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JESUS' EARTHLY MINISTRY CONTINUES

FIRST WE NEED TO KNOW WHAT THE LORD WAS AND IS ABOUT

- He was devoted to helping people in need.

LUKE 4:16-21

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¹⁸"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to *the poor*; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to *the captives* and recovery of sight to *the blind*, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

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- His followers were sent to reap His sowing.

JOHN 4:34-38

Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. ³⁵Do you not say, 'There are still four months and *then* comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! ³⁶And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. ³⁷For in this the saying is true: 'One sows and another reaps.' ³⁸I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors."

- Christ obeyed what He was shown to do.

JOHN 5:19-21

..., "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner. ²⁰For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel. ²¹For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to *them*, even so the Son gives life to whom He will."

- He was sent to do the works of His Father.

JOHN 9:4-5

"I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; *the night* is coming when no one can work. ⁵As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."

- Believers are called to continue His works.

JOHN 14:12

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. ¹³And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴If you ask anything in My name, I will do it."

- We are called to follow Jesus' example.

1 PETER 2:21

For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:...

- Our example should be for others to follow.

1 CORINTHIANS 11:1

Imitate me, just as I also *imitate* Christ.

In the Gospels, Jesus said, "**Follow Me**" 15 times. How are we doing?

CHAIN BREAKER

If you've been walking the same old road for miles and miles
If you've been hearing the same old voice tell the same old lies
If you're trying to fill the same old holes inside
There's a better life, there's a better life

If you've got pain, He's a pain taker
If you feel lost, He's a way maker
If you need freedom or saving
He's a prison-shaking Savior
If you've got chains, He's a chain breaker

We've all searched for the light of day in the dead of night
We've all found ourselves worn out from the same old fight
We've all run to things we know just ain't right
There's a better life, there's a better life

If you believe it, if you receive it
If you can feel it, somebody testify
If you believe it, if you receive it
If you can feel it, somebody testify, testify

by Jonathan Lindley Smith / Mia Fieldes / Zach Williams

WHO ARE YOU?

by Tony Evans

If I were to ask you who you are, could you tell me without giving me your name, occupation, or job title, or any other obvious means we use to identify ourselves? If I were to simply say, "Tell me who you are," what would you say?

It's not that your name and occupation don't matter. These are valid, but there are plenty who know their names and occupations and yet don't really know who they are at their core. Therefore, they have no real sense of purpose in life.

When you have no *purpose* for what you're doing, all you have left is the routine of what you're doing. Many trudge to work every day and home every night with little or no sense of why they do what they do.

Since thinking about the purpose of life can raise uncomfortable questions, many hide behind their routines. It becomes their escape & excuse not to search for anything more. The routine may not be enjoyable, but at least it's safe. It's predictable.

Many of us have lost sight of the fact that life and its labor are from God. We believe we've earned our things. We get up in the morning and say: "Here's my agenda. I'm going to do this and this." Then we get aggravated, and even angry when things interrupt those plans. We've forgotten that our lives are not our own. They are God's, and it is his work we are here to do. The plans, the timing, and our assignments are all his.

For this reason, Jesus' brother James warned against setting our own agendas. His writings remind us that life is nothing more than a "mist" which vanishes in a short time and that we should plan by saying, "If the Lord wills, we will live

and do this or that" (v. 15).

No matter how important or successful the person, he has to remember that life is God's gift to him for a time. Many a man has gone to his job and never come home again; made his plans for the year and suffered a heart attack; or arranged his schedule for the week and found himself under the surgeon's knife instead. We need to realize that even though life is *given* to us, it is a gift.

The condemnation of Romans 1 is that God gave man nature, the earth, a big, beautiful world. But not only were men ungrateful, they claimed it all as their own. It became their world, along with their lives, their work, their land, and their families. Somewhere in their houses, they put God away in a closet or on a mantle, and became unthankful.

The Bible says they turned their attentions toward creation and away from the Creator. To put it another way, they forgot the Giver and began to worship the gifts he had given. This is an ultimate sin.

A few decades ago, I found one of my daughters banging the doll I had given her for Christmas against the kitchen sink. I took the doll away from her. She said: "But, Daddy, it's my doll. You gave it to me." Somehow she had understood that my giving her the doll had given her absolute independence, the right to do with it whatever she chose. To give her a better understanding of gift-giving, I explained: "Yes, honey, this doll was your gift. I bought it for you for Christmas, and I want you to enjoy it. But there is one thing that you must understand. I gave you the doll to play with and take care of, not to mistreat. If you misuse the gift, I'll have to take it back."

The gift of life cannot really be enjoyed until it is received as a gift. Some people act as though they want to snatch life from God's hands or steal it while he isn't looking. They don't want a gift — they want self-willed ownership.

God can't be fooled. He wants to give you life and to stay in your life as an essential part of the gift. He also wants you to be thankful for the life he gives. You can refuse the gift if you don't like the terms, but there are no terms on which you can beg, borrow, steal, or buy His abundant life. Mere existence is the only alternative.

If you have accepted the gift of life, how does God know you are thankful? He doesn't know you are thankful just because you go to church on the 7th or 1st day of each week. That may be a small part of it, but God is just as interested in your Monday through Fridays as your Lord's Days.

The proof of our thankfulness is in the fact that we let him govern our lives. Think for a moment about the prayer Jesus gave to his disciples (Matt. 6:9–13). He prayed, "Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." God's will is to be performed here on earth just as it is in heaven. How is that? In heaven, everybody and everything conforms to the will of God. It's his will—perfect, absolute, and only.

God wants men who are so thankful for their lives that they surrender themselves to him out of genuine appreciation.

Times Square Costumed Characters Don't Live Up To Their Image

Average Rating: Not rated [see ratings/reviews]



Occasionally the costumed street performers in New York City's Times Square fall on hard times. The ordinary folks dressed up as Spider-Man, Elmo, Cookie Monster, Mickey and Minnie Mouse, or a whole host of popular movie and TV characters compete to get pictures with and tips from tourists. But a few years ago there was a rash of unseemly incidents with these street characters.

One of Times Square's Spider-Man performers [punched an NYPD officer](#) after resisting arrest for harassing a tourist.

[According to another report](#), "Cookie Monster stood accused of shoving a 2-year-old.

Mr. Super Mario was charged with groping.

Police spokesman Paul Browne said in an email that the department has had "occasional issues with the 'faux paws' in Times Square, but they're nominal."

And Elmo was booked for berating tourists with anti-Semitic slurs."

[Why all the drama?](#) According to one psychology professor at Tufts, "When we are anonymous, the unwritten rules of society fall by the wayside and we engage in acts that we wouldn't usually want to be held accountable for. Masks are a good physical substantiation of that."

Paul Pastor, Portland, Oregon; sources: Jamie Schram, Larry Celona, Kevin Sheehan and Amber Sutherland, "More Times Square Characters Arrested After Spider-Man Attack" The New York Post (7-28-14); "Crooked Cookie Monster, Angry Elmo? Beware Of Times Square Characters" FoxNews.com, (4-10-13); Christophe Haubursin, "Why Costumed Times Square Performers Keep Attacking People" NYMag.com (7-31-2014)

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