

Be Jesus.

Introduction

Be Jesus. Wow. This is a big ask. In fact, it seems a bit presumptuous to think we can **be Jesus**. Be Kind. Be Present. Be Brave. We can do those things. We get that. They're clearly good things to be and do. But **be Jesus**? Let's dig in to this a bit. What does that even mean?

"Personal Jesus"

In 1989, Depeche Mode released this song. Topped the charts. "Reach out touch faith. Your own personal Jesus. Someone to hear your prayers. Someone who cares." Great song and several remakes have been done. But, there's a problem: we don't get our own personal Jesus. We do get a personal relationship with the real Jesus, but to say that he is my personal Jesus is to say that I can shape and form Jesus as I want him to be. Which unfortunately has happened a lot and has created a lot of confusion about who Jesus actually was, who he really is.

Jesus walked the earth, had real beliefs, said real things, acted in ways that instruct us how to follow him. And, he said that when he left, it was good because he would send the Spirit to guide us into all truth. Ongoing. Not once and done.

Jesus prayed to his Father (Jn 17:26): I have made you known to them, and **will continue** to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that **I myself may be in them**.

Embracing Everyday Interactions

Our goal is to continually yield ourselves to the Spirit of Jesus working in our lives, so that we might clearly reflect and be the love, presence, and power of Jesus to the people with whom we relate.

Biblical Text Options

John 15:3-8 – According to Jesus, the disciples were "already clean" because of the word he had spoken to them. And yet, there was more for them according to Jesus. "Remain in me", he told them. Though you are clean, though you have walked with me and known me, if you do not stay connected to me, like branches to a vine, you will be like a branch that is thrown away and withers. But, remaining in Him...dependent, close, obedient...results in much fruit. The relationship is active, transformative, life-giving. His love in you, given to others,



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will change the world. (See Mother Teresa video:

<https://www.facebook.com/goalcast/videos/1370150243062162/>

John 14:12; 16:7; Acts 3:1-10-

Jesus expected his disciples to do greater works than he did. He sent them out to heal and raise the dead. And, stories of these kind of power-encounters have been part of our story as followers of Jesus since the first church. And, yet, in our western world, it seems we either shy away from this aspect of following Jesus entirely, or make it central...elevating the "works" more than Jesus himself. Walking with Jesus, being Jesus to those we encounter, may mean stepping out in faith, and love, and inviting the power of the Spirit of God to touch someone. Are we willing?

Mark 8:29 –

But what about you Peter, who do you say that I am? There are so many things Peter could have said that would not have been wrong: a rabbi, a healer, a miracle worker. But, what Peter said made all the difference. You are Messiah. You are savior. Deliverer. You are Lord. Only one response was merited from Peter: complete allegiance. To acknowledge Jesus as Messiah left no middle-ground for Peter to stand on, no place to evaluate Jesus based upon his own understanding. Jesus must matter more than anything...even Peter's own life. So, I ask you, who do you say Jesus is? (And what does your life say about who Jesus is?)

Application

Being Jesus to the people in our lives takes ongoing intention. After all, becoming more and more like Jesus, aka transformation, is not a passive process on our parts. Consider these evaluative questions:

- Do I believe what Jesus believed?
- Do my words match my actions?
- Do I really know Jesus?
- Do I do what Jesus did?
- Do I live like Jesus matters more than anything?

Story or example from leader/preacher to emphasize and/or unpack what you feel is most important for your hearers.



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Closing

Nobody is disqualified. Wherever you are, as you believe in and follow Jesus, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is alive in you. Really! Now, where do you need that power? For some, it is to simply be kind to someone you have previously hated, and perhaps for good reason. For some, it's time to step out in faith and pray for a miracle in someone's life.

Jesus has trusted us so much to allow us to be his first impression to a world desperately in need of Him. He's not sitting back judging us on how we are doing, but rather resides in us by his Spirit, cheers us on, as he longs to love the world through us. Are you willing? Will you yield? Don't evaluate how "far" you have to go. Otherwise we'll never get started.

Just start. Don't give up.

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