

**The Elephant in the Church:
Christian or Disciple?
John 15:8-16**

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This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.
John 15:8 (New International Version)

“Disciple” = someone who is actively learning, as Christ’s apprentice, to live life under God’s rule and who is helping others to do the same

Being Christ’s disciple means **LEARNING TO CHOOSE OBEDIENCE AS YOUR CONTINUED RESPONSE TO HIS LOVE.**

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. John 15:9-11 (NIV)

Action Step: Decide. “I am now becoming an apprentice of Jesus; I now intend to live under God’s rule, to please Him.”

Discipleship means **LEARNING OBEDIENCE EVEN WHEN THAT OBEDIENCE IS ESPECIALLY TESTED BY THE COMMAND TO LOVE OTHERS.**

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. John 15:12-13 (NIV)

Action Step: Pray. “Lord, use the closest relationships in my life to teach me to obey Your command to love.”

Discipleship means **LISTENING TO JESUS’ WILL THROUGH HIS TEACHINGS AND INVITING HIM TO SHAPE MY BELIEFS AND ACTIONS.**

You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. John 15:14-15 (English Standard Version)

“Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. ²⁵The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock. ²⁶But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash.” Matthew 7:24-27 (NIV)

Action Step: Decide. “I will learn God’s Word—especially Jesus’ teaching—and let it shape both my beliefs and my actions.”