

Ambassadors of Christ

“You are not to take in vain the name of the LORD your God, because the LORD will not leave the one who takes in vain his name unpunished.”

This is Exodus 20:7. It is one of the well-known Ten Commandments brought down from the mountain by Moses. Like me, many of you have grown up being taught that it is an admonition against swearing. While that is a good idea and covered elsewhere in the Bible, I have since learned that this command holds a much deeper meaning. We are called to be ambassadors of Christ. We are to act in such a way as to be a light to the worldⁱ (Matthew 5:14-16).

This morning, I heard two flabbergasting things regarding this very subject. First, was that of a story related about a pastor and his wife who went to eat at a restaurant after Sunday church. The restaurant was crowded and they were talking to their waitress who relayed to them that nobody wanted to work on Sundays because of all of the “church people”. When asked to explain she told them that it was because church people are rude, needy and don’t tip well. Hearing that should astound anyone who professes to be a Christian.

This is not being an ambassador of Christ. If these characteristics are what describe us, we need to make some serious changes. These three attributes are exactly the opposite of what we should be known for. It is written in Ephesians 4:29-32

²⁹Let no filthy talk be heard from your mouths, but only what is good for building up people and meeting the need of the moment. This way you will administer grace to those who hear you. ³⁰Do not grieve the Holy Spirit, by whom you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. ³¹Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, quarreling, and slander be put away from you, along with all hatred. ³²And be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another just as God has forgiven you in the Messiah.

If rudeness and neediness is what we are known for, then we are no better, perhaps even worse than the world in which we are called to be a light in.

Furthermore, the very words of Jesus, himself are written in John (13:34-35):

³⁴I am giving you a new commandment to love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵This is how everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

There are countless passages covering the issue of generosity. Much has been given to you; give, in return, to others so that they may know Christ through your actions.

The second flabbergasting thing I heard about on the radio was a survey done by the Barna Group in which they found that only 9% of American adults held a biblical world view. Among those who profess to be “born again” Christians, only 19% held a biblical world view. This is appalling. It gets worse for the younger generation. Only one half of one percent (0.05%) of young adults (ages 18-23) hold a biblical world view.

The criteria used to determine if someone held a biblical world view were wrapped up in six questions. Here are the questions they asked:

1. Is there an absolute moral truth?
2. Is the Bible accurate in its teachings and principles?
3. Is Satan real?
4. Is it impossible to earn your way into heaven?
5. Did Jesus live a sinless life while on the Earth?
6. Is God the all-knowing, all-powerful creator of the universe?

Very simple and basic concepts yet so few actually believe these statements. If we don't believe what we read, then we certainly won't act as if we believe them.

I encourage you to read your Bible. Learn what it says, look at the world around you and how the Bible relates to your life or more accurately how you should conform your life to the words of the Bible. It truly is the words of life. Put away your preconceptions and really read it to understand it. Earnestly seek His teaching. Learn from it. Apply what you learn. I guarantee you will learn what Jesus meant when he said “You shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free.” You will learn what it really means to have the peace that surpasses understanding. Be an ambassador of Christ. Don't be one of those “church people”. Be known for your love one for another. Actions do speak louder than words.

^{i 14}“You are the light of the world. A city located on a hill can't be hidden. ¹⁵People don't light a lamp and put it under a basket but on a lamp stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶In the same way let your light shine before people in such a way that they will see your good actions and glorify your Father in heaven.”