

DAILY READING

WEEK 10 THE TRUTH CONCERNING THE BELIEVERS

WEEK 10 — DAY 3

Scripture Reading

Matt. 16:24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, If anyone wants to come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.

Acts 5:14 And believers were all the more being added to the Lord...

Believers—Their Designations

In this [portion] we shall begin to cover the four designations of the believers given in the New Testament: disciples, believers, saints, and Christians.

Disciples

First, the believers are designated as disciples. The term “disciples” is often used in the Gospels and in Acts, but it is not used at all in the Epistles....All these verses [Matt. 5:1; 28:16; Acts 6:1; 21:16] indicate that one designation of the believers is that of disciples.

Disciples are those who follow Christ. In His ministry the Lord Jesus told people to repent, for the kingdom of God has drawn near (Mark 1:15; Matt. 4:17). When some repented, or had an inclination to go with Him, He said to them, “Follow Me” (Matt. 4:19; 9:9; 19:21; Luke 9:59).¹³⁵ To follow the Lord is to love Him above all things (Matt. 10:37-38).

Disciples are also those who learn of Christ. In Matthew 11:29 the Lord Jesus says, “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me.” Discipline is required for both following Christ and learning from Him....We especially need to be disciplined in order to learn from Christ.

Believers

Many verses in the New Testament speak of the believers. Acts 5:14 says, “Believers were all the more being added to the Lord.”...In 1 Timothy 4:12 [Paul] charges Timothy to “be a pattern to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.”

In 2 Corinthians 6:14 Paul exhorts the Corinthian believers not to “become dissimilarly yoked with unbelievers.” *Dissimilarly* means *diversely*, implying a difference in kind. This refers to Deuteronomy 22:10, which forbids the yoking together of two dissimilar animals. Believers and unbelievers are diverse peoples. Because of their divine nature and holy standing, the believers should not be yoked together with the unbelievers. This should be applied to all intimate relationships between believers and unbelievers, not only to marriage and business.

The apostle used five illustrations to depict the difference between believers and unbelievers [2 Cor. 6:14-16]: (1) no partnership, no sharing together, between righteousness and

lawlessness; (2) no fellowship, no communion, between light and darkness; (3) no concord, no harmony, between Christ and Belial; (4) no part, no portion, held by a believer with an unbeliever; and (5) no agreement, no consent, between the temple of God and idols. These illustrations also unveil the fact that the believers are righteousness, light, Christ, and the temple of God, and the unbelievers are lawlessness, darkness, Belial (Satan, the devil), and idols.

The designation “believers,”...of course, indicates the matter of believing. Anyone who does not have faith in Christ, who does not believe in Christ, is certainly not a believer. To believe, as taught in the Bible, first means to receive. John 1:12 says, “As many as received Him [the Lord Jesus],...those who believe into His name.”...With our heart we must receive Christ into us to be our Savior. This is the genuine believing.

To believe is not only to receive but also to “believe into” (John 1:12; 3:15-16, 36). To receive is to receive Christ into us and to allow Him to be mingled with us. On the other hand, to “believe into” is to enter into Christ and be joined to Him. By believing into Christ as the Son of God we have an organic union with Him. When we believe in Him, we believe into Him and thereby become one spirit with Him (1 Cor. 6:17).