

Epistles of Christ

“You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; clearly you are an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart” (2Cor. 3:2-3).

“Dr. Bob Reccord tells of an experience he learned about while in the business world. A major institution that ranked among the Fortune 500 was working to make an unheard-of-move. They were going to promote a 38 year old vice president to president. The man was an impressive businessman who wooed and awed the board of directors. Upon completing the final interview process, the board broke for lunch, with plans to offer this man the prestigious position of president after they all returned from lunch. This young man went to lunch alone at a cafeteria, but was unintentionally followed by several of the board members, who stood in line behind him. When the young man came to the bread section, he placed two three-cent butters on his tray and covered them up with his napkin. As he checked out he never revealed the hidden six cents' worth of butter. When everyone returned to the boardroom for what was to be a joyous occasion, the mood had dramatically changed. The promising young man was not only denied the help of the company but was fired from his position as vice president – all because of six cents' worth of butter.” (Leighton Ford Evangelism Leadership Seminar, 1991)

The true character of our faith is not what we show everyone, but what we are to God. It is when our character is shown to everyone that we are people of character. Integrity is a virtue of every child of God. Job said, “Does He not see my ways, and count all my steps? If I have walked with falsehood, or if my foot has hastened to deceit, let me be weighed on honest scales, that God may know my integrity.” (Job 31:4-6)

In a crazy and mixed up world the honest people should be the ones who call Christ their Savior and King. We are the only Bible some may read, as the song says. The World's Bible. How do people read us? What do they see in our lives that glorifies God? Are we examples of honesty, truth, nobility, character? Let men read us as citizens of the kingdom of Christ. People of our word. People of our bond. A handshake from us is as good as gold (just not very legally binding anymore). Let's not take two three cent squares of butter and jeopardize our character. If we allow too much character assassination it may lead to spiritual death and finally eternal death. “Character is what you are in the dark.” (Dwight L. Moody 1837-1899, Sermon) Compiled by Kent Heaton

True Service

“Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, Lord, are You washing my feet? Jesus answered and said to him, What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this. Peter said to Him, You shall never wash my feet! Jesus answered him, If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me. Simon Peter said to Him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head! Jesus said to him, He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you. For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, You are not all clean” (John 13:1-11).

The record of Jesus washing the disciples' feet is the picture of true service. If we would be His disciples, we must learn from His example. Being a servant means looking past yourself. Jesus had a lot of things on His mind that night. However, His thoughts were not of Himself, but of His disciples. "He loved them to the end." The disciples were thinking of themselves, while the Man of Sorrows was thinking only of them. He laid aside His garments and washed their feet.

Being a servant means not fussing over your rights. Your supper may get cold. While others are sitting, you'll be stooping. You'll get the grime and dirt of other people on you. It happened to Jesus. It'll happen to those who serve like Him.

Being a servant means going first and going it alone. It doesn't take a servant to observe that there are a bunch of dirty feet that need washing. He is a servant who gets up and gets busy. Jesus didn't ask for Peter to grab a towel and help. A servant doesn't quit when others don't share his enthusiasm for the project.

Being a servant means serving those who don't understand, even those who don't care. Peter didn't get it. Jesus said, "You'll understand later." Judas never did get it, but Jesus washed His feet, too. The greatest test of service may be when we're asked to serve the ungrateful, or the enemy who pretends to be our friend. Can you do that? The Master did. Are you better than Him? Christianity ... makes a man's greatness consist in the amount of service he renders to the world. (Theodore Parker, Thoughts on Labor, 1841) By Jason Moore

Big Name Preacher

"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. 4:10). "For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20).

A congregation had invited a "big name" preacher to preach for them one Sunday. As it turned out, however, he couldn't go and he sent his brother to speak in his place. As word got around the congregation, several people started to leave. The fill-in preacher then stood up and made this announcement: "Those of you who came to hear my brother speak may leave at this time; those of you who came to worship God may stay on."

Joshua said, "And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" (Joshua 24:15).

A Moments Wisdom on Optimism

--Despite his extensive publishing record, Robert Louis Stevenson was often bedridden and in poor health. Still he always seemed to have a very optimistic attitude. His wife reported that one day she questioned him about this. Stevenson smiled at the sun light streaming through the window and answered, 'I do believe it's a wonderful day. I will never allow a row of medicine bottles to block my horizon.'

--Gray skies are just clouds passing over.

--Children are born optimists, and we slowly educate them out of it.

--Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadows. (Helen Keller)

--Optimists do not wait for improvement; they achieve it.

--I am an optimist, but I'm an optimist who carries an umbrella.

--An optimist is someone who gets treed by a lion but enjoys the scenery.

--An optimist is someone who goes after Moby Dick in a rowboat and takes the tartar sauce with him.