

CARRYING THE TORCH

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Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father the Son and 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 28:19-20, NIV)

This is our Lord Jesus talking to His disciples over 2,000 years ago and some of His last words on earth were “*go and make disciples of all nations*” which means, ‘preach the gospel’.

- What is the gospel of Jesus and who are the disciples?
- How are we going to become disciples of Jesus Christ?
- How we are meant to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ?

The Gospel

The gospel is the good news. The good news is the message of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

And anyone who believes in God's Son has eternal life... (John 3:36, NLT)

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16, NLT)

Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. (John 14:6, NLT)

The Gospel of Jesus Christ is not talking about temporary things; it talks about eternal things, heavenly things. The Gospel teaches us how you can be saved from Gods judgment and the way for man to be free from the penalty of sin.

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23, NLT)

What does that mean? Everyone dies physically, but those who believe in Jesus Christ are promised a physical resurrection onto eternal life.

Disciples of Jesus Christ

Disciples of Jesus Christ are worshipers, servants, witnesses and followers. They operate by the power of the Holy Spirit.

And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit... Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd... (Acts 2:4, 14, NLT)

The disciples of Jesus Christ loved God more than anyone or anything else.

Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. (Mathew 10:37, NLT)

What Jesus is trying to tell us is, following Him means total submission.

And he said to all, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. (Luke 9:23, ESV)

In Jesus' day the cross wasn't just a symbol of pain and suffering, it was mainly a symbol of death. What Jesus was telling them is that they needed to put to death their own plans and desires and then turn their life over to Him and do His will every day.

Picking up the cross means denying yourself, and 'follow me' means you will have eternal life when you follow Jesus.

Jesus told him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through me. (John 14:6, NLT)

So faith comes from hearing, that is, hearing the Good News about Christ. (Romans 10:17, NLT)

Everything in the Scriptures is God's Word. All of it is useful for teaching and helping people and for correcting them and showing them how to live. (2 Timothy 3:16, NLT)

The disciples knew the word of God Jesus was with them for three years and taught them the word.

How to be Disciples for Christ

A disciple or a Christian is called first by God, and he responds by having faith in Jesus. He accepts Jesus into his life as his Lord and savior and walks in obedience to God's word.

He who gave you the grace to repent and believe will give you the strength to continue to repent and believe. That is the power of the Holy Spirit.

But you will receive the power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and you will be my witnesses... (Acts 1:8, NIV)

Jesus says you **will** receive the power; through the power of the Holy Spirit believers are **saved, filled, sealed and sanctified**. The Holy Spirit reveals God's thoughts, teaches and guides believers into all truth including knowledge on what is to come. The Holy Spirit also helps Christians in their weakness and intercedes for them.

Once we become a disciple and have received the Holy Spirit, He begins to work in us, cleansing us, to transform us into the image of Christ and the image of Christ is a new creation.

This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun! (2 Corinthians 5:17, NLT)

How Do We Spread The Gospel?

Those who live a Godly life spread the Gospel, and those who let their light shine before others.

But in your hearts honour Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defence to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,
(1 Peter 3:15, NLT)

You have to become less and less like the world, and more and more like Jesus. If you live like the world, dress like the world and act like the world you are not living a Godly life. The bible says those who love the world do not have the love of the father. Your desire must be to grow in Christ, be holy in your life and have Christ working in you, so you can bear fruit in your life.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness.
(Galatians 5:22, NLT)

Through love we can spread gospel of Jesus Christ. God does not love us because we deserve to be loved. We don't deserve His love, instead we deserve His wrath but God loves us because He himself is love. God did not save us because we deserve to be saved; He saved us because He is our savior.

Another way to share the gospel of Jesus Christ is to invite people to church. We don't invite them to fill our church, but to fill the Kingdom of God. We have so many opportunities to spread the Word of God through The Pulse, Ignite, Men's Excel, Shine and New Horizons.

When you invite people to church you are fulfilling the Word of God because the church is the body of Christ. We have a discipleship course in our Church, and it teaches and guides us to be part of the body of Christ.

Jesus is the light of the world. Whoever follows him will not walk in darkness, but will have eternal life. The Bible says '*you are the light of the world, a city set on a hill cannot be hidden.*' When we live our lives reflecting the light, it allows others to see His love. We are called to share the gospel, but more importantly through how we live. It's not merely what the people do, but why they do it and how they do it.

In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify our father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16, NIV)