

TRUTH & LIGHT

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REMEMBER WHO YOU PLAY FOR

I have a pretty big weakness for tolerating phalange related injuries. My eyes wince shut and sympathy pain shivers down my spine any time I think of someone with a finger or toe injury. I know I'm super weird. That is the reason I still have not and probably will never watch the footage of Boston Celtics player, Gordon Hayward, dislocating his left ankle and fracturing his left tibia in their season opener against the Cleveland Cavs. Midway through the first quarter Haywood attempted to catch an alley-oop pass for a dunk. He landed awkwardly on his left foot, and everyone knew immediately something awful had happened. Hayward collapsed under the basket

and looked in horror as his left foot was pointing outward. After the injury, several of Hayward's teammates huddled in prayer while many covered their mouths and looked away. While I am still among those looking away refusing to even look at any of the images, I have found myself looking at his example of faith. Gordon Hayward is very vocal about his spiritual life and has no shame in stating that his primary motivation for playing professional basketball is to glorify God. "My parents (Gordon Scott Hayward and Jody Hayward) went to church every Sunday. They have been there for me my whole life. They took me to church. It's always been a

staple; something I try to do.” In an article where he was asked about how much of an influence God is in his life, he mentions that before every game his mother sends a reminder to him in a text message: “Remember who you play for.” “It helps to remind myself why I am doing this, I am playing for the glory of God. It makes life easier. It takes a lot of pressure off of you. My inspiration first and foremost always has to be God. I play every game for Him and after that my inspiration is my family.” I found that to be so encouraging and such a great statement...Remember who you play for! It is no secret that the moment you make any kind of public profession of your faith in God and desire to glorify Him in everything that you do that you are going to be watched extremely closely. Count me among those who may be watching Gordon Hayward a bit more closely now that I know he is playing his sport for a higher calling than fame and money. I’ll be watching him closely when someone sends him to the floor with a hard foul, when he doesn’t

get a call to go his way, when his team loses a game, or when some fan of an opposing team is yelling something derogatory at him from the stands. I’ll be watching, not as a skeptic hoping he somehow fails to respond as you’d hope and expect someone living for God’s glory would. I’ll be watching as a reminder that my curiosity in how deeply convicted his professed faith really is as reflected in his demeanor is exactly the same way others in my life inevitably will be looking at me. Every time I bow my head in prayer in a crowded restaurant, and others see my faith in God on public display, do I not realize others may be watching me a bit more closely to see how I react if my order is wrong or receive sub-par service? I can remember being reminded of this a few years ago waiting in line behind a large group of worshipers who had just gotten out of their services to have a meal at a fast food restaurant. Several of them were very rudely talking down to the workers taking their order and making their meals.

BIBLE TRIVIA

C H A L L E N G E

DIRECTIONS: After searching through your Bible, circle which answer is correct.

1. What did the man with the unclean spirit in the synagogue say about Jesus?

- a) Prince of the Demons
- b) Holy One of God
- c) Good Teacher
- d) Just A Man

2. Who did Jesus tell the healed leper to go see?

- a) His Parents
- b) Other Lepers
- c) The Priest
- d) The Apostles

3. What did the scribes think of Jesus telling a paralytic his sins were forgiven?

- a) Scared
- b) Confused
- c) Preaching Truth
- d) Blaspheming

4. In His defense, Jesus quoted a passage about this man eating unlawful bread:

- a) David
- b) Elijah
- c) Hezekiah
- d) Aaron

5. Jesus looked at the Pharisees in anger when he healed this affliction:

- a) Blindness
- b) Paralytic
- c) Withered Hand
- d) Leprosy

6. While Jesus taught large crowds, his family was looking for him because they thought He lost:

- a) His Money
- b) His Food
- c) His Cloak
- d) His Senses

7. Jesus was preaching everything in this way:

- a) Rhymes
- b) Parables
- c) Songs
- d) Poems

8. The disciples were stunned to find Jesus doing this in the middle of a storm:

- a) Sleeping
- b) Singing
- c) Crying
- d) Eating

9. The man healed of a legion of demons wanted to do this:

- a) Go tell all his friends
- b) Replace the dead pigs
- c) Change his name
- d) Leave with Jesus

10. Jesus said this should be done for the 12 year old girl risen from the dead:

- a) Give her a hug
- b) Give her a toy
- c) Give her something to eat
- d) Give her an autograph of Jesus

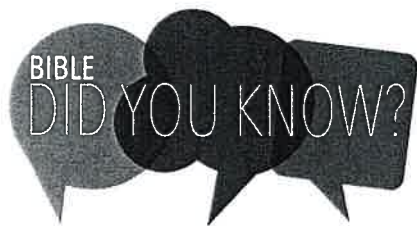
- 1) B, Reference: Mk. 1:23-24
2) C, Reference: Mk. 1:40-44
3) D, Reference: Mk. 2:5-7
4) A, Reference: Mk. 2:23-28
5) C, Reference: Mk. 3:1-6
6) D, Reference: Mk. 3:20-21
7) B, Mk. 4:2, 33-34
8) A, Mk. 4:38
9) D, Mk. 5:18
10) C, Mk. 5:43

ANSWERS & VERSES:

Once they were finished being served, the woman behind the counter about to take my order angrily vented at me, "Church people are the worst!! I'm sorry, but they are!" As she calmed down, she asked for my order and I quickly told her to brace herself as I was a "church person" too! She laughed and apologized for the remark and explained why she had said it. "I am not exaggerating at all, but this group of people from this church come in here all the time after services and are the rudest customers I see all the time!" I noticed several other workers who couldn't help but overhear what was being said nodding in agreement to her statement. "I don't have anything against people who go to church, I used to go all the time years ago. But when I see these people act the way they do I don't want anything to do with them!" I told her I was sorry that the behavior of some had soured her interest in studying the bible and seeking God and tried to encourage her to overlook the weaknesses of man and see the perfect glory of God who is worthy to be worshiped.

I'm sure Gordon Hayward will be looked at in wonder when his team checks into a hotel on the road: will someone who "plays for the glory of God" treat the staff like that or like an entitled sports star? For us, this is a great way to start each day before we encounter others watching us live out our faith..."Remember who you play for." Peter encourages us to think that way in all our dealings with unbelievers. "Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers, they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them, glorify God in the day of visitation," 1 Peter 2:12.

- Daniel Ruegg



There is a sin not leading to death and a sin leading to death. "If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask and God will for him give life to those who commit sin not leading to death," 1 Jn. 5:16