

Who Christians Are and What They Do

<u>Who They Are:</u>		<u>What They Do:</u>
Disciples	Acts 11:26	Study
Children	Galatians 3:26-27	Grow
Priests	1 Peter 2:5	Sacrifice
Saints	1 Corinthians 1:1-2	Live Holy Lives
Branches	John 15:1-8	Bear Fruit
Soldiers	Ephesians 6:10-18	Fight
Stewards	Matthew 25:14-30	Use Talents
Pilgrims	1 Peter 2:11	Long for Home

Sincerity Plus Truth

Conductor: "I'm sorry, but you are on the wrong train. You want to go to Memphis, but this train does not go there ... it goes to St Louis." **Passenger:** "What difference does that make? I sincerely thought this train was going to Memphis ... does it really matter?"

Doctor: "Madam, I'm sorry. Your husband took pills containing poison and he'll be in the hospital at least a week."

Woman: "He can't be sick. He sincerely believed those were sleeping pills."

Surgeon: "Sir, you have a malignancy, which if not removed will cause your death." **Patient:** "Don't be silly, Doc, I feel fine."

Preacher: "You are traveling on the road that leads to destruction. You must repent or perish." (Matthew 7:13, 14; Luke 13:3) **Sinner:** "Don't be so narrow. My folks travelled this road, and if it was good enough for them, it is good enough for me. What difference does it make as long as one sincerely believes he is right? One way is just as good as another. I feel all right and that's all that matters. I'm satisfied."

Jesus: "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven." Matthew 7:21 "If you love Me, keep My commandments. John 14:15



Do you need to change tracks?

Get Rid of the Silver Cup

Leonard da Vinci was famous for many paintings; however, his most significant work was the "The Last Supper" painted in a church building in Milan. This monumental fresco took four years to complete.

An interesting story is told as to why it took so long to finish. When da Vinci was almost finished, a friend commented on how incredibly moving the painting was—especially the silver cup on the table. "It was brilliant, beautiful!" he said. "My eyes were immediately drawn to it."

Da Vinci got so angry that he immediately painted over the cup, blotting it out. The focus of the painting was to be Jesus, not the cup. All attention had to be drawn to Him; anything that detracted from Him had to be removed.

What is the focus of our lives? We must remove anything that comes before Christ or hinders us from serving Him. Each day we're faced with many distractions. Literally hundreds of things vie for our attention. Is your life centered on Christ? Is He your focus?

"For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain" —Philippians 1:21A

Thoreau's Frog and My Lord

Henry David Thoreau once spent a whole day in Walden Pond up to his neck in the water. He wanted to experience the world as a frog sees it. He shared the experience, but not the reality. Thoreau did not become a frog!

Jesus did not swoop down and survey the human situation from a safe distance. He emptied Himself. He laid aside His celestial robes to put on the simple clothes of a man. Divinity clothed Himself with humanity.

The Word became flesh. "But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross . . ." (Philippians 2:7-8a; cf. John 1:14).

Jesus Borrowed:

a place for His birth . . . a house to sleep in . . . a boat to preach from . . . an animal to ride on . . . a room to meet privately with His friends . . . and a tomb to be buried in. He who owned it all had nothing for His own! "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9).

Jesus Left:

His purse to Judas . . . His clothes to the soldiers . . . His body to Joseph of Arimathea . . . His mother to John . . .

His peace to the disciples . . . His supper to His followers . . . His Gospel to the world . . . His presence with God's children . . . His crown for me.

". . . for me a crown of righteousness"
—2 Timothy 4:8



NEIGHBORLY NEWS

Handling Rejection

Some people don't handle rejection well:

A soldier was serving overseas and far from home. He became annoyed and upset when his girl wrote breaking off their engagement and asking for her photograph back.

He went out and collected from his friends all the unwanted photographs of women that he could find, bundled them all together and sent them to her with a note which said:

"I regret that I cannot remember which one is you ... please keep your photo and return the others."

How do you handle rejection? It's not a pleasant thing, but we've all experienced it. Rejection by a loved one. Rejection by a boss. But perhaps most difficult to handle is the rejection that comes as a result of living the Christian life. We want to be accepted. We want to feel like we're "part of the crowd". But, at times, our decision to live a godly life in a godless world will not be appreciated and we will be rejected.

Notice what Peter had to say about this: "Nonbelievers think it is strange that you do not do the many wild and wasteful things they do, so they insult you." (I Peter 4:4, NCV)

The message throughout I Peter is that we should not be surprised at all by such rejection (4:12), but that it should never deter us from our commitment to live holy lives (1:15).

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