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 Faith Bible Church
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<http://fbcweb.org/doctrines.html>

JEWISH APOLOGETICS (28)
 ANSWERING JEWISH OBJECTION #19
 (DDR #647)

Objection #19: “You missionaries always use the same old arguments and proofs. Your faith can’t be very deep!”

To this objection, Michael Brown only has a short response:

To be perfectly honest, I’ve been getting a little bored with the standard arguments of the anti-missionaries. New or old, however, truth is truth. We don’t need to come up with some novel, new proofs for the messiahship of Jesus any more than we need to come with a novel, new proofs for the existence of God. What *you* need to do is carefully examine the evidence. I think you’ll discover that there is a lot more to our position than you ever imagined, and as we continue to study and tap into the rich mine of biblical truth, we are more than happy to provide you with further arguments and proofs. For now, I’ve provided you with some real food for thought. Read, study, reflect, and pray. As the Messiah said to Jewish forefathers who believed in him, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31-32). It’s time for you to experience that freedom for yourself.¹

On the concept of discipleship, I would like to note that it is the mandate of the Great Commission,

Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ "And after **going, make disciples** of all the nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, **teaching** them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." [the red is an imperative---a command, the greens are participles that unpack the imperative].

Ergo, Christ’s central mandate was to make disciples. To make a disciple is to make one like the teacher, namely Jesus Christ. Even Christ’s focus was not on winning souls just for the sake of saving souls. Certainly, one has to become a believer (i.e. regenerated by faith alone in Christ

¹Michael L. Brown, *Answering Jewish Objections to Jesus: General and Historical Objections*, 1ST ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2000), 65. In this work, Brown lists the objection and then gives a short response, which is followed by a more developed response. This DDR series, for the most part, tracks the objection and his *short* response, after which you will find my comments. I highly recommend his book if you are interested in his longer response (there is far too much material to include in the DDRs).

alone) before he can become a believer, but note Christ's emphasis: the command! to mature the believer into the likeness of Jesus Christ.

There is a desperate need for mature believers today. The stats on what the average Christian believes about Christ, the Word of God, and the local church is shocking. I recall all the befuddled looks when I taught at two Christian schools. When I would ask them about something as fundamental as "fellowship," they had no clue.

Without understanding the dynamics of fellowship, the believer does not stand a chance against our corrupt culture (e.g. consider: the destruction of the traditional family; corrupt politics; entitlement attitudes; 50% of Christian men say they are addicted to porn sites; 20% of Christian women say they are addicted to porn sites; 52% of *pastors* check out porn sites; over 50% of evangelicals are unaware that a person is saved by faith alone in Christ; that the majority of Christians view God as some therapeutic genie to massage their self-esteem and a Santa to get more stuff; that the majority of Christians do not go to church and the ones that do want to be entertained; and that most Christians view Christ as some sort of friendly benign Mr. Rogers, et al. ad nauseam) regardless of his will power or tenacity. Only the Holy Spirit is powerful enough to enable the Christian to overcome the perversity of our *Zeitgeist*, and apart from fellowship, there is no unhindered ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life, without which you will fall—sooner or later.

To become a disciple of Christ requires nothing less than being in fellowship with God for extended periods of time *plus* spiritual growth through Bible doctrine. There simply is no other way. As Christ put it, "you must abide in My Word." This is humanly impossible no matter how many *new* programs man can come up with. It requires nothing less than consistent

influence of God the Holy Spirit. If you are interested in a classic series on the Holy Spirit, see *Chafer: the spiritual life*, 1-18 at <http://www.fbcweb.org/otherteachers.html>

Because of God, there is always HOPE,

Lamentations 3:24 "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I have hope in Him."

Zech 4:6, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts.

Pastor Don