

KEEPING IT REAL

You may have heard the phrase, “keeping it real.” It is an expression that is used in our modern-day vernacular that expresses the idea of being honest and transparent. Christians will never be pleasing to God as long as they fail to “keep it real.”

The Greeks have two words that are used for being fake. The first word that is used is “plastos.” It is from this word that we get the English word “plastic.” It carries the idea of someone taking on the form of something that they are not. Have you ever known someone you would describe as plastic?

The second word is “hupokrinomai.” It is a form of the word “hupokrites” from which we get the word “hypocrite.” Literally, it means to decide under. It carries the idea of acting under a false character. In ancient times, a hypocrite was a professional actor. He pretended to be someone else by playing a role in a play. In Luke 20.20, the word is translated as “pretend.”

The Holy Spirit guided the hands of the New Testament writers to instruct us that our lives as Christians are not to be pretend or plastic. We are to be genuine in all that we do. For example, in **1 PETER 1.22**, we are told *“in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart.”* The word “sincere” is the word “hupokrinomai” which means “to pretend.” However, it is prefixed by the letter “a” which negates the word. Literally, the apostle Peter is telling Christians that they are not to pretend to love their brethren. Our love is never to be faked.

When you show love toward your brethren, do you “keep it real”? Do you speak with kindness toward your brother at worship services and then speak evil about him to your spouse on the way home? Do you reach out the hand of fellowship on Sunday, and then shun him on Monday? Do you love with a “pure heart,” that is, with a clean heart? Paul writes that we are to *“Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.”* If we show love on the surface but inside are filled with bitterness and anger, can we really say we love with sincerity?

Christians are to “keep it real.” One may pretend to be faithful, to love the brethren, but God knows the heart (Heb. 4.13).

NORTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST
2424 McCARRAN ST.
NORTH LAS VEGAS, NV 89031
(702) 642-3141

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WWW.NLVCHURCHOFCHRIST.COM

NORTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST

2424 McCarran St. ☐ North Las Vegas, NV ☐ 89030

Phone: (702) 642-3141 Email: Pruittlc@gmail.com

Be sure to watch us live at www.nlvchurchofchrist.com

Facebook: Northside Church of Christ

“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature”
-Mark 16.15

February 6, 2023

MEETING TIMES:

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE CLASS : 9:00 AM

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP: 9:50 AM

SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP: 6:00 PM

WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE CLASS 7:30 PM

JESUS IS A SERVANT

A young preacher was talking to his mentor and was complaining about being mistreated by the brethren. There were brethren who disagreed with him doctrinally and he found himself caught up in controversy. There were brethren who would come to him with their broken lives and expect him to fix them speedily. His mentor asked him, “Have they spit on your lapel? Have they slapped you in the face? Have they stripped you of your clothing and laughed? Have they replaced your crown with a crown of mockery?” He realized that he had been complaining about nothing, and so he answered, “No sir, but until they do, I will hold on and set forth to proclaim the message of Christ as His servant.”

To live as a servant, I need to remember that Jesus came and lived as a servant. Jesus tells us that *“the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many”* (Matt. 20.28). Paul explains that Jesus *“made Himself of no reputation...He humbled Himself”* (Phil. 2.7,8). Preaching on Solomon’s porch, Peter declared that *“the God of our fathers glorified His Servant Jesus”* (Acts 3.13).

In a word of might makes right and humility is equated with weakness, the world needs to be introduced to the Servant named Jesus. It is our example that shows the humility of Jesus. CLP

BLOTTING OUT YOUR SINS

ACTS 3:19

INTRODUCTION:

1. The book of Acts begins by writing that the life of Jesus was only the beginning. (Acts 1.1; John 19.31)
2. The thesis of Acts centers around Jesus who meant so much to the apostles that they were driven to share His message. (Acts 1.8)
3. After a miracle grabbed the attention of the Jews, Peter preached a Christ-centered sermon. (Acts 3.1-11)

I. THE SEVERITY OF SIN

- A. The sin of the Jews.
 1. Delivered: The Jews delivered Jesus to the Romans (Acts 3.13; Matt. 27.1,2; John 18.31)
 2. Denied: The Jews denied the identity of Jesus as the Christ. (Acts 3.13; John 19.15,21)
 3. Determined: Pilate was determined to let them go. (Acts 3.13,14; John 18.38; 19.4)
- B. Notice the severity of their sin.
 1. **JOHN 19.11:** *“The one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.”*
 2. The put to death the One who has done nothing wrong and everything right. (Acts 13.14; Heb. 4.15)

II. THE SOLUTION FOR SIN

- A. **ACTS 3.19:** *“Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out.”* Two concepts behind “blotted out.”
 1. Blotting out (exaleipthenai): Ek – “out”; Aleipho – “to wipe.” Literally, to wipe out. (Jer. 2.22)
 2. In the Old Testament, blotting out refers to the covering of debt. (Jer. 17.1)
- B. How can we have our sins blotted out?
 1. **ACTS 3.19:** *“Repent”* (cf. Luke 13.3)
 2. **ACTS 3.19:** *“be converted”* Epistrepchos: Epi – “over”; Strephos – “to turn.” Lit., to turn over. (Acts 26.18-20)
 3. Only when we repent and turn to God with our hearts can we enjoy the forgiveness of sins. (Acts 26.18-20)

CONCLUSION: There is no sin that Jesus cannot wipe out.

JESUS IS SAVIOR

In the book of Philippians, the apostle Paul described Jesus like this: *“the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ”* (Phil. 3.20). In Acts 2, Peter preaches about Jesus and then says, *“Be saved from this perverse generation”* (Acts 2.40). Jesus is the Savior, and the only way for us to be saved is through Him. What does it mean when Jesus is characterized as the Savior?

The fact that Jesus is the Savior implies that something exists from which we need saving. Jesus as the Savior indicates the reality of sin. In **1 JOHN 3.8**, we are told that *“He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”* Jesus came to be our Savior because of sin. Sin is the worst thing that man has ever known. If it hadn’t been for sin, there would be no death. If it hadn’t been for sin, there would be no hell. When we go from day to day, and we see people who have given up the beautiful blessing of life, we need to impress upon them the reality of sin.

The fact that Jesus is the Savior implies that you and I are sinners. The penman of Hebrews wrote, *“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone”* (Heb. 2.9). This passage tells us that Jesus came to die for everyone. Thus everyone is guilty of sin. Regardless of how hard we try to ignore it or disguise it, it is everyone’s problem. It is not a white-collar problem or a blue-collar problem. It is not a problem that is more prevalent in minority communities. I need to remember that Jesus is my Savior as much as He is the Savior of everyone else.

The fact that Jesus is the Savior implies that the consequences of our sins is being in a lost condition. Jesus said that *“the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost”* (Luke 19.10). We live in a world that has turned heaven into a brothel where you can go to heaven and be given 72 virgins. We live in a world that has turned hell into a figment of our imagination. This is a world that needs to have impressed upon them that their sins lead to eternal destruction (Rev. 21.8).

If we want to help people who deal with the reality of sin because they are guilty of sin and face the consequences of their choices, we need to tell them about the Savior, Jesus Christ. CLP