

*In
search
of*

Truth and Right

Tim Henderson, Editor

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"Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things." Philipians 4:8 (NASB-U)

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Which Jesus Do You Follow?

By: Steven Harper

I know that headline question may seem strange, but I must ask because it seems some people are not following the same Jesus! The "Jesus" they follow apparently teaches some things that may be strange to you and me but they are convinced it is the Biblical Jesus. So, I must ask you—the reader—which Jesus you follow. Is He:

The One Who Condemns No One? This "Jesus" is very popular in our modern society; in fact, you might think He is a **product** of our modern society [which would not be far from the truth]. This "Jesus" who is so popular says **nothing** offensive and would not dare condemn what used to be called [in times past] "sin". He is the "Jesus" of love, encouragement and praise—but He would **never** utter a negative word about "sin" or the need for repentance. He is just "too loving" to do something like that!

Of course, those who follow **this** "Jesus" are quick to point out the words of Jesus when He said, *"Judge not, that you be not judged"* (**Matt. 7:1**)—and they will usually quote it with exclamation! To them, that little sentence is the greatest commandment in the world! No matter how erroneous their beliefs or practices, this passage is their answer! Even if you should try to explain the context of those words, they are not affected because they have already decided in their minds what it means: no condemnation should **ever** be made! Sadly, even those who do not claim to follow Jesus at all seem to know this passage exists and are just as free to cite it should you point out one's sins.

Those who follow this "Jesus" will also go to the Bible and point out that when the adulterous woman was brought before Him by those hypocritical Pharisees, He simply stated, *"Let him who is with-*

TIMES OF SERVICES	
SUNDAY	
Bible Classes*	10:00 AM
AM Worship	10:45 AM
PM Worship	6:30 PM
WEDNESDAY	
Bible Classes*	7:00 PM
(* Bible Classes for All Ages)	

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out sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her" (**John 8:7**). They might also add that Jesus, after He noted that her accusers failed to condemn her by stoning her to death, says to her, "*Neither do I condemn you*" (**v. 11**). They stop short [of course] and do not tell the whole story, though. For some reason, they stop at those words and fail to notice that those very words spoken to the Pharisees are words of condemnation! They fail to note that Jesus was pointing out the hypocrisy of these men and that they stood before Him just as worthy of condemnation as the adulterous woman! They also fail to note that Jesus—after the accusers left—turned to the woman and told her, "*go, and from now on sin no more*" (**v. 11**). Can you see that Jesus said that the woman had **sinned**? Do you understand that this last statement was a demand for repentance?

Yes, Jesus said He did not come into the world to judge (**John 12:47**), but to save. But note that Jesus went on to say, "*The one who rejects Me and does not receive My words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day*" (**v. 48**). No, Jesus did not come into the world to judge, but He plainly said that the words He spoke **while** on earth will be the very words that will judge us on the last day. You see, the Jesus that many think would never judge [condemn] anyone will **be** the Judge before whom all shall stand one day (**2 Cor. 5:10**). Jesus Himself told us of the Day of Judgment, when **He** would personally tell some to depart from Him because they stood condemned, and they would then "*go away into eternal punishment*" (**Matt. 25:41, 46**).

When we consider the **complete** Jesus of Scripture, we find that He **did** condemn some and that He will one day condemn many because they refused to heed His words spoken while here on earth, or the words of the inspired apostles and prophets who spoke God's will to us.

But maybe this is not the "Jesus" you follow. Is the "Jesus" you follow:

The One Who Teaches We Should "Just Love One Another"? This "Jesus" does not differ much from the previous in result, but those who follow this "Jesus" make it a point to make this proclamation about the "Jesus" they follow when someone points out their error. They are taken aback at someone actually pointing out error and they quickly reply, "Why are you telling me I am wrong? Jesus said we shouldn't condemn one another, but that we should just love one another!" Many who have said this sincerely believe that what they say is a direct quote from Scripture but I will say this very plainly: That "Jesus" does not come from Scripture! In fact, those words are not found **anywhere** in Scripture!

Yes, Jesus said we should love one another, and the standard is to love one another as He loved us (**John 15:12**). Let us state first of all that this is, indeed, a high standard! But how **did** Jesus love us? Did He come here to say nothing at all about our spiritual condition? Did He "just love" us and say nothing that would point out our sins or say nothing that would condemn us? Did His love restrain Him from ever telling anyone they were wrong?

Consider that the death of Jesus was, itself, an implication that all men were in sin. When John said that Jesus was a propitiation "*for the sins of the whole world*" (**1 John 2:2**), he was, in effect, condemning the whole world of sin because the whole world had a **need** for a propitiation; after all, "*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*" (**Rom. 3:23**). By the very act of giving Himself for our sins (cf. **1 Cor. 15:3**), Jesus demonstrated that we were all in sin. But we should see it **not** an act of condemnation, but salvation! But when we remember that it was for **love** Jesus gave Himself for us (cf. **Eph. 5:2**), we see the manner in which **we** should "love one another."

True love does not make excuses for sin and it does not try to make it less than what it really is. True love for one another means that **if** we point out error, it is because we want them to do **the right thing**! We point out error **not** because we think we are "holier than thou" [as the Pharisees did] but because we recognize the standard of God's word and seek to help others live according to that standard—and we expect that they would do the same for us. We recognize that if we are not

following the will of God, we are in sin and error and, as such, we would stand condemned before God and Christ in the end. We recognize that when Jesus said, "*Judge not, that you be not judged*" (**Matt. 7:1**), He was saying that we should not judge others by a standard we would not want for ourselves. We do not want anyone to stand before God to be condemned, but want all to be able to hear those wonderful words, "*Well done, good and faithful servant*" (**Matt. 25:21**).

The wise writer said, "*Better is open rebuke than hidden love*" (**Prov. 27:5**). Friends and brethren, if we never show our love by telling those who are in error that they are in error, how can we honestly say we love them? For you who are parents, would you keep your mouth shut if you saw your toddler walking towards a busy street for fear they might think you didn't love them? Of course not! So why do we think it is "unloving" to point out to adults that they are in great **spiritual** danger? Is this matter not infinitely more important than even our physical lives? Should we not readily point out error so that the lost may know they are lost and the erring will know they are in error? James plainly said, "*whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins*" (**Jas. 5:19, 20**). It will be **love** that leads a man to turn a sinner from his wandering, not silence.

If you claim to follow the Jesus of the Bible, you must be willing to accept Him for who He is **completely**. We cannot take the "loving" Jesus and reject the Jesus who rebuked those in sin. Only **one** Jesus can save us (**Acts 4:12**).

News N Notes

Remember these in your prayers:

- Merl Frey
- Tammy Garrison, Zeda Goddard's daughter
- Audrio Gaudio, Nancy Morris' great-granddaughter
- Blake Headen, Alberta's husband.
- Blake Swanson, Dorothy Lancaster's grandson
- Virginia Malick, Peggy Miller's mother
- Roy Rhodes, Peggy Miller's brother
- Terry Smith, Jr.
- Mabel Fleming
- Amanda Dowdy
- Terry Smith's brother George
- Ed & Marie Roberts, & Ed's father, Jim Roberts.
- Ila Marshall, Harold Marshall's mother
- Cary & Grace Lancaster

Nursing Home:

- Hazel Carroll
- Pauline Sellers
- Rhea Henthorn

Shut-ins:

- Ethel Mahan
- Josephine Clow
- Mabel Fleming
- Pauline Midcap