

Disciples of Jesus



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Introduction

Jesus, God living among His created people, was nearing the end of His ministry on earth. Jesus and His twelve apostles were gathered together to eat the Passover meal. The disciples were arguing about which one would be the greatest in His Kingdom which they thought He was going to establish on earth. Instead of who would be the greatest, Jesus said they were to be servants, "But I am among you as a servant." (Luke 22:24-27)

Jesus then made an astounding statement "You have stood by me in the troubles that have tested me. 29 So as my Father has given me a kingdom, I'm giving it to you. 30 You will eat and drink at my table in my kingdom. You will also sit on thrones and judge the twelve tribes of Israel." (Luke 22:28-30)

Note: Giving is translated from the Greek word *diatithemai* meaning to dispose of by a will. Bibles have translated this word as give, assign, appoint, confer, grant, and bestow. They were now in His kingdom as His servants.

About 50 days later "The eleven disciples went to the mountain in Galilee where Jesus had told them to go. 17 When they saw him, they bowed down in worship, though some had doubts. 18 When Jesus came near, he spoke to them. He said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 So wherever you go, **make disciples** of all nations: **Baptize them** in **the name of** the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. 20 **Teach them to do everything I have commanded you**." "And remember that I am always with you until the end of time." (Matthew 28:16-20,)

Note: His command was directed to the eleven. But if they obeyed, which no doubt they did, then the command applies to all who are or will be made disciples, baptized, and taught to do everything the Lord commanded.

Make Disciples

The Hebrew term for what it means to be a disciple is *shimush chachamim*. In the context of the time, this means a servant of the rabbis. Serving is essentially the first stage of discipleship. You serve your rabbi as you learn how to follow the Word of God like he does. The object of discipleship was to follow, emulate, copy, duplicate, and replicate your rabbi, all while serving him.

<https://renew.org/rabbis-and-their-disciples-between-the-1st-century-b-c-and-the-2nd-century-a-d/>

Contrasting the Discipleship Methods of Jesus and Jewish Rabbis

On the surface, there appears to be no essential difference between the discipleship methods of Jesus and that of the rabbis of His time. For example, both had disciples attached to them. However, a closer examination shows there are fundamental differences between these two approaches. The following shows these contrasts.

1. The *talmidim* (rabbis' disciples) chose their teacher. Jesus chose His disciples (John 15:16; Luke 9:57-62). Mark 5:18-19 shows how Jesus even rejected some who wanted to follow Him! 2 The

talmidim chose a rabbi based on his knowledge of the Torah (the Old Testament Scriptures) because the law was the center of Judaism. A rabbi only had authority commensurate to his knowledge of the Torah; the authority belonged to the Torah, not any individual rabbi.

In contrast, Jesus expected His disciples to renounce everything, not for the sake of the Torah but for His sake alone (Matthew 10:38). In the New Covenant, Jesus is the center of the universe, not the Torah. Read

Colossians 1:17; John 5:39-40. (Of course, the Scriptures bear witness of Christ if read with an unveiled heart; read 2 Corinthians 3:15-18.)

3. In Judaism, being a disciple was only transitional—a means to an end—with the goal of becoming a rabbi. For the disciples of Jesus discipleship was not a step towards a promising career; the following of Jesus was in itself the fulfillment of destiny (Romans 8:29-30). There is no graduation or official degree that completes our discipleship process. It is an ongoing process that continues until our last breath in this life and beyond. (Philippians 3:7-14; 2 Peter 3:18)

4. Disciples of rabbis were only their students, nothing more. The disciples of Jesus were also His servants who committed themselves (entered into a covenant relationship) to obeying Him and suffering for His sake.
(Matthew 16:24-25; John 12:26)

5. The disciples of rabbis merely passed on their teachings. The disciples of Jesus were called to be with Him (Mark 3:14) and be His witnesses. (Acts 1:8)

6. The disciples of rabbis were attempting to bring back the former glory of the nation of Israel. The disciples of Jesus were (and still are) the vanguard of the coming kingdom and await the second bodily return of King Jesus.

7. For the disciples of rabbinic Judaism, following the letter of the 613 laws and rabbinic interpretations of the Torah was of prime importance. But for Jesus, rules and regulations were not as important as caring for the human soul. (Read Mark 2:1-12; 3:1-6)

8. The Jewish rabbis stressed separation from non-Jews and those that were unclean. Jesus taught that loving our neighbors is equal to loving God—irrespective of whether or not a person is a Jew or not. (Read Matthew 22:37-40; Luke 10:30-37) josephmattera.org/contrasting-the-discipleship-methods-of-jesus-and-jewish-rabbis/

Conclusion

The objective of a disciple of rabbis and Jesus may have been the same. However, the purpose of a rabbi disciple was to become a rabbi. Whereas the purpose of Jesus' disciples was to imitate Him and be a servant doing His will.

Baptize Them

THE LAVER (basin YLT) stood between the altar of burnt offering and the door of the Tabernacle. It was made of the brass and mirrors of the "serving women." No account is given of its size and shape. It must have been of considerable dimensions, as it was used for the priests to bathe in (wash feet and hands Exodus 30:21). For the priests to attempt to enter the Tabernacle without washing at the laver was to incur instant death. What does this laver represent? Paul stated in Ephesians 5:26-26 "Christ also loved the church, and gave Himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word. ... Baptism is in order to "salvation" or "remission of sins." See Mark 16:15-16 and Acts 2:28. We conclude then that the water of the laver before the door of the Tabernacle represents baptism (the door to Heaven). Shadow of Heavenly Things, or the First and Second Tabernacle. BY JOSEPH PITTMAN, Melbourne: Austral Publishing Company, 1893. Austral Publishing Company, 1893.)

The priests had to be ritually clean (*tahor*) in order to serve at the Tabernacle, and Israelites who had become ritually unclean (*tamay*) had to restore their situation with the passing of time and bathing their whole body in fresh, ritually clean (*tahor*) water, according to Leviticus 15. Later, when the temple had been built, it was necessary for everyone to be immersed in a *mikveh* to become ritually clean before entering the temple. There are many ancient *mikva'ot* (plural of *mikveh*) to be seen in Jerusalem, and it is clear to see the two sets of steps for each one – a set of steps going down to the *mikveh* in an impure (*tamay*) state on one side, and on the other side, steps where the pilgrim will emerge fresh and ritually clean (*tahor*). <https://www.oneforisrael.org/bible-based-teaching-fromisrael/was-baptism-originally-jewish/>

A *mikveh* (pool, cistern) must, according to classical regulations, contain enough water to cover the entire body of an average-sized person.

John did not use a *mikveh* but performed his baptisms in a river.

1. John performed the baptism, while people immersed themselves in a mikveh.
2. Repentance was an important aspect of John's baptism.
3. John baptized to prepare believers to receive Jesus and eventually the Holy Spirit.
4. John taught that the Messiah had arrived and salvation would come through Jesus.

This was very puzzling to many of the Jews who came to watch him. To the Scribes and Pharisees, it seemed like John was confusing their traditions and laws and leading people astray. People who were touched by the Spirit began to understand that truth and righteousness were being offered to them. They accepted the baptism of John and sought out Jesus. (<https://christ.org/history-rituals/did-the-jews-of-the-bible-baptize/>)

Conclusion

In the Covenant given by God through His servant Moses baptism was a physical cleaning to remove contaminants from feet and hands.

In the Covenant given by Jesus baptism is a spiritual cleansing to remove sin from the souls of men.

If entry into the Tabernacle, into the presence of God, with uncleansed feet and hands was physical death, then spiritual death awaited those who desired to enter Heaven, God's residing place, with souls not having been cleansed by baptism into Christ's blood.

A Mikveh



In Name of

In the New Testament, the Greek word *Onoma* is translated 'name' or "in the name of".

What comes to mind whenever we hear "in the name of?" Do we think something different if we hear "by the authority of?"

If one were to think about it, they would realize similar expressions are used today. For example, when my younger sister was married, our father was dead. So, when the minister asks, "who gives this woman in marriage." I replied, "For her mother, I do." I had no power, or authority in the case but I represented someone who did. Also, I sold my mother's house. I did not own it or have any standing with the state to sell it, except that I represented her by her power to execute a power of attorney. Both actions were "in the name of" or "by the authority of".

David said to the Philistine, "You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the LORD Almighty, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied. (1 Samuel 17:45-46)

The following New Testament examples may assist in understanding the meaning "in the name of" and the significance of "in Jesus' name." It could be *epí toó onómati* (on the basis of or by the authority of) as in Acts

2:38 or *eis to ónoma* (into the possession of) as in Matthew 28:18. [adapted from *The Distinctive Nature of the New Testament Church*, Edward C. Wharton]

"On the next day, their rulers and elders and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem; and Annas the high priest was there, and Caiaphas and John and Alexander, and all who were of high-priestly descent. When they had placed them (Peter and John) in the center, they began to inquire, "By what power, or in what name, have you done this?" Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers and elders of the people, if we are on trial today for a benefit done to a sick man, as to how this man has been made well, let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene." (Acts 4:5-12)

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of [in or by authority, power, responsibility] the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:19)

Note: Baptism is the calling on God's power and authority, not the repeating of specific words. It is the one being baptized making an appeal to God for cleansing or the removal of sin through the resurrected Christ. Through the act of immersion into the blood of Christ one is pleading with God, The Father, to cleanse them of their sins.

Such were some of you, but you were washed [cleansed of sins], but you were sanctified [declared holy], but you were justified [made righteous] in the name of [by Christ's authority] the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God. (1 Corinthians 6:11)

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord [Christ] will be saved." How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching (proclaiming) to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent? (Romans 10:13-15)

Note: What does calling on the name of the Lord mean? If it is the phrase 'in Jesus name' then Jesus' atoning sacrifice was in vain or totally useless. Surely there must be something more. Is the calling a request for His power or authority to do something? His perfect life and sacrifice of Himself (the Gospel) accepted by God as the only sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins is the power and only through Him (His name) can one ask God to forgive one's sins. "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes." (Romans 1:16)) In some situations, one may be guilty of replacing Christ's power and authority with some ritualistic phrase. In years past and perhaps even now people are condemned for not performing some action such as ending their prayer or immersing someone into Christ by parroting "in Jesus name, amen" even though their prayer was offered to God recognizing it is only possible through Christ to reach God's throne.

Acting in the Name of Another

Doing something in someone else's name has two implications.

1. You come by the authority of the other person. You are not coming in your own authority but because someone else authorized you to take these actions. When David fought Goliath, he came unto him "in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied" (1 Samuel 17:45). He was not coming in his own power or authority but in that which belonged to God alone. This gave David the authority and ability to fight against the giant Goliath...and win.
2. When you come in someone's name, you come in his stead. The person to whom you come is expected to react to you, not on the basis of who you are, but as if the person who sent you was there himself. They are to treat you as they would treat the one who authorized you to come. When

David sent servants to Nabal to ask for food, "they spake to Nabal according to all those words in the name of David" (1 Samuel.25:9).

Therefore, when Nabal insulted David's servants (who came in David's name), he insulted David just as directly as if he had spoken to him to his face.

Conclusion

Depending on the situation "in the name can mean either:

1. Being a representative of someone, e.g.; an ambassador.
2. Using the authority of another, e.g.; a police officer using government authority.

Today disciples cannot be eyewitnesses. However, the apostle John states John 1:1-2 "In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. Therefore, disciples using His Word as recorded in the Bible can proclaim His message of forgiveness through His atoning sacrifice and resurrection.

Hearers can choose to accept Christ's offer of redemption by baptism in His name or they can reject His offer.

Teachings and Commands of Jesus

When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he went back to Galilee. He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum. ... From then on, Jesus began to tell people, "Turn to God and change the way you think and act because the kingdom of is bear. ... Jesus went all over Galilee. He taught in the synagogues and spread the Good News of the kingdom. (Matthew 4:12; 17; 23)

"You have heard that it was said, 'Never commit adultery.' But I can guarantee that whoever looks with lust at a woman has already committed adultery in his heart. (Matthew 4:27-28)

Whosoever shall put away (Greek *apolúsee*) (GW has *divorce* but the Greek word for divorce is *apostasion*) his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorcement (*apolúseeon* - a document proving she was not unfaithful): But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away (*apolúoon* - without a certificate of divorcement) his wife, saving for the cause of fornication (*porneías* meaning illicit sexual intercourse), causeth her (puts her in a situation to survive) to commit adultery (*moicheúseis* – to have sexual relations with someone other than her husband to whom she is still married). (From IBKI Marriage and Divorce) (Matthew. 5 31-32, also see Matthew 19 and Mark 10)

"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I tell you not to oppose an evil person. If someone slaps you on your right cheek, turn your other cheek to him as well. If someone wants to sue you in order to take your shirt, let him have your coat too. If someone forces you to go one mile, go two miles with him. Give to everyone who asks you for something. Don't turn anyone away who wants to borrow something from you. (Matthew 5:38-42)

Note: You have heard that it was said, referring to traditions – oral teachings.

"'Love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.' But I tell you this: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. In this way, you show that you are children of your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:43-45)

"Be careful not to do your good works in public in order to attract attention. (Matthew 6:1)

"When you pray, don't be like hypocrites. They like to stand in synagogues and on street corners to pray so that everyone can see them. (Matthew 6:5)

"When you pray, don't ramble like heathens who think they'll be heard if they talk a lot. (Matthew 6:7-8)

"If you forgive the failures of others, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you don't forgive others, your Father will not forgive your failures. (Matthew 6:14-15)

"When you fast, stop looking sad like hypocrites. They put on sad faces to make it obvious that they're fasting.
(Matthew 6:16)

"Stop storing up treasures for yourselves on earth, where moths and rust destroy and thieves break in and steal. 20 Instead, store up treasures for yourselves in heaven, Your heart will be where your treasure is. (Matthew 6:19-21)

"You cannot serve God and wealth. (Matthew 6:24)

"So I tell you to stop worrying. (Matthew 6:25, Luke 12:22-34)

"But first, be concerned about his kingdom and what has his approval. Then all these things will be provided for you. (Matthew 6:33)

"Stop judging so that you will not be judged. (Matthew 7:1-2, Luke 6:37-42)

"Always do for other people everything you want them to do for you. (Matthew 7:12, Luke 6:31)

"Everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord!' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the person who does what my Father in heaven wants. (Matthew 7:21-22)

"Everyone who hears what I say but doesn't obey it will be like a foolish person. (Matthew 7:24, Luke 6:47-49) "Can you evil people say anything good? Your mouth says what comes from inside you. 35 Good people do the good things that are in them. But evil people do the evil things that are in them. 36 "I can guarantee that on judgment day people will have to give an account of every careless word they say. 37 By your words you will be declared innocent, or by your words you will be declared guilty."
(Matthew 12:34-37)

"These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.⁹ Their worship of me is pointless ...

It's what comes out of the mouth that makes a person unclean." (Matthew 15:8-11)

"Jesus told His disciples "He would be killed, but on the third day he would be brought back to life." ... Peter said "Heaven forbid, Lord! This must never happen to you!" ... Jesus said to Peter, "Get out of my way, Satan! You are tempting me to sin. You aren't thinking the way God thinks but the way humans think." Then He added, "Those who want to come with me must say no to the things they want, pick up their crosses, and follow me." (Matthew 16:21-25, Mark 8:34-9:1 and Luke 9:23-27)

"Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" ... I can guarantee this truth: Unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18:1-4, Mark 9:33-37 and Luke 9:46-48)

"If a believer (one in Christ) does something wrong, go, confront him when the two of you are alone. If he listens to you, you have won back that believer. (Matthew 18:15-16)

"Lord, how often do I have to forgive a believer who wrongs me? Seven times?"²² Jesus answered him, "I tell you, not just seven times, but seventy times seven (every time he seeks forgiveness). (Matthew 18:21-22)

"Teacher, what good deed should **I do to gain** eternal life?" ... "I have obeyed all these commandments. **What else do I need to do?**" ²¹ Jesus said to him, "If you want to be perfect, sell what you own. Give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then follow me!" When the young man heard this, he went away sad because he owned a lot of property. (Relying on wealth cannot earn eternal life) (Matthew 19:22-21, Mark 10:17-31 and Luke 18:18-30)

"An expert in Moses' Teachings, tested Jesus by asking, ³⁶ "Teacher, which commandment is the greatest in Moses' Teachings?" ³⁷ Jesus answered him, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is the greatest and most important commandment. ³⁹ The second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.' ⁴⁰ All of Moses' Teachings and the Prophets depend on these two commandments." (Love always causes one to do what pleases God in the Old and New Covenants) (Matthew 22:34-40, Mark 12:28-34)

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