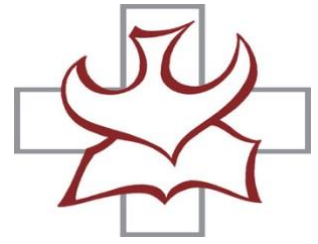


# You are a Disciple!

James 1:22-25 Rom 6:1-5 Matt 28:16-20

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In the Christian faith, a **Disciple**<sup>1</sup> is a learner; someone who is learning the doctrines of Scripture and putting them into practice. A **disciple** is sometimes described as a follower; one who follows Jesus as they live their lives.

Your first thought may be that of the **Twelve Disciples**; the men Jesus originally chose to follow Him and to learn from Him.

But Jesus also describes you as a **disciple**! When the Holy Spirit created faith your heart, you became a **disciple** the Lord Jesus Christ. You are now a *lifelong learner* Jesus; you *follow* Jesus as you live your life; you have been *chosen* by Him and *belong* to Him.

Here is how Jesus defines a **disciple**:

Go therefore and make **disciples** of all nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching** them to observe all that I have commanded you. Matthew 28:19-20

Discipleship begins with **Holy Baptism**, where you first met the Lord Jesus as He intervened in your life to rescue you from your sins. Baptism is the **conversion event** in your life: you are **born again** in the waters of Baptism and given **new life**. God rescues you from sin and death by giving you the forgiveness of sins and

<sup>1</sup> “In short, a disciple is a student. A disciple is one who disciplines himself in the teachings and practices of another. The word *disciple*, like *discipline*, comes from the Latin word *discipulus*, meaning “pupil” or “learner.” Consequently, to learn is to discipline oneself. . . a disciple follows Jesus.” <https://tabletalkmagazine.com/article/2018/06/what-is-a-disciple>  
The two textbox quotes later in this sermon are from this same article.

eternal life. **BAPTISM IS SIGNIFICANT!** In Baptism, God brought you into His Family, and into a *teacher/student* relationship. God is your Father, and you are His child; you are a *lifelong learner* of His Holy Word. Jesus teaches that we are to **learn** and **hold fast** to all He has taught us. *That is what a disciple of Jesus does: learns* and **holds fast** to all He has taught us.

The *disciple*, the one who truly listens and learns, will put into practice what he learns.

That is why **Holy Scripture** is so important to us. It is God teaching us the ways of His kingdom and how to live as His people. We call the Bible the *Word of God* because God is actually speaking to you whenever you read, hear, study, and learn Holy Scripture. Holy Scripture is the voice of Jesus in your life!

God speaks His word of **Law** and exposes your sin. God's Word of Law is described like a *surgeon's scalpel*; it cuts into you to expose and remove the tumors of sin. God's Word of Law leads you to repentance; where you turn from your sin and confess it to God. As a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, you want nothing to do with sin. Sin can only bring guilt, shame and death to you! That is why you wholeheartedly renounce the devil and all of his evil works and all of his wicked ways.

God then speaks His Word of **Gospel** to you and forgives your sin. The *Gospel* binds up and heals what the Law exposed. The *Gospel Good News* teaches you about your Savior and what He has done for you in His death, burial, and resurrection. He took your sin and guilt upon Himself; and He suffered and died with it. You are

now forgiven; you at peace with God; and you have been given a new life of discipleship.

As a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, we treasure the **Holy Scriptures** as God speaks to us about the ways of His Kingdom and how to live as His people. God Himself works through His powerful Word to make you *biblically literate* and *doctrinally sound*! Holy Scripture is a means of grace; a means of strength; a means of power; a means of hope; a means of comfort! **The Word of God is how the Lord works in your life to strengthen your faith!** As a *disciple* of the Lord Jesus Christ, you are a lifelong learner of the Word of God; Holy Baptism put you in a teacher/student relationship with Christ! That means you listen to His voice in Holy Scripture, take it to heart, and put it into practice.

The Word of God is powerful in your life; its living and active; and it changes you! As you grow and mature as a disciple; as you listen and learn Holy Scripture, you become more and more passionately engaged in the Christian faith and life. Holy Scripture creates **zeal** within you.

No one can truly call himself a *disciple* of Jesus who is not willing to obey Him.

In the New Testament, the word **zeal** means “*hot, burning, on fire*.” It’s the idea that you have a passion for the things of God; and that you understand how serious and significant the Christian faith in life is. **Zeal** comes from the Holy Spirit at work in you as you continually listen and learn the Holy Scriptures.

Christian **zeal** is seen in many ways:

- ⇒ You are faithful in worshiping the Lord each week
- ⇒ You desire to take Holy Communion

- ⇒ You strive to live a holy and godly life at all times and in all places and with all people
- ⇒ You are eager to speak to God in prayer
- ⇒ You make it a priority to read, study, and learn God's Holy Word
- ⇒ You acknowledge your spiritual gifts and try to maximize them in your life
- ⇒ You find joy in helping, loving, and serving others
- ⇒ You boldly confess the faith to the people in your life so they can be disciples of the Lord Jesus also
- ⇒ You intentionally raise your children in the Christian faith
- ⇒ You create a godly home and family life
- ⇒ You let your light shine in all of your God-given vocations

Christian **zeal** is seen in many ways in your life. **Zeal** comes from the Holy Spirit at work in you as you continually listen and learn the Holy Scriptures.

Part of your **Christian zeal** is giving financially for the work of the Kingdom of God. Here at Trinity we ask you to be faithful in giving of your tithes and offerings. For the last several weeks we have been asking you to specifically pray about your giving so that it is well thought out and planned. **Next week** we would like you to fill out a pledge card, seal it up with your name and address on the front, and bring it upfront as a confession of faith. By bringing it upfront you are acknowledging that God is the giver of all of your gifts; and that you are returning some for the work of His Kingdom. In six months, they will be mailed back to you – UNOPENED – for you to evaluate how you are doing. **Your financial giving; your tithes and offerings; is part of your Christian zeal; it is motivated by the Holy Spirit at work within you.**

Today, think of yourself as a **disciple** of the Lord Jesus Christ. Like the 12 Disciples, Jesus has called you by name in Holy Baptism, to follow Him. You are now a *lifelong learner* Jesus; you *follow* His teachings as you live your life; you have been *chosen* by Him and *belong* to Him. You are a **disciple** of the Lord Jesus Christ!

Make it a priority to **learn** and **hold fast** to the Word of God; and that Word of God will create a godly **zeal** within you! Amen!