

Christ Plus Nothing

FTAP Study Guide • Scripture Study and Reflection

FINDING THE ANCIENT PATH | FTAP

Teaching Overview

This Teaching examines the slogan “Christ plus nothing.” The speaker affirms salvation by faith in Messiah without preconditions, but argues that the slogan becomes misleading when used to dismiss repentance, Torah obedience, discipleship, and spiritual growth. He grounds his argument in Acts 15, the words of Yeshua, the Hebrew Scriptures, and the letters of the apostles. The closing conversation emphasizes sharing these convictions with grace.

Key Scriptures

- Acts 15:1–21 — The discussion of Gentile entry into the covenant community; the speaker distinguishes initial faith from subsequent learning.
- Galatians 3:1–14 — Paul’s teaching on faith and justification is central to the controversy discussed.
- Romans 3:28–31 — Faith and the law are discussed together; the speaker rejects treating justification as a license to discard obedience.
- Matthew 28:18–20 — Making disciples includes teaching them to observe what Yeshua commanded.
- 1 John 3:4 — The speaker points to lawlessness as a biblical description of sin.
- 1 Peter 2:2 — New believers are called to desire the Word and grow.
- 2 Peter 3:18 — Believers are instructed to grow in grace and knowledge.
- John 5:39, 46 — Yeshua teaches that the Scriptures and Moses testify about Him.
- Luke 24:27, 44–45 — Yeshua explains Himself from Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms.
- Psalm 119:18 — A prayer for opened eyes to understand the wonders of God’s law.
- Matthew 7:21–27 — Hearing and doing Yeshua’s words is likened to building on rock.
- Colossians 1:9–10 — Knowledge, a worthy walk, good works, and spiritual growth are connected.
- James 2:17–26 — The speaker uses James to distinguish living faith from faith without works.
- John 14:15, 21 — Love for Yeshua is expressed through keeping His commandments.
- 1 John 2:3–6 — Knowing Him is connected with keeping His commandments.
- Colossians 4:6 — Closing counsel to speak graciously and wisely when discussing obedience.

Key Takeaways

- The speaker affirms “Christ plus nothing” as a description of coming to faith, not as a complete description of discipleship afterward.
- He argues that salvation cannot be earned by Torah observance, while obedience remains a response to faith.
- The Teaching challenges the claim that obedience to Torah necessarily denies Messiah’s finished work.
- The speaker disputes dividing God’s commands into acceptable New Testament commands and unacceptable Old Testament commands.
- Yeshua’s Great Commission includes teaching disciples to obey His instructions.
- The Hebrew Scriptures supply the vocabulary and context for understanding Yeshua, atonement, covenant, and redemption.
- The speaker connects spiritual growth to study of the Torah, Prophets, and other Hebrew Scriptures.
- In Matthew 7, the speaker emphasizes hearing and doing Yeshua’s words as the foundation represented by rock.
- James and John are presented as witnesses that genuine faith and love are expressed in obedience.
- The closing discussion urges humility, discernment, and gracious speech when sharing these convictions.

Study Outline

The purpose of the Teaching

The speaker explains why this message is intended both to strengthen believers and to prompt discussion with Christians unfamiliar with Torah observance.

What the slogan means

He traces the use of “Christ plus nothing” and distinguishes the claim that salvation is by faith from the claim that obedience is unnecessary.

The accusation of adding to Christ

The Teaching challenges objections to Sabbath, biblical feasts, dietary instructions, and other commandments as supposed additions to Messiah.

Contrasting approaches to commandments

The speaker identifies positions that reject Torah obedience, require only reiterated New Testament commands, or allow Torah as personal preference.

The standard for obedience

The Teaching argues that Scripture, rather than personal preference, defines sin and obedience.

Salvation as the beginning

Acts 15 is used to argue that Gentiles do not need to become Torah-observant before coming to faith; growth follows conversion.

Learning Messiah from the Hebrew Scriptures

The speaker appeals to Peter, John, and Luke to show how the earliest believers learned about Yeshua from Moses and the Prophets.

Building on rock

Matthew 7 is read as a contrast between hearing-and-doing and hearing-without-doing.

Faith and works

Colossians, James, and John are cited to argue that genuine faith produces a life of obedience.

Sharing convictions with grace

The closing conversation emphasizes speaking graciously, considering the listener, and inviting continued dialogue.

Discussion and Reflection Questions

1. What does “Christ plus nothing” mean at the moment of salvation? (Acts 15:1–21)

2. Why does the Teaching challenge “Christ plus nothing” as a complete doctrine? (Matthew 28:18–20; James 2:17)

3. Does the speaker teach that keeping Torah earns salvation? (Galatians 3:1–14; Acts 15:1–21)

4. Why does the speaker discuss Galatians and Romans? (Galatians 3:1–14; Romans 3:28–31)

5. What is the concern with calling Torah obedience heresy? (Matthew 28:18–20; John 14:15)

6. How does the Great Commission relate to obedience? (Matthew 28:18–20)

7. 7. What objection is raised to obeying only commands repeated in the New Testament? (Matthew 28:18–20; 1 John 3:4)

8. 8. How does the Teaching define sin? (1 John 3:4)

9. 9. What is the speaker's concern about making obedience a personal preference? (1 John 3:4; John 14:15)

10. 10. What role does Acts 15 play in the Teaching? (Acts 15:1–21)

11. 11. What does 1 Peter 2:2 contribute to the argument? (1 Peter 2:2)

12. 12. Why does the speaker emphasize the Hebrew Scriptures? (John 5:39, 46; Luke 24:27)

13. 13. How does Yeshua point to Moses and the Prophets? (John 5:39, 46; Luke 24:27, 44–45)

14. 14. What caution is given about finding Yeshua in every Old Testament passage? (Luke 24:27; Psalm 119:18)

Personal Application

- How do I distinguish trusting Messiah for salvation from responding to Him through obedience?
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- Which biblical passage from this Teaching should I study more carefully in its full context?
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- How can I explain a conviction about Torah in a way that invites discussion rather than closes it?

Prayer and Closing Reflection

Ask Yahovah for understanding, humility, a willingness to obey what Scripture teaches, and graciousness toward people who understand these passages differently. Consider Psalm 119:18 and Colossians 4:6.