

WHO ARE THE REAL FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST?

Note to the speaker:

Use Jesus' teachings and example to prove that Jehovah's Witnesses are Christ's true followers. Illustrate the main points with examples suitable to the cultural and religious background of new ones

WHY WE NEED TO IDENTIFY THE REAL FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST (4 min.)

Worldwide, more than two billion people profess to follow Christ (*w12 3/1 3*)

They belong to thousands of denominations that vary widely in beliefs, moral standards, and forms of worship

Jesus said that his genuine disciples would be the ones *doing* his Father's will [**Read Matthew 7:21-23**]

Many others who call him Lord would not merit his approval

Such have been deceived by a counterfeit form of Christianity that has no value

Let us consider four features of true Christianity

GENUINE CHRISTIANS RESPECT GOD'S WORD AND LIVE BY IT (6 min.)

Jesus viewed God's Word as absolute truth [**Read John 17:17**]

He quoted from it, defended it, and explained it (*cf* chap. 10)

Jesus and his disciples based their teachings on the Scriptures (Lu 24:45; Ac 17:2, 3)

They did not teach man-made traditions or philosophies (Mr 7:6-8; Col 2:8; *w12 3/1 4*)

Christ's true followers accept the Bible as the authority for their beliefs and practices (1Th 2:13)

Jehovah's Witnesses live in harmony with God's written Word; doing so involves our entire way of life

God is not pleased with those who merely *profess* Christianity

CHRIST'S REAL FOLLOWERS MAKE KNOWN GOD'S NAME (6 min.)

Jesus honored his Father's name and made it known [**Read John 17:6, 26**]

His true followers recognize that only those who call on the name of Jehovah will be saved (Ro 10:13)

The Bible in its original languages included the name of God some 7,000 times

Many Bible translators and church leaders who claim to be Christian have removed the divine name from their versions of the Bible and from their worship services (*w12 3/1 7*)

Jehovah cherishes those who fear him and who treasure his name (Mal 3:16-18)

He has granted his true servants the privilege of being "a people for his name" (Ac 15:14)

His Witnesses, in turn, are pleased to expose false teachings (*w09 11/1 4-9*)

TRUE CHRISTIANS ADVOCATE GOD'S KINGDOM AS MANKIND'S ONLY HOPE (6 min.)

God's Kingdom was the theme of Jesus' ministry [**Read Luke 4:43**] (*cf* 81-82 ¶10)

Christ's true followers make known what God's Kingdom is and what it will accomplish

God's Kingdom is a heavenly government with Christ as King (Isa 9:6, *ftn.*; Da 7:14; Re 11:15)

It will soon rule over the entire earth and bring lasting peace (Isa 9:7; Da 2:44)

Jehovah's Witnesses proclaim worldwide that God's Kingdom is the only hope for mankind (Mt 24:14)

We maintain strict neutrality in all political affairs (Joh 17:16; 18:36)

We live as subjects of God's Kingdom and put its interests first in our life (Mt 6:33)

JESUS' GENUINE DISCIPLES ARE IDENTIFIED BY THEIR LOVE (5 min.)

Self-sacrificing love binds true Christians together; they are a united brotherhood [**Read John 13:34, 35**]

Their love transcends differences in race, culture, and social status (*w12 3/1 6*)

They help one another through trials and disasters

Christ's true followers have love for all people, even those who oppose them (Mt 5:43-45)

They put forth great effort to share their Bible-based hope with others

They refuse to take up weapons against fellow humans (Isa 2:4; Mt 26:52)

PROVE YOURSELF TO BE A REAL FOLLOWER OF CHRIST (3 min.)

It is now more urgent than ever to live as a genuine follower of Jesus (Lu 6:46; Joh 15:8)

God will hold accountable all who falsely claim to follow Christ (2Pe 2:1-3)

Examine further the teachings and practices of Jehovah's Witnesses in the light of God's Word (Ac 17:11)

We hope that you will identify us as Christ's *real* followers and join us in worship that is acceptable to Jehovah God and Christ Jesus

(Public talk by circuit overseer, starting March 2016. Not all cited texts need to be read or commented on)