

Continued from Page Three, "Would Jesus Do What We Do?"

what men are doing when it comes to following our opinions instead of God's will!

Teach In A Way So As Not To "Offend" People?

Before we study this point in detail, please remember that the Bible's use of the word "offend" and our use of the word "offend" is different. The Bible often uses the word "offend" as meaning a cause to sin. We use it to mean that we are put-off by something, insulted, or otherwise repulsed by something someone has said or done. The question is not, "Did Jesus speak in such a way so as to lure people into sin?" Surely, He did not (Jas. 1:13). Our question is, was Jesus' teaching the kind of teaching that never caused folks to be mad or upset at what they heard?

There is a call and cry today by some who demand we "preach like Jesus preached," and what they mean is to speak in such a way so as to never make a person mad or convict him of sin. Did Jesus do this? If folks think Jesus' preaching never made folks mad, or convicted them of

sin, then they have just not read the New Testament! When we read about the life of Christ, we find times when He caused folks to be "filled with madness" (Lk. 6:11). Some folks "criticized him vehemently" for His words. Even in His actions, we see Jesus cleansing the Temple on two occasions, as well as provoking controversy as He continually healed people on the Sabbath.

When confronting the Pharisees about their hypocrisy, they were upset; so much so that when His disciples told Him about their response, Jesus said simply, "Let them alone they are blind leaders of the blind..." (Matt. 15:12-14). Jesus would not allow hurt feelings to stand in the way of the truth being preached. We should not, either. Beware of those who will not teach the truth because they are afraid someone may be "offended."

Conclusion

If Jesus would not do what we do, then why are we doing it? If Christ is our example, and we should be following Him. Why are we intent on doing things "our" way and not His? Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦

I AM YOUR BULLETIN

- I am not just another piece of paper.
- I am your weekly church information sheet.
- I do not come to you easily, or without expense.
- I cost money, time, thought, and energy.
- I should not be taken for granted.
- I can only be as useful and valuable as you allow me to be.
- I am often abused and overlooked.
- Sometimes all I get is a fleeting glance.
- Sometimes all I get is a critical analysis.
- I want so much for you to read me, study me, appreciate me, and make me useful for your spiritual activity and development.
- I want to serve you.

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

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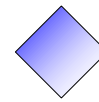


Schedule of Assembly

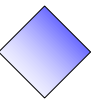
Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

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The Voice of Truth



January 9, 2011

Biblical New Year Resolutions

By Jimmy Pettigrew

Another year passes and we are made aware of our most precious, fragile gift: time. Benjamin Franklin wrote "Dost thou love life? Then waste not time, for that is the stuff that life is made of." Our use of time determines success or failure. Surely it is fitting that we make some Biblical new year's resolutions to direct us into the future. Let us look at the word "resolutions" for this article.

1. Let us resolve to stay in the (R) Race (Hebrews 12:1). In this race, we must be able to take it and not give up. Paul said, "Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run ..." (1 Corinthians 9:24-27). We need to get rid of everything that would slow us down or hold us back, or detour us from running the race of our Christian life. Stay in the race!

2. Let us resolve to stop making (E) Excuses (Luke 14:16 ff). A common practice among men is that of excuse-making for their failure to do their duty. Many in the churches take lightly the command to come together for worshipping God. So they make plans as these three did in (Luke 14:16 ff), and use excuses why couldn't assemble with the saints (Matthew 6:33; Hebrews 10:25). The Master was angry with the three, and all who would lightly consider His generous offer. Stop making excuses, and do your best!

3. Let us resolve to be good (S) Soldiers for Christ (2 Timothy 2:3). This army is made up of all volunteers. Our enlistment began when by faith (Hebrews 11:6) we repented (Luke 13:3) of our sins, confessed (Matthew 10:32-33) the name of our Commander in Chief (Hebrews 2:10) and was buried into Him for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; Romans 6:1-4; Galatians 3:27). As a result, one is in subjection to God's will, a member of the spiritual army of God. As soldiers in the Lord's army we need to "Fight the

good fight of faith" (1 Timothy 6:12). Brethren, God has a right to expect godly living, cheerful giving, Bible reading, praying, loving and faithful attendance of worship services from His soldiers. After all we volunteered! We need to say as Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith" (2 Timothy 4:7).

4. Let us resolve to keep our (O) Obligations to God (Deuteronomy 6:5; 10:12; 11:1; Matthew 22:37). We, as God's children have the obligation, duty, we promised the Lord that we will ever be faithful in all His duties as a part of the bride, the church. We promise to love the Lord, the church, to keep the commandments of the Lord, to walk in all His ways and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart. May I implore you to live true to your word being a Christian!

5. Let us resolve to be united in (L) Love (Ephesians 5:1-2; John 13:34-35). John commands Christians to love one another (1 John 3:11; 4:7, 16). The lack of such love causes grievous harm to the growth and welfare of the body of Christ (Galatians 5:15). If there is one thing that all men know about the teaching of Christ, they know that He emphasized love (John 13:35). How do we know that we truly love the brethren? John says, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments" (1 John 5:2).

6. Let us resolve to be (U) unselfish (2 Corinthians 5:15). Who had died for all, deserves all glory! Christians are bought or redeemed for the Lord's own possession (Ephesians 5:25-26; 1 Peter 1:18-19). One of the most difficult things in life is denying self, and living apart from selfish desires and ambitions, but to be a disciple of Christ it must be done (Matthew 16:24-25). We "no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God" (1 Peter 4:2). "Let no man seek his own" (1 Corinthians 10:24). The love of Christ

Continued on Page Two

In This Issue...

Page 1 - Biblical New Year Resolutions
Pages 2 to 4 - "Would Jesus Do What We Do?"

Page 4 - I AM YOUR BULLETIN

Continued from Page One, "Biblical New Year Resolutions"

constrains us to leave self!

7. Let us resolve to use our (T) Talents (Matthew 25:14-30). God requires that we use our talents and not only use them, but to use them faithfully. Woe to the brother or sister that shirks their responsibility, for their eternal destiny hangs in the balance. Use them or lose them!

8. Let us resolve to keep our saving (I) Influence (Philippians 1:27). The conversation (manner of life) of the Christian be as becometh the Gospel. The manner of life of the Christian will be either a real asset or a significant liability to the cause of Christ. The conduct of the Christian should adorn the doctrine of God (**Titus 2:10**). Adorn means to beautify. The life of a faithful Christian reveals the beauty of God's will and way. There is nothing more impressive than the influence of a pure Christian life. Show the world what a Christian is (**Matthew 5:13-16**)!

9. Let us resolve to be (O) Orderly. Orderly means a soldier assigned to perform services. We are soldiers in the Lord's army, and we need to be doers, not hearers only (**James 1:22**). It is absolutely essential that we, being followers of Jesus, emulate His example in doing the will of our heavenly Father (**John 4:24**). God pronounces a blessing upon all those who both hear and do His will (**Revelation 22:14**).

"Would Jesus Do What We Do?"

By Jarrod Jacobs

A popular acronym over the last several years is "WWJD" (What Would Jesus Do?) We have seen it on bracelets, bumper stickers, T-shirts, and a host of other things. The title of this article is just a "twist" on that question. Instead of asking ourselves what would Jesus do, let us turn this around and ask, "Would Jesus do what we do?" We might be surprised at the answer! When thinking about whether or not Jesus would do what we do, would Jesus

Not Attend Worship Services?

Would it be logical to assume that Jesus would not be present with the saints to worship God and study His word every time the doors are open? (**Heb. 10:25**) Jesus is the One who gave His body and shed His life's blood to purchase the church (**Jn. 19:33-34; Acts 20:28**). After paying such a price as this, do we see Jesus considering this same church of little worth, or of only a "passing interest"?

10. Let us resolve to be truly a (N) New person in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). We are new in Christ; the old sinful self has been put to death (**Romans 6:6**). The old man is the sinful man, a servant of sin (**Romans 6:17**), but in Christ we are new people! The new man is "*created in righteousness and true holiness*" (**Ephesians 4:24**). A new man is indeed a Christ-like man (**Colossians 3:10**). Are we Christ like? Do people see a difference between the old you and the new you (**1 Peter 4:4**)?

11. Let us resolve to (S) Support this congregation! I love the church of our Lord! Have you ever wondered just what you could do to support, to help this congregation be what God desires for it? We can support, help this congregation by:

- Living pure lives.
- Giving the men of this congregation support.
- Promoting love and unity.
- Never bringing shame to this congregation.
- Giving as God as commanded.
- Doing the best you can for the cause of Christ.
- Attending every service.
- Putting God first.

What are you going to do with this new year God has given you? •

Sadly, there are many people today who consider the assembling of the saints as "optional", or as something they can do when they "have time." Would Jesus do what we do after paying the price He paid?

If we say, "No, He would not do this", then why do we often times do it? Could it be

Illness? Yes, some folks are ill, and sometimes folks are the caretakers for the ill. Yet, before we focus on illness too closely, let us be reminded that the vast majority of those not attending are not on the "sick list" for their chronic ailments! Too, I have observed that those who are chronically sick are the ones wishing their health allowed them to assemble. Ask them and see!

Work? Some allow work to come between them and worship. Could there be an emergency at work requiring

Continued on Page Three

Continued from Page Two, "Would Jesus Do What We Do?"

your attention? Of course, there could! Yet, does such require your attention consistently on a weekly basis? Of course, not! For those allowing this excuse to keep them from worship, let them read **Matthew 6:25-33** again. Let them be reminded that the physical things will be provided by God when we put first things first! Yes, we need to be gainfully employed (**II Thess. 3:10**), but this command does not contradict the Lord's command for worship, either (**Heb. 10:25**)! We can do both, and must, if we are to please God.

Laziness? This is the key to a lot of our problems, is it not? We have the "energy" to do the things we want to do. Would Jesus do what we do and just decide to be "lazy" sometimes? By no means! When we read of the life of Christ, He did so much, John said he supposed the world couldn't contain the books if someone tried to record everything He had done (**Jn. 21:24-25**). Remember, this was just over a 3 year period! Imagine what good we can accomplish with our entire lives! Are we doing it? Where are we when it is time to worship God?

Do Just Enough To Get By?

This attitude is prevalent in society, and sadly, it leaks over into the Lord's church. Some portray an attitude that says they want to do the "minimum" to "squeak" by and get into Heaven. This attitude was seen in the one we call the "rich young ruler" (**Matt. 19:16-22; Mk. 10:17-22; Lk. 18:18-23**). He asked Jesus about the one "good thing" he could do so he could have eternal life. Jesus answered him, but he "*went away sorrowful*" because it required more of him than he was willing to sacrifice.

In truth, we see the opposite with Christ. In **Matthew 5:17**, Jesus told those folks that He came to fulfill the law! In other words, He came to "fill it full"! He promised to complete it when His life on earth was over, and He did (**Jn. 19:30**)! In **I Peter 2:21-22**, we learn, "*For even here-unto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth.*" To describe Jesus this way means He did not do the "minimum", but kept all the law! We know this because to offend in one point was to be guilty of all (**Jas. 2:10**). Jesus did not do this, but committed no sin at all! He did not do the "minimum." He did it all. What about us? Are we doing all Christ has commanded?

Act Hypocritical?

Knowing that some Christians today are hypocrites, would Jesus be a hypocrite, too? Let the Bible speak. In truth, Jesus "practiced what He preached" (**Acts 1:1**). In fact, He condemned the Pharisees and others for their hypocrisy (**Matt. 23:13-36**). Even then, we still hear Jesus tell His disciples to "*observe and do*" what those folks said since they had authority at that time (**Matt. 23:3-4**). He did not do things merely to be seen by men and praised (**Matt. 6:1-18**).

Since we know Christ would not act like this, why do men today act like this? Why do we think we can act one way on Sunday, and another way the rest of the week? Why do men think it is acceptable to act one way in public, and another way at home? This is hypocrisy! Shame on folks for acting like this. If we recognize Jesus wouldn't be acting the way we are acting, then let us repent and do what He did (**I Pet. 2:21**).

Rely Upon His Opinions Rather Than God's Will?

When we observe the world at large, we see many relying upon their opinions for what is right and wrong rather than God's word. Sadly, even Christians are like this at times. Would Jesus do what we do? Would He rely upon His own opinions in matters?

In fact, He did not! He never relied upon His personal thoughts, but continually lived and taught that He was here to speak and do what the Father told Him to do. This was made clear in **Luke 2:49** when He told His mother, "*Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?*" In **Luke 2:51**, we read of Him being "*subject*" to His parents. In other words, He was obeying the word of the Lord that said, "*Honor thy father and thy mother...*" (**Ex. 20:12**). Jesus' life was one of subjection and submission to His Father's will. We see this in the words He spoke, "*For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak*" (**Jn. 12:49-50**). Even in His last hours on earth, He would pray, "*not as I will, but as thou wilt*" (**Matt. 26:39, 42, 44**).

Jesus followed His Father's Word without fail. Knowing this is true, who are we to think we can do something that the Son of God didn't do?? No, Jesus wouldn't be doing

Continued on Page Four