

What Will You Do With Jesus? #4

Joe Slater

Pontius Pilate, Governor of Judea, what will you do with Jesus? Pilate answers, "I'll disclaim responsibility!"

When the kangaroo court of Caiaphas completed its miscarriage of justice, they hustled Jesus away for another sham trial before the Roman governor of the province of Judea (Matt. 27:11-26). Pilate knew full well that the Jews had no valid charges against Jesus, but *"because of envy they had delivered Him"* (v. 18). Spineless politician that he was, however, he bowed to the demand of the blood-thirsty mob that screamed, *"Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"* Pilate would have preferred to release Jesus. He was totally innocent, and the governor knew it and said so repeatedly. Rather than do the right thing, though, Pilate symbolically washed his hands, as if this absolved him of responsibility for permitting an innocent man to be executed. His cowardly act has become proverbial; people wanting to disassociate themselves from a disagreeable situation are said to "wash their hands" of the matter.

We routinely face situations where taking a stand for truth and righteousness brings howls of protest. We can stand firm as Jesus always did; or we can surrender to the crowd and "wash our hands" like Pilate. All around us, brethren are conceding to popular demands. Jesus' teaching on baptism doesn't suit most of the religious world, so some are reclassifying baptism as non-essential. His teaching on divorce/remarriage struck even His disciples as unreasonably hard, so most soften it or ignore it altogether. Few, if any of these, will acknowledge that caving in to culture and political correctness amounts to a denial of Christ; but the Lord Himself put those who reject Him and those who reject His word in the same basket (John 12:48). What will you do with Jesus?

Look Into The Mirror!

"For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does" (James 1:22-25).

Grandpa and his precious, tiny granddaughter were sitting together talking when she asked, "Did God make you, Grandpa?" "Yes, God made me," the grandfather answered. After a significant pause, the little girl asked him, "Did God make me too?" "Yes, He did," the old man responded. For a few minutes the little girl seemed to be studying her grandpa, as well as her own reflection in a nearby mirror. The grandfather wondered what thoughts were running through her innocent, inquisitive mind. At last she broke the silence: "You know what, Grandpa," she said in child-like candor, "God's been doing a lot better job lately."

I love that story. But it hurts a little. A well-made mirror does not lie. We may not like mirrors, but we need them to determine whether we are presentable.

To determine whether we are acceptable to God, we need to look continually into the mirror of His Word. As we see our reflection in view of what He requires of us, we can make adjustments by bringing our lives into compliance with His will. Thus, according to James' inspired words, one will *"be blessed in what he does."*

Our Bible classes provide a great opportunity for us to look into God's Word and take stock of where we are in our spiritual lives. If you already attend and actively participate in the studies, you already know the blessings produced in your own lives. Keep it up. If you do not regularly attend any of our Bible class offerings, please give them a try. I think you will discover blessings in your life resulting from consistently looking into the mirror of God's Word.

--Johnny Hester (via Bulletin Gold)

HOLD THE MAYO

"Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in him" (Psalm 34:8).

Have you ever noticed the clever slogans at fast food chains? The concept each restaurant seeks to portray is that the customer is in complete and total control. For example, Burger King invites customers to come and "have it your way." Wendy's encourages patrons to "do what tastes right," while Taco Bell bids their clientele to "think outside the bun" and "live mas" (live more) by choosing a burrito or taco over a hamburger. Quite often, these catchphrases become engrained in our culture.

Now, consider how frequently these "slogans" mirror everyday life. Regarding spiritual matters, many choose to "have it their way" by embracing lifestyles that contradict God's will. Rather than "tasting and finding the Lord to be gracious" (1 Peter 2:3), others make the choice to *"think beyond the things which are written"* (1 Corinthians 4:6) and "live more" by "doing what feels right." When all things are considered, being in complete and total control is not always a good thing.

How do we remedy this problem? We must reject conventional thinking and exercise the ultimate self-control by allowing God to take total control. Paul writes, *"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God"* (Romans 12:2).

--Kenny Westmorland (Celina, TN)

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Dear Optimist, Pessimist, and Realist,

While you were arguing whether the glass of water was half empty or half full, I drank it.

**Sincerely,
The Opportunist**