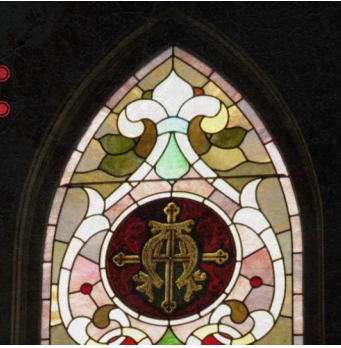


CHRISTIAN:

it's not what you think



Acts 11:25-26; John 13:33-38

context:

line by line:

application:

Branded

4.7.2013

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Study Questions

Use these questions in your community group time to dig deeper and discover how you can apply today's message to everyday life.

INTRODUCTION

What is a Christian? The word "Christian" only appears three times in the Bible. First-century Christians didn't call themselves Christians. Christians called themselves something far more intimidating: "disciples." "Disciple" is an intimidating word because it's concrete. It means a learner, pupil, apprentice, adherent, or follower.

Jesus calls his followers to build communities of world-changing love. Too often, we fail and outsiders end up viewing churches as places of scorn, hostility, rejection, and stifling moralism—exclusive, self-serving clubs in which they're not welcome.

So here's the question: *Are we going to be content just being Christians, or are we going to be disciples?*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. How would you define "Christian"? Does the word have positive or negative connotations for you? Why?
2. What's been your experience with church so far? Have most of the people you've met in churches been disciples or just Christians? How has that shaped your perception of Christians?
3. How have your interactions with Christians shaped your perception of Jesus?
4. Read **John 13:33–35**. Dig deep into Jesus' words: How is Jesus' description of what it looks like to be his disciple surprising?
5. Think about someone in your sphere of influence who is difficult to love. What is it about that person that makes him or her difficult to love? What is one thing you can do this week to show that person love?
6. What's most intimidating about the idea of being a disciple of Jesus? What's most compelling about it?
7. Go back and read **Acts 11:19-26**. How can you/we be "Barnabas" to each other? How can we help each other fulfill the calling of Jesus from questions 6 & 7?

MOVING FORWARD

Can you imagine what your workplace and community would be like if you loved the way Jesus calls us to love? Can you imagine what would happen in our nation—in our world—if Christians everywhere began living like disciples? What if, for the next three to six months, Christians committed to love the people around them?

If you're a follower of Jesus, try it this week. To the best of your ability, by God's grace, love the people around you. This isn't a means to an end; you're not going to fix people. This is better. This is being a disciple. It has the power to change your heart, your relationships, your community, and even the world.

PRAYER

Pray that we would be inspired to be Jesus to one another to such an extent that outsiders will come to the edge of our community and look in and say "I don't know if I want to be one of those people, but I sure want to work for them, be with them, and experience what they have."

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