



## What Would Jesus Do # 1

Hello everyone. Welcome to "Notes From The Presence." This past week I have had a few things on my mind including the notion of representing Jesus well on this earth. I recall being at youth camp as a teenager and wearing a wrist band bearing the initials - "WWJD" (What would Jesus do?). I am certain that we have all prayed the prayer at one time or another: "God, let me be more like Jesus." Today, I thought we would explore those thoughts.

The desire to be like Jesus and to know what He would do in each and every instance is a good desire. It is an idea supported by scripture. Someday when we see Jesus in all of His glory, we will be changed and made into His image. Somehow, this sentiment tugs at our heart with great intensity while we are here on this earth.

There are really two aspects of Jesus that we think of imitating. The first one is the picture of Jesus walking among us nearly 2000 years ago. It is simple to see from the four gospels what kind of a life our Master had. It seems as if Jesus was a down to earth person who was never caught in a situation over which He didn't have full control. Wherever He was - whether on land or at sea, in a storm, with someone who was sick, with a hungry multitude, needing money for taxes, needing to get to the other side of a lake with no transportation, being attacked by a demonized lunatic, ready to be stoned by a group of haters, being ridiculed by religious cynics, or happening upon a funeral where someone died too early in life - Jesus always had a practical answer to the problem.

Then, along with His power side, Jesus also had remarkable character. He was the perfect embodiment of the nine fruits of the Spirit. He set the standard of love so high that it is impossible to reach without help from the Spirit of God. He operated in the five ministry gifts including teaching, shepherding, and evangelizing. He also hit every gift of the Spirit out of the park including manifestations of wisdom, knowledge, prophecy,

healing, miracles, faith, and the list goes on. Our Master was, and is, one amazing person.

So where does this leave us when it comes to representing Him well? It doesn't matter which area we stack ourselves up against, we, as humans, always seem to come up short. Yet, the definition of the very word "represent" suggests that we are to re-present Jesus. We are to take the essence of who He was, and then present Him all over again to the world through our lives. Wow, what a tall order.

In order to understand the idea of representing Jesus, we need to understand who Jesus was and how He did the things He did. This is going to sound strange, but a lot of people put the life of Jesus on an unreachable pedestal. They will say things like, "yea but He was God." It is true that Jesus was God, however, when He came to our earth, He did something unthinkable. Check out this scripture ...

*Philippians 2:5-8 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but **emptied Himself**, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.*

Jesus, in coming to our earth, emptied Himself. What does this mean? It means that He took anything that could have given Him an advantage while here on this earth, and left it behind. Jesus came to finish what Adam couldn't do. He was here to live a sinless life, operate in the realm of men as a man, eventually give His life for us, and then make a way for us to be successful again as a human race. If Jesus would have taken any advantage in this endeavour by using His "God card", the devil would have forever contested our redemption. Although Jesus was God, He willingly laid aside this mantle until His work of redemption was over. It was something that He dare not touch while here on earth.

So, how did Jesus accomplish such an outstanding life here on earth? Friends, He did it with the same tool chest that we as born again believers have been given. He was born righteous and sinless. We have been made righteous and sinless by His blood. The Holy Spirit resided inside of Him. The Holy Spirit now resides inside of us. The Holy Spirit also came and rested upon Jesus. Once we are baptized, or filled with the Spirit, He also rests upon us. I have heard it said, "the Holy Spirit is inside us for us, but He is upon us for others." Jesus did what He did with the same tools that we have now been given. He just learned to use them to their fullest potential. We, on the other hand don't even know

they exist for the most part. Those of us who do discover these tools spend most of our lives fighting through feelings of unworthiness, if only to look at them a few times.

What am I saying here? Jesus set the high water mark at 100%. We, on the other hand, rarely make it to 20%. However, does this mean we can't reach for 100%? Absolutely not! I will never buy into a gospel that tells me that just because the standard is incredibly high, there is no use reaching for it - or even worse ... a theology that has been created to tell me it is not meant to be. We as humans have taken our experience and created doctrine around it. When it comes to representing Jesus on our earth, there has been a mountain of doctrine created to explain why we so often end up so inadequate.

On the other hand, here is what God has to say about us:

*1 John 4:16-18 We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.*

The bottom line for us as humans is that we constantly short circuit ourselves in our representation of Jesus by feelings of unworthiness, feeling unloved by God, guilt, and shame. This, in turn, takes us out of the realm of effectiveness and pulls us down to a level of just trying to do better at life. In this kind of an existence, there is no power, little hearing of God's voice, and no way to represent our Master. In order to represent Him well, we have to learn to think like Him.

Friends, the first step in learning to represent Jesus well on this earth is to come to know and believe the love which God has for us. With this confidence, there is no fear of punishment and no judgement. This in turn gives us confidence to know that as Jesus is, so are we in this world. We have been given the same Spirit inside of us that Jesus had and we have the same Father. Are we Jesus? No! We are who God made **us** to be and we are in Christ. We will continue this subject in our next article ... stay tuned.

Thanks for reading. Jesus is real and He has made a way through His blood for us to represent Him well.