all the faith in God you can muster, but your sin will keep your prayers from being answered (Ps. 66:18; Isa. 59:1,2; Jms. 4:1-10). You must, as Jesus said:

"Repent and believe in the gospel."

-Mark 1:15.

Now, let's look at two portions of Scripture that are used to support this false gospel which is being taught here in America and around the world. They are: 1 Cor. 2:14-3:4, 15 and Luke 8:4-8, 11-15.

"But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him' nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one. For 'who has known the mind of the LORD that he may instruct Him?' But we have the mind of Christ. 3 And I, brethren,

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could not speak to you as to spiritual people but as to carnal, as to babes in Christ. I fed you with milk and not solid food; for until now you were not able to receive it, and even now you are not able to receive it, and even now you are still not able; for you are still carnal. For where there are envy, strife, and divisions among you, are you not carnal and behaving like mere men? For when one says, 'I am of Paul,' and another, 'I am of Apollos,' are you not carnal? ...15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire."  
-1 Corinthians 2:14-3:4, & 15.

This passage of Scripture is used to teach that there are 3 categories of people:

1. The natural man (unregenerate man, unsaved man).
2. The carnal Christian (believer only, supposedly born-again, but self is on the throne of their life, and is saved.)
3. The spiritual Christian (disciple, Jesus is on the throne of their life and is saved.)

This is a false understanding of this passage, for the following reasons:

1. Paul was rebuking the Corinthians for ACTING like they were not born-again/ saved, for behaving like "mere men" (natural men), because of the "envy, strife, and divisions among" them. They weren't being spiritual as Christians should be, but "carnal", as unsaved men are. The word "carnal", in the Greek Strong's #4559 means "fleshly" and according to Romans 8:1-14 and Gal. 5:16-24, if a person lives according to the flesh, they are not "sons of God" and "will not inherit the kingdom of God". Christians do sin, at times, and act carnally, but we don't excuse it and make a separate category for ourselves when we do, we repent and seek to not practice these things as a lifestyle, or we know, from the Scriptures, we will not inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Jn. 1:8, 9; 3:7-11)

2. The envy, strife, and divisions among the Corinthians are all three listed in Gal. 5:19-21, where Paul, himself said that those who practice these things will NOT inherit eternal life. Paul was obviously not making an option of a second category of being a "carnal Christian" because he's saying in Galatians, that those who practice such things are not saved.

3. We know Paul was not establishing three categories of people because he would be contradicting himself in what he said by the inspiration of God in Rom. 8:1-14 and Gal. 5:16-24, that there are only 2 categories of people and only one of them is saved; those who are in the Spirit (Rom. 8:9) and walk by the Spirit and have crucified the flesh with it's passions and desires and manifest the fruit of the Spirit. Rom 8:13 & 14; Gal. 5:22-24. The second category are those who are in the flesh (carnal), are not repenting and are not God's children, according to Rom. 8:9. You are either in the Spirit, or seeking to walk after the Spirit and are God's child, or you are in the flesh, not repenting and are not His child, and are under condemnation (Rom. 8:1), are at enmity against Him, are not subject to the Law of God, are unable to please

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Him (Rom. 8:6-8) and will die. (Rom. 8:6, 13, 14; Gal. 5:19-21) (“die“, meaning, not saved, and is often contrasted with living &/or having eternal life, Rom. 6:23)

4. Paul said that those who live a carnal lifestyle, practicing unrepentantly, the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:16-24 ) should be put out of the church and not be considered a true brother, but “an evil person” (1 Cor. 5:9-13; Rom. 16:17, 18; Matt. 18:15-17; 2 Cor. 6:14) These “smallest matters” 1 Cor. 6:2) are to be judged by the church and not glossed over and excused, as an “Oh well, you’ve chosen to just be a carnal believer” category of Christian.

5. Paul reveals, in 1 Cor. 6:11 and 1:1-9 that they were not always carnal, and but had repented and were spiritual for having done so, and he warns them, “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God?” in 1 Cor. 6:9, regarding some things and then went on to remind them of what they had been delivered from and warned them regarding going back to their old “carnal” ways. (1 Cor. 6:9-11)

The Corinthians had a lot of carnal problems as many of us do, but if we’re truly saved, born-again children of God, his disciples, we will repent and stop practicing them, crying out to God for fruits of repentance and searching to find our promised way of escape (1 Cor. 10:13) examining ourselves to see if we’re in the faith (2 Cor. 13:5), and crying out for him to increase our faith (Mk. 9:24). The alternative, is to deceive ourselves, excuse ourselves and comfort ourselves with a false hope of heaven in spite of our unregenerate hearts. Jms. 1:22; Mt. 7:19-23

Now, concerning 1 Cor. 3:15:

**“If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.”**

This Scripture is being taken out of context by those who use it as a defense of this false doctrine. Please, read in context, 1 Cor. 3:5-17. It is regarding leadership ministry building upon the foundation of those who are already saved and not about people who didn’t have any good works in their lives, and are yet still saved. Leaders having their ministry efforts burned up doesn’t mean there were no fruits of repentance or good works in their personal lives in other areas. That would be a contradiction to what Jesus said:

**“Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”**

**-Matthew 7:19**

See also, Mt. 25:14-30

There is a parable in Scripture that is used as a “proof text” to support the false doctrine that teaches you can be a believer that bears no fruit and yet expect salvation, as opposed to the truth that all believers are disciples that bear fruit (Jn. 15:8; Is. 8:16) This parable is found in three of the four gospels, but we will use the one in Luke 8:4-8, and 11-15, here:



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“And when a great multitude had gathered, and they had come to him from every city, He spoke by a parable: ‘A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trampled down, and the birds of the air devoured it. Some fell on rock; and as soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up with it and choked it. But others fell on good ground, sprang up, and yielded a crop a hundredfold.’ When He had said these things He cried, ‘He who has ears to hear, let him hear!’”

–Luke 8:4-8

“Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. Those by the wayside are the ones who hear; then the devil comes and takes away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved. But the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no root, who believe for a while and in time of temptation fall away. Now the ones that fell among thorns are those who, when they have heard, go out and are choked with cares, riches, and pleasures of life, and bring no fruit to maturity. But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.”

–Luke 8:11-15

(see also; Mk. 4:1-9, 13-20; Mt. 13:3-9, 18-23)

I believe this parable does not support this doctrine for the following reasons:

1- In all the places the parable is given, the only ground that Jesus called GOOD was the last one that yielded a crop (or bore fruit). If only the one soil is called good, wouldn't it be conversely true that the others are bad situations?

As has already been established, if there is no fruit of repentance and a desire to obey the Lord who died to save them, then there is no scriptural basis to believe someone has been saved. (See, Mt. 7:17-19-23; Acts 26:19, 20; Lk. 13:1-9; 3:7-14; Rom. 6:22; Heb. 6:8)

2- Only in Luke does this parable say the ground that Jesus didn't say was good, that they “believed”. Lk. 8:13, 14. In both cases it is apparent that their faith wasn't saving faith for the following two reasons:

A. Their faith didn't endure to the end. Whether or not you believe you can lose your salvation, is not the issue here. The Scriptures are clear that it is those who endure to the end that shall be saved. (Heb. 3:6; 10:36-39; Mt. 10:22; 24:13; Col. 1:22, 23; Ezek. 18:31, 32; 1 Cor. 15:2; Rom. 11:22)

“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.” 1 Jn. 2:19

B. As has already been established, true faith produces lasting fruit and obedience from the hearts of those who are born-again of the Spirit of God. (Jms. 2:14-20; 1 Jn. 2:3-6; 3:17-19; Heb. 5:9; Mt. 7:19-21)

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In conclusion, I believe the Scriptures are very clear. A disciple is the same as a believer and there are not three categories of people taught in the Bible. This doctrine, that is taught in three different ways, but they all mean the same thing, is false.

As stated in the beginning of this examination, the gospel of Jesus Christ is the most important, foundational truth there is for mankind. We MUST get it right. If this, our foundation is not solid, everything built upon it will falter. Our own, as well as the people we influence, very destinies' depend on it. If we are pacifying ourselves or someone who has not been born-again with a false sense of security, pronouncing them saved because they simply prayed a prayer, or say they "believe", when they are not daily living for and trusting Christ, we do them no favors, and rob them of the conviction they desperately need to cry out to God to grant them the repentance that leads to life.

"Because with lies you have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and you have strengthened the hands of the wicked, so that he does not turn from his wicked way by promising him life:"  
-Ezekiel 13:22 KJV

"I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed."  
-Galatians 1:6-9

"Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you."  
-1 Timothy 4:16

"My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment."  
-James 3:1

If you can prove, from Scripture, that I am wrong, please, love me enough to show me where I am wrong (Gal. 6:1). If you have been teaching these false teachings or have believed them, and you see that you have been wrong, it is my prayer that you will repent.

May the Lord Jesus Christ our Lord, alone be glorified, and His glorious gospel be preached and not this man centered "gospel" that is being spread throughout the world.

I will end with a quote from A.W. Tozer's book "The Divine Conquest", written sometime before 1950, from pages 35-40:

"I want to be fair to everyone and to find all the good I can in every man's religious beliefs, but the harmful effects of this faith-as-magic creed are

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greater than could be imagined by anyone who has not come face to face with them. Large assemblies today are being told fervently that the one essential qualification for heaven is to be an evil man, and the one sure bar to God's favor is to be a good one. The very word righteousness is spoken only in cold scorn, and the moral man is looked upon with pity. "A Christian," say these teachers, "is not morally better than a sinner, the only difference is that he has taken Jesus, and so he has a Saviour." I trust it may not sound flippant to inquire, "A saviour from what?" If not from sin and evil conduct and the old fallen life, then from what? And if the answer is, From the consequences of past sins and from judgment to come, still we are not satisfied. Is justification from past offenses all that distinguishes a Christian from a sinner? Can a man become a believer in Christ and be no better than he was before? Does the gospel offer no more than a skillful Advocate to get guilty sinners off free at the day of judgment?

I think the truth of the matter is not too deep nor too difficult to discover. Self-righteousness is an effective bar to God's favor because it throws the sinner back upon his own merits and shuts him out from the imputed righteousness of Christ. And to be a sinner confessed and consciously lost is necessary to the act of receiving salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. This we joyously admit and constantly assert, but here is the truth which has been overlooked in our day. A sinner cannot enter the kingdom of God. The Bible passages which declare this are too many and too familiar to need repeating here, but the skeptical might look at Galatians 5:19-21 and Revelation 21:8. How then can any man be saved? The penitent sinner meets Christ and after that saving encounter he is a sinner no more. The power of the gospel changes him, shifts the basis of his life from self to Christ, faces him about in a new direction and makes him a new creation. The moral state of the penitent when he comes to Christ does not affect the result, for the work of Christ sweeps away both his good and his evil and turns him into another man. The returning sinner is not saved by some judicial transaction apart from a corresponding moral change. Salvation must include a judicial change of status, but what is overlooked by most teachers is that it also includes an actual change in the life of the individual. And by this we mean more than a surface change, we mean a transformation as deep as the roots of his human life. If it does not go that deep it does not go deep enough.

If we had not first suffered a serious decline in our expectations we should not have accepted this tame technical view of faith. The churches (even the gospel churches) are worldly in spirit, morally anemic, on the defensive, imitating instead of initiating and in a wretched state generally because for two full generations they have been told that justification is no more than a "not guilty" verdict pronounced by the Heavenly Father upon a sinner who can present the magic coin faith with the wondrous "open-sesame" engraved upon it. If it is not stated as bluntly as that, at least the message is so presented as to create such an impression. The whole business is the result of hearing the Word preached without power and receiving it in the same way.

Now faith is indeed the open-sesame to eternal blessedness. Without faith it is impossible to please God, neither can any man be saved apart from faith in the risen Saviour. But the true quality of faith is almost universally missed, viz., its moral quality. It is more than mere confidence in the veracity of a statement made in Holy Writ. It is a highly moral thing and of spiritual essence. It invariably effects radical transformation in the life of the one who

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exercises it. It shifts the inward gaze from self to God. It introduces its possessor into the life of heaven upon earth.

It is not my desire to minimize the justifying effect of faith. No man who knows the depths of his own wickedness would dare to appear before the ineffable Presence with nothing to recommend him but his own character, nor would any Christian, wise after the discipline of failures and imperfections, want his acceptance with God to depend upon any degree of holiness to which he might have attained through the operations of inward grace. All who know their own hearts and the provisions of the gospel will join in the prayer of the man of God:

“When He shall come with trumpet sound,  
O, may I then in Him be found;  
Dressed in His righteousness alone,  
Faultless to stand before the throne.”

It is a distressing thing that a truth so beautiful should have been so perverted. But perversion is the price we pay for failure to emphasize the moral content of truth; it is the curse that follows rational orthodoxy when it has quenched or rejected the Spirit of Truth.

In asserting that faith in the gospel effects a change of life-motive from self to God I am but stating the sober facts. Every man with moral intelligence must be aware of the curse that afflicts him inwardly; he must be conscious of the thing we call ego, by the Bible called flesh or self, but by whatever name called, a cruel master and a deadly foe. Pharaoh never ruled Israel as tyrannically as this hidden enemy rules the sons and daughters of men. The words of God to Moses concerning Israel in bondage may well describe us all: “I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows.” And when, as the Nicene Creed so tenderly states, our Lord Jesus Christ, “for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate, and suffered and was buried, and the third day He arose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father,” what was it all for? That He might pronounce us technically free and leave us in our bondage? Never. Did not God say to Moses, “I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey...and thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Let my people go”? For sin’s human captives God never intends anything less than full deliverance. The Christian message rightly understood means this: The God who by the word of the gospel proclaims men free, by the power of the gospel actually makes them free. To accept less than this is to know the gospel in word only, without its power.”

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“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, HAVING A FORM OF GODLINESS BUT DENYING ITS POWER. AND FROM SUCH PEOPLE TURN AWAY!”

-2 Timothy 3:1-5

## JESUS IS COMING. ARE YOU READY?

For more information on how to be right with God and how to pray and fast for revival, contact me at [JesusisLife196@gmail.com](mailto:JesusisLife196@gmail.com).

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