

DISCIPLE

We cannot skim over the term disciple too quickly in this portion of the Gospel of Mark. The term *disciple* implies several important ideas in the Bible. The title speaks of repentance and faith for salvation, a dedication to Christian living and identification with the Person of Jesus Christ.

The actual English word is derived from the Latin word *discipulus*. In the first century this word distinguished the pupil of the learner. The word was often used in the philosophical world to speak of a philosopher's understudy. The equivalent of the term in the New Testament Greek carries the same idea of a student or pupil.

We see the word used extensively in all four Gospels. Moses' disciples (John 9:28) and the followers of John the Baptist (Mark 2:18) are classic examples. It is also used to denote the disciples of the Pharisees (Matthew 22:16). Of course, the New Testament usage is primarily concerned with the disciples of Jesus Christ, His handpicked twelve who would be our Lord's closest followers. But all who encountered Jesus and became his committed followers and pupils were known as disciples.

I believe that the entire theme of being a disciple can be summarized by saying that a disciples was:

- A person who became a believer, trusting in Christ for their salvation (Acts 11:26).
- One who made the commitment to become a learner of Christ and sit at the feet of their Master for instruction and guidance.
- A believer who is committed to the possibility of suffering and living a sacrificial lifestyle for the sake of Jesus Christ (Luke 14:26-27, 33), and...
- A person who fulfills the ultimate obligation of "making disciples" of others and thus fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).