

When Jesus “Called” the Disciples – Did the Disciples Become “Christians”?

Why couldn't the disciples understand what Jesus was telling them?

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The Israelites of the Old Testament were **Christians** because they were looking forward to Christ the Messiah. Isaiah, Zachariah, Micah and David ALL predicted the Coming of the Messiah.

Where does the Old Testament prophesy the coming of Christ?

Many Old Testament scriptures refer to the coming Messiah and have been specifically fulfilled in Jesus. The exact number varies based on how one determines what constitutes a reference, with some scholars counting more than 400. A few of the more obvious predictions are shared here.

Isaiah 7:14 refers to a child who will be born of a virgin and will be called Immanuel, a name meaning "God with us." The verse reads, "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." Isaiah 9:6 likewise predicts: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Micah 5:2 predicted the exact location of the birth of Jesus: "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days." There were two towns called Bethlehem during this time. The foretelling of Bethlehem Ephrathah in Judah is highly significant.

Zechariah 9:9 specifically speaks of the Messiah riding into Jerusalem on a young donkey and being hailed as a king. This took place on what we call Palm Sunday, when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey the Sunday before His crucifixion (John 12:14-15).

There is a clear prophecy of the clothing of Jesus being given away by casting lots, an ancient game of chance. Psalms 22:16-18 shares, "For dogs encompass

me; a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my hands and feet—I can count all my bones—they stare and gloat over me; they divide my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots." Matthew 27:35 notes, "And when they had crucified him, they divided his garments among them by casting lots."

Isaiah 53 speaks of the suffering servant. Specifically, the verses talk of someone who would be "despised and rejected by men [...] he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; like a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and like a sheep that before its shearers is silent, so he opened not his mouth" (Isaiah 53:3-7). We see the truth of these verses most clearly in the work of the Cross.

Psalm 41:9 predicted, "Even my close friend in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted his heel against me." Jesus would later be betrayed by Judas Iscariot in this way: "After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me.' The disciples looked at one another, uncertain of whom he spoke. One of his disciples, whom Jesus loved, was reclining at table at Jesus' side, so Simon Peter motioned to him to ask Jesus of whom he was speaking. So that disciple, leaning back against Jesus, said to him, 'Lord, who is it?' Jesus answered, 'It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.' So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, 'What you are going to do, do quickly.'" (John 13:21-27).

Fulfilling one or two of the hundreds of predictions in the Old Testament could be dismissed as insignificant, but Jesus fulfilled each of the numerous predictions exactly. Jesus and only Jesus is the prophesied Messiah who ultimately proved Himself as the Christ by His resurrection from the dead.

Jesus, the Messiah, Appeared and Called His Disciples

First, Peter and his Brother Andrew were Called

“And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

“And he saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.

“And they straightway left their nets, and followed Him.” Matt 4:18-20

Were they “Christians”?

Of course. They would be called “Christians” because they were followers of Christ.

Then James and His brother (the Sons of Zebedee) were Called

“And going on from thence, He saw two other brethren, James, the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them.

“And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed Him.”
Matt 4:21,22

Were they “Christians”?

Of course. They would be called “Christians” because they were followers of Christ.

Eventually Jesus Called twelve disciples and they all followed Him without hesitation. Naturally, all of these men would be called “Christians” because they were followers of Christ.

From where did the term “Israelite” come?

Abraham and his wife, Sarah, were Babylonians who, at God’s direction moved from Babylon to Canaan. Their son Isaac, and his wife Rebecca, had twin boys: Jacob and Esau. Esau was the first born, and thus was to receive the inheritance (birthright) from their father. However, Jacob, at his mother’s instigation, deceived both his father, Isaac, and his brother Esau, into giving the inheritance to him - Jacob. The name Jacob means “supplanter” – or “one who overthrows another,” as Jacob **stole** the birthright from his brother – and his father. Deep-seated family hostilities characterized Jacob’s life. He was a determined man; some would consider him to be ruthless. He was a con artist, a liar, and a manipulator. In fact, the name *Jacob* not only means “deceiver,” but more literally it means “grabber.”

Obviously, Esau was very angry when he found out, and Jacob had to flee to Haran, to live with his Uncle Laban, the brother of his mother, Rebecca. The city of Haran was in what is now Turkey, and is almost 2,000 miles from Beersheba

where Jacob and Esau lived with their parents, Isaac and Rebecca. Jacob made the trip on foot – no easy task!

Jacob continued his life of deception in Haran, but reaped what he had sown when Laban deceived Jacob into marrying Leah, the older sister of Rachel – the love of Jacob’s life. He had worked 7 years for Rachel’s hand in marriage, but instead was tricked into marrying Leah. After another 7 years of work, he married Rachel. But now he had two wives, not uncommon in that era, but Jacob’s two wives would be a constant source of trouble, not only between the two wives, but between their respective children.

Jacob lived in Haran for 20 years, until he had “reaped what he had sown” and given up on his deceptive, cheating ways. Then God told Jacob to return to Canaan and make peace with his brother. Naturally, Jacob was afraid because Esau had made many threats to family members that he would kill Jacob. But he obeyed God’s voice.

On Jacob’s way back to Canaan, at the river Jabbok, now called the Zarqa River in Jordan, near the border of present-day Palestine. One night, Jacob wrestled with an angel, presumably God, who maimed Jacob by dislocating his hip, as a permanent reminder of Jacob’s previous life of deception.

After Jacob’s heart was changed, and he prevailed with the “angel,” God changed his name from Jacob - “deceiver” - to Israel, meaning “Prince of God.”

Notice that is Jacob’s NAME that was changed – NOT his genes. Jacob did NOT become a “Jew.” Jacob was the grandson of two Babylonians (Abraham and Sarah) who had emigrated to Canaan. Abraham was not a Jew – he was a Babylonian.

After Jacob’s heart was changed, and he obeyed God, his name was changed to “Prince of God” – Israel, because he now worshiped the one true God. All those who were the offspring of Jacob – now Israel – were term Israelites, because they, too, worship the one true God!

The name Israelite has nothing to do with ethnicity: it has to do with worship. The Israelites worship the true God. The pagan nations worshiped many false gods. The word nations means, “those who know not God.” Frequently the word nations is mistranslated in the Bible as “gentiles” even though the word “gentile” is found NOWHERE in the original Scriptures. The word “Gentiles, has been written in erroneously by the translators, as has the word “Jew” – which also appears NOWHERE in the original manuscripts, in a deliberate attempt to try to make the words relate to ethnicity rather than to a from of worship.

The Judeans (incorrectly translated as “Jew”) worshiped the God whose presence was in the temple in Jerusalem in Judea, and the nations (incorrectly translated as “Gentiles), worship many false pagan gods.

Interestingly, the “Jews” of today consider Jacob to have been a “Jew” – which he was NOT. But, even though, Jacob and Esau were twins, the Jews of today do NOT consider Esau to have been a “Jew.” They consider Esau to have been a “Gentile.” And many supposedly “Christian” churches agree. **That shows you the abominable “scholarship” of today’s “Christians.”**

It is this erroneous translation of these two words in the Bible that is the source of ALL WARS in the last 200 years, and is the source of the abject apostasy in the “Christian” church today, and will be the source of massive persecution of True Christians coming soon.

But Israelites were “Christians” (followers of Christ) in name only

The Israelites had become so evil during the approximately 1400 years before Christ, that when Jesus was born, they didn’t even recognize Him as their Messiah – because He wasn’t at all like them! He said “Love your enemies.” The Israelites wanted to Destroy their enemies. Jesus said, “Forgive 70 times 7,” whereas the Israelites wanted deadly revenge against those who caused them trouble.

Jesus Calls His Disciples

So, at the time Jesus called His disciples, there were many, especially the Pharisees and Sadducees who had set up their OWN counterfeit “religion” in the synagogues – apart from the TRUE religion of God that occurred in the Temple – where God’s presence resided. There were a few who recognized Jesus as the Messiah, and those were the ones He called to, “Follow Me.”

But the Israelites (Christians) in general, and the Disciples, in particular, had No Idea what Jesus was talking about

Over and over again, the Israelites, and the disciples, had to ask Jesus what He meant. And over and over again, He tried to explain it to them. But they didn’t understand. **They were “Christians” in name only. They did NOT understand Christ!**

Here are just a few examples:

- 1) When the disciples came on Jesus talking to a Samaritan woman at the well, they were shocked because Israelites usually had nothing to do with

Samaritans, who were considered beneath them. (Samaritans were the product of intermarriage between Israelites and pagans.)

“The disciples said to Him, “Master, eat.”

“But He said unto them, “I have food to eat that you know not of.”

“Therefore said the disciples one to another, Has any man brought Him something to eat?”

“Jesus said unto them, “My food is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.” John 4:27-34

2) After Jesus miraculously fed thousands of people, He and the disciples got into a boat,

“Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the ship with them more than one loaf.

“And He charged them, “saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and of the leaven of Herod.

“And they reasoned among themselves, saying, ‘It is because we have no bread.’

“And when Jesus knew it, He said unto them, Why do you reason such, saying “because you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive, neither understand? Is your heart still hardened?

“You have eyes, but you see not. You have ears, but you hear not, and you do not remember.

“When I broke the five loaves among five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you collect? They said unto Him, **Twelve.**

“And when the seven loaves were fed to the four thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you collect? And they said, **Seven.**

And He said unto them, “How is it that you do not understand?

Jesus was not only reminding the disciples that He can “make bread” whenever He chooses, but He was also chiding them for not understanding that “the more

of 'man' that is in the deal, the less God will supply. In other words, when "man" supplied only 5 loaves of bread and 2 fishes for 15,000 people (5,000 plus women and children), there were TWELVE baskets left over.

But when "man" supplied MORE food - 7 loaves of bread and a few fishes (at least 3 or more) - for LESS of a crowd – 4,000 plus women and children (approximately 12,000 people) there were only SEVEN baskets left over.

Jesus was also telling them spiritually to "Beware of the leaven (yeast – which represents fermentation = sin) – false doctrines – of the Pharisees." He was reminding His disciples that Jesus is the Bread of Life – the source of all spiritual nutrition for all mankind.

- 3) In John 6:32-35, Jesus declared Himself the "Bread of Life." He showed that in the wilderness they received PHYSICAL bread from heaven (manna) to sustain PHYSICAL life, but that now, Jesus was their SPIRITUAL bread from heaven, to sustain them SPIRITUALLY.

But they obviously did NOT "get it."

Just a short time later, in verses 53-55, Jesus was still talking about His being their SPIRITUAL "nutrition" when He said:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, ye have no life in you.

"Whosoever eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, has *eonian* life (mistranslated "eternal") and I will raise Him up at the last day.

"For My flesh is food indeed, and My blood is drink indeed." John 6:53-55

Jesus was trying to tell them that HE is the "Word" of God, and that they must DEVOUR the "Word" in order to get to know Him. But they could not understand spiritual things. They were only able to understand sense knowledge: what they could understand with their senses: sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell. They had NO "spiritual" understanding – just like most "Christians" today.

"The natural man (the soulish man – one who can only understand with his five senses) receiveth not (cannot understand) the things of the spirit of God (spiritual things): for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because spiritual things are only spiritually discerned (understood)." 1 Cor 2:14

Finally, Jesus said:

“I Have Many Things to Tell You, but You Cannot Bear Them Now!”

John 16:12

- 4) After the Last Supper, when they all went out to the Mount of Olives, Jesus said:

“All of you shall be offended because of Me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.

But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.

“Peter answered and said unto Him, Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet I will never be offended.

“Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny Me thrice.”

“Peter said unto Him, Though I should die with Thee, yet I will not deny Thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.” Matt `6:31-35

But, of course, in spite of all Peter’s bravado, Peter DID deny Jesus three times that night.

After Jesus was resurrected and appeared to His disciples, He said,

“And behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you: **but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.**”
Luke 24:49

Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as My Father hath sent Me, even so I send you. And when He had said this, He **BREATHED** on them, and said unto them, “Receive ye God’s **breath** of Holiness.” (Not, receive ye the Holy Ghost.) John 20:21,22

So, WHEN did the disciples begin to understand what Jesus was saying?

In the first chapter of the book of Acts, Luke tells us:

“Jesus commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard from

Me. For John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with God's breath of holiness not many days hence.

“When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, Lord, will you this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?”

Obviously, the disciples were still thinking of a physical “kingdom” of Israel. They still could not understand spiritual things.

“And He said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power.

“But ye shall receive the power after God's breath of holiness is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. Acts 1:4-8

It was at Pentecost that the disciples finally received this “Power from on high”

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

“And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind (wind = same word as breath), and it filled all the house where they were sitting...

“And they were all filled with God's breath of holiness, and began to speak with other (known) **languages** that God's breath of holiness gave them to speak clearly.” (literal translation) Acts 2:1-4

In Acts 2:7-11 we learn that the disciples were speaking in known languages of the day, because “every man heard in our own language, wherein we were born.” The disciples were speaking the languages of the Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt and in Libya, and in Rome, and the language of the Cretes and Arabians:

“We do hear them speak in **our languages**, the wonderful works of God.” Acts 2:11

After Pentecost!

It was only after Pentecost, AFTER the disciples had received God's “Breath of holiness” – the power from on high – AFTER the disciples had been through severe sorrow with the crucifixion of Christ, AFTER the disciples hearts had been

changed by God's Breath of holiness imbued in them, that they were able to understand the things that Christ had told them.

Only AFTER Pentecost did Peter have the courage to stand for Christ against the Pharisees. And even when they put Peter in prison for healing the sick in the Name of Jesus Christ, when released by the angel, Peter went right back on the street to preach about Jesus.

Peter and the other Disciples were Changed men AFTER Pentecost!

The disciples were certainly called "Christians" – followers of Christ – BEFORE Pentecost. But it was only AFTER Pentecost, when they had received God's "breath of holiness" –which is the ability to understand Spiritual things, and the ability to stand for the Lord against persecution, were they changed men.

There are "Christians" – and then there are CHRISTIANS!

The churches today are filled with those who call themselves Christians. They are "followers" of Christ - - - from a distance. Of them, Jesus says,

"This people draweth nigh unto Me with their mouth, and honoreth Me with their lips; but their heart is far from Me." Matt 15:8

They want the affirmation of a large group around them – a "church" – with those who believe as they do. They want a pastor to tell them what to read, what to believe, and how to live. They want to be surrounded by church members who give them moral support, and who praise them for "working for God."

They are afraid to go directly to God for their teaching. They prefer a human teacher over being taught directly by God.

They are "Wilderness" Christians!

The Exodus

The Israelites left Egypt on the night of the Passover. According to the Bible it took 49 days for the Israelites to get to Mt. Sinai.

It was on the 50th day that God gave them the Ten Commandments. It was the Day of Pentecost - - - when God wanted to instill in the Israelites His "Breath of holiness" so He could govern each of their lives directly.

But they REFUSED. They preferred to be taught by a man – Moses – rather than for God to teach them directly.

“And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people and sanctify them today and tomorrow, and let them wash their clothes.

“And be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.: Ex 19:10,11

In Exodus, Chapter 20, God speaks directly to the Israelites, and gives them the Ten Commandments. But the Israelites were terrified of God.

“And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking, and when the people saw it, they moved, and stood afar off.

“And they said unto Moses, You speak with us, and we will hear: but do not let God speak with us, lest we die.” Ex 20:18,19

Right there is the Beginning of the “Organized Church” – a desire to be taught by “man” rather than to be taught by God – a desire that continues in the Organized churches to this very day!!

“And Moses said unto the people, “Fear not: for God has come to test you, and that His fear (reverence) may be before your faces, that ye sin not.” Ex 20:20

It was at this time that God wanted to put His character and disposition – His Breath of Holiness – into the Israelites. But they Refused!

The Exodus occurred in approximately 1446 B.C. Pentecost occurred in approximately 33 or 34 A.D.

God had to wait an additional almost 1500 years after the Exodus, before He had a group of followers who were willing to receive God’s Breath of Holiness. And that could only occur AFTER they had literally **Seen** Jesus!

“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall SEE God.” Matt 5:8

“Since Shavuot occurs **49 days** after the first day of Passover (i.e., the 50th day, including Passover itself), Hellenistic Jews (Judeans) gave it the name Pentecost (πεντηκοστή, "fiftieth day"). According to Jewish tradition, Pentecost commemorates God's giving of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai, **49 days** after the Exodus.^{nm}[Pentecost - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pentecost)<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pentecost>Wikipedia

The Civil Laws

When the Israelites at Mt. Sinai refused to allow God to instill in them His “breath of Holiness” in order to change their hearts so they could actually KEEP the Ten Commandments, God had to give them a series of harsh civil laws so they wouldn’t become a hopeless, chaotic multitude.

He gave them laws about murder, theft, marriage, laws about property, laws about personal actions, laws about lying and stealing, and laws about the Sabbath. None of these would have been necessary if the Israelites had been willing to be taught directly by God, and allowed Him to change their hearts.

Today’s Organized Churches

It is the same situation with the members of today’s Organized churches. They want to be taught by “man” rather than by God, and by their persistence in this false notion, they have denied themselves the ability to 1) understand the truth of God’s Word, and 2) have refused to allow God to change their hearts.

Many Christian workers try to serve Christ out of a sense of duty, or because they sense a need as a result of their own discernment. The reason for this is actually the **absence** of the resurrection life of Jesus – *eonian* life (always mistranslated “eternal life”) – the life of Christ that Jesus Himself puts in us.

Most Christians make their own common sense decisions and then ask God to bless them. He cannot bless them because they are not HIS decisions. When Christians do something simply out of a sense of duty, they are trying to live up to a standard that competes with Jesus Christ. Then they become prideful and arrogant.

They continue to be in the Wilderness of Rebellion!

When the Ten Commandments hang on the wall – the Old Covenant - the members of the churches of today have **no** ability to keep them.

“For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.

“For finding fault with them, He saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a NEW Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah (True Christians),

“Not according to the Covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued NOT in My covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord.

“For THIS is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel (True Christians) after those days, saith the Lord: **I will put My laws into their mind, and write them on their hearts** (they will have *eonian* life – Christ living in us - so they WILL be able to keep them), and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people.

“And they shall NOT teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord, **for ALL shall know Me**, from the least to the greatest.” Hebrews 8:7-11

Until the members of the Organized Churches are willing to study on their own – being taught directly by God – rather than being taught by a pastor and an organized church hierarchy, they will be unable to discern the Truth of God’s Word! They will remain as the weak, docile, spiritually blind, uncourageous “Christians” of Christ’s time were - - - - BEFORE they were “imbued with power from on High!”

God can’t teach you directly unless He gets you Alone with Him. He must have your undivided attention.

That’s why the “Churches” CANNOT understand the TRUTH of God’s Word – including Universal Restoration!