

## International Conversation Café

### Bible Discussion: What It Means to Follow Jesus

1. **To be a Christian means you believe certain things about Jesus Christ.** Peter, one of Jesus's followers summarized the life of Jesus Christ to non-Jewish people.

You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached— how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a cross, but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. Acts 10: 36-41

*Put in your own words the life of Jesus Christ.*

Christians believe that there was a purpose in the death and resurrection of Jesus. The following sentence summarizes that significance. "He was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification" (Romans 4:25).

*In your own words, tell what this might mean.*

2. **To be a Christian means that you obey what Jesus taught. Peter said,**

He (Jesus) commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. Acts 10:42

*What did Jesus tell his followers to do?*

*What does this Scripture say that Jesus Christ will do one day?*

*What are your questions and thoughts?*

3. **To be a Christian means that one has a loving relationship with God through forgiveness from Jesus Christ.**

All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name" (Acts 10:43).

*The word believe means to have faith, to trust, or to have confidence in. What are some examples of things you have confidence in?*

Most relationships begin as we learn to trust the other person. A relationship with God begins the same way. We do not try to impress Him. Instead we thank him for his love and trust him to forgive us.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—<sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast. Ephesians 2:8-9

*Summarize these thoughts in your own words.*

**4. To be a Christian means we enjoy the gifts he gives.**

- a. God's Fatherly love and tenderness. "Think about how much the Father loves us. He loves us so much that he lets us be called his children, as we truly are" (1 John 3:1).
- b. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27).
- c. The presence of Jesus with us, as he said, "I will never leave you or forsake you" (Hebrews 13:5).
- d. The forgiveness of sins and eternal life. "Whoever believes in Jesus, will never perish (be ruined) but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

*Which of these gifts are most attractive to you?*

**5. To be a Christian means we follow what Jesus taught.** Consider the following.

"Love the Lord your God with all of your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:36-38).

To love God means that we make him the most important thing in our lives, more important than wealth, fame, power, or relationships.

To love our neighbor as our self means that those people near us deserve our attention, care, and help.

*Which of these teachings do you think is the most difficult to follow?*

*How can a person do these things? Are they too difficult?*

**6. To be a Christian does not mean we will become wealthy or that our life will be easy.**

God promises to meet our needs but never promises us wealth or power or fame.

In fact, following Jesus may be difficult.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup> For whoever wants to save their life<sup>[a]</sup> will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it" (Matthew 16:24-25).

"Taking up their cross" means that sometimes people will reject you because you are a Christian. They could make life difficult for you.

*Do you think this could be true? Give an example*

*Why would anyone want to follow Jesus if their life could become difficult in some ways?*