

MODELING CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

Matthew 28:19-20 ... "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you..."

You may be familiar with the practice of using human models to wear clothing so you can see what a dress, pants, shirt or jacket might look like on you. In a department store you may be attracted to a dress displayed on a mannequin because it is easier to picture yourself in that dress, than if it is lying folded on a shelf. Modeling applies to many things in life. If you want to paint your house, you may go to a hardware store and look at paint samples. You do the same with nail polish and lipstick. In a restaurant you may order your food by the picture of it on the menu. You pick out many things in life according to how they are modeled and displayed.

In addition to God creating you to worship him, he created you to tell others about him. Today's passage from Matthew is Jesus' command for us to make followers of him and teach them everything he commands us. However, consider how you model the life that Jesus teaches you to live. If you tell someone about Jesus, they will look at your life as an example of what you are trying to convince them to adopt. What does an unsaved person see in you? Do they see a believer who is totally committed to honoring God, or a person who has one foot in God's kingdom and the other foot in the world?

Only Jesus led a perfect life on earth. You and I are flawed. We make mistakes. We often display hypocrisy (believing one thing, but doing something else). Sometimes our tempers or emotions get the best of us and we say or do things we regret. We may be unkind when we are tired, impatient when waiting for someone, or momentarily caught up in materialism. Other people hear and see us make those mistakes.

Although we still make mistakes, we are to live with the intent to NOT make mistakes. Studying God's Word and applying what you learn will help you adopt a more Christ-honoring lifestyle. Respecting the Holy Spirit when he convicts you of sin, will help you conform to God's plan for you. So, how do you share Christ with others if your own life is not yet conformed to Christ? You are commanded to share Christ, not when you reach a certain level of perfection or righteousness, but now...right now...TODAY and every day. You must incorporate into your testimony, the confession that you are still a work in progress; you are not perfect, but you are growing in Christ every day and learning a little at a time what it means to honor God. But you must really be committed to change and becoming more like Christ. If you are not, your testimony is worthless, which means you are still trapped in a largely sinful lifestyle. People are watching you. What do they see? A follower of Christ in name only, or a follower who is committed to honoring Christ in every aspect of your life, publicly and privately?

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