

Acts 6- I am a Christian

“Go from your country, your people and your father’s household to the land I will show you. 2 “I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. 3 I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” Genesis 12:1-3

Jesus’ new way of compassion and service was in direct opposition to Jewish Leaders need for control and social isolation.

13 “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people’s faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to. Matthew 23:13

The point has always been to love the Lord with all of our heart, soul mind and strength and we try to love him only with our behavior when we feel like behaving.

8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Jew and Gentile Reconciled Through Christ.

11 Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands)— 12 remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. Ephesians 2:8-13

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.” Acts 11:1-3

The Scriptures are incredibly honest about the sinful nature of man and the mistakes that God’s people make.

God does not feel the need to minimize the mistakes of his followers because he embraces us in our mistakes and is not surprised by them.

If we are successful at making people who resemble us at all, let it be only in the ways that we resemble Jesus.

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?”

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.” Acts 11:15-18

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. Acts 11:19-21

The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch. Acts 11:26

14 For he (Jesus) himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, Ephesians 2:14

The Lord’s hand was with His church as they went into the scary places and not as they stayed safe.

The difficult truths of scripture are best expressed in the atmosphere of grace, love and mercy.