

Believer?  
Disciple?  
Christian?

Acts 11:1-26 (NIV)



# Acts 11:1-5 (NIV)

## Peter Explains His Actions

**1** The apostles and the **believers** throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.

**2** So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the **circumcised believers** criticized him

**3** and said, “You went into the house of uncircumcised men and ate with them.”

**4** Starting from the beginning, Peter told them the whole story:

**5** “I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. I saw something like a large sheet being let down from heaven by its four corners, and it came down to where I was.



## Acts 11:6-10 (NIV)

6 I looked into it and saw four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, reptiles and birds.

7 Then I heard a voice telling me, 'Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.'

8 "I replied, 'Surely not, Lord! Nothing impure or unclean has ever entered my mouth.'

9 "The voice spoke from heaven a second time, 'Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.'

10 This happened three times, and then it was all pulled up to heaven again.



## Acts 11:11-15 (NIV)

**11** “Right then three men who had been sent to me from Caesarea stopped at the house where I was staying.

**12** The Spirit told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went with me, and we entered the man’s house.

**13** He told us how he had seen an angel appear in his house and say, ‘Send to Joppa for Simon who is called Peter.

**14** He will bring you a message through which you and all your household will be saved.’

**15** “As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning.



## Acts 11:16-18 (NIV)

<sup>16</sup> Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'

<sup>17</sup> So if God gave them the same gift he gave us who **believed in the Lord Jesus Christ,** who was I to think that I could stand in God's way?"

<sup>18</sup> When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, "So then, even to Gentiles God has granted **repentance that leads to life.**"



## Acts 11:19-21 (NIV)

**19** Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews.

**20** Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus.

**21** The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.



# Who is a believer In context of Acts 11?

1) Believers are those who have received the Word – vs 1

1 The apostles and the **believers** throughout Judea heard that the Gentiles also had received the word of God.

2) Believers are those who could be...  
critical in their ways;  
ritualistic;  
hold tightly to doctrines;  
define their lives by “dos” and “don’ts” and  
“possibly lack understanding about the dealings of the Holy spirit” – vs 2

2 So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the **circumcised believers** criticized him.





## Who is a believer In context of Acts 11?

3) Believers are those who have put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ and have the gift of the Holy Spirit – vs 15-17

15 “As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning.

16 Then I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’

17 So if God gave them the same gift he gave us who **believed in the Lord Jesus Christ**, who was I to think that I could stand in God’s way?”





## Who is a believer In context of Acts 11?

4) Believers are those who have received “Zoe” (the life of God) through repentance – vs 18

18 When they heard this, they had no further objections and praised God, saying, “So then, even to Gentiles God has granted repentance that leads to life.”



## Who is a believer In context of Acts 11?

5) Believers are those who have turned away from their old ways and are now focused on the Lord – vs 21

<sup>21</sup> The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.





# Acts 11:19-22 (NIV)

## The Church in Antioch

**19** Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews.

**20** Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus.

**21** The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

**22** News of this reached the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.



## Acts 11:23–26 (NIV)

**23** When he arrived and saw what the grace of God had done, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.

**24** He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord

**25** Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul,

**26** and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The **disciples** were called **Christians** first at Antioch.





# Acts 11:26

## Acts 11:26 (The Voice)

**26** He found Saul and brought him back to Antioch. The two of them spent an entire year there, meeting with the church and teaching huge numbers of people. It was there, in Antioch, where the term “Christian” was first used to identify disciples of Jesus.

## Acts 11:26 (J.B. Phillips New Testament)

**26** Then for a whole year they met together with the Church and taught a large crowd. It was in Antioch that the disciples were first given the name of “Christians”.



# Fair Analysis

- You should not refer to yourself as a Christian if you are not being disciplined or have not been disciplined.

- The name “Christian” was given to the disciple.

Therefore, a follower of Christ should be quick to identify themselves as disciple. Let the on lookers determine for themselves if indeed you are a Christian.

- Jesus called His followers disciples not “Christians” throughout His walk on earth.

- The word “disciple” or “disciples” are mentioned in the bible at least 294 times.





# Fair Analysis

- The word “Christian occurs only 3 times in scripture”

## Acts 11:26 (NIV)

<sup>26</sup> and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

## Acts 26:28 (NIV)

<sup>28</sup> Then Agrippa said to Paul, “Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?”

## 1 Peter 4:16 (NIV)

<sup>16</sup> However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.





# What is the Difference?

Acts 11:19-26

Acts 11:21 (NIV)

The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

Acts 11:26b (NIV)


... So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people.

Acts 11:26c (NIV)

The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.







# Who is a Disciple?

- The root word for “disciple” is “discipline.”
- A disciple (in context of the kingdom) is one who engages in learning until he or she becomes like Christ.
- A disciple (in context of the kingdom) is a personal follower of Jesus Christ.
- A disciple is one who disciplines himself or herself to live according to the instructions of Jesus Christ.





# WHO ARE YOU?

**BELIEVER?**

**CHRISTIAN?**

**DISCIPLE?**



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