



St. Paul Evangelical Community Church (SPECC)

Worship Address : Cerritos High School Auditorium
12500 E. 183rd St., Cerritos, CA 90703
(Enter at Bloomfield, across Heritage Park)

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August 2, 2009

Theme: What Would Jesus Do?

Text: 1 John 2:16; 1 Peter 2:20-21

Today I am going to begin a series of topical messages—but they will still be based upon the Bible. The series that we will begin today will focus on the question, "What would Jesus do?" At the end of the last century, it was sort of a fad to wear bracelets and have key chains and so on that had the initials, "WWJD," on them. The topic is sort of an old one, but it is still relevant today. At least the apostle John thought so. In his first letter he wrote, "Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did."

In 1897, a man named Charles Sheldon wrote a book entitled, "In His Steps." It was about a mythical town named, Raymond, which experienced a profound transformation because the members of a church were challenged to a deeper commitment to Christ. The pastor of that church challenged the members to ask the question, "What would Jesus do?" before every action that they took. He challenged them to do this for one year. In the story, revival came to that community because of the commitment of Christians to ask this question. How would our lives be changed if we were to ask this question before every action.

One way that our lives might be changed is that we would become people of prayer. Prayer was a high priority in Jesus' life. He spent whole nights in prayer to God. His fellowship with God was a high priority that He never compromised. Luke's Gospel, especially, presents Jesus as a man of prayer. At every major turning point in his ministry, Luke finds him in prayer. If Jesus needed to pray, we surely do also.

Another way that our lives might be changed might in the way that we relate to people. Jesus had time for people. He took time to be with people, to love them and to heal them. If we took time to be with people with the intent of expressing God's love to them, we might find that our thinking will be radically transformed. We might find that we are more often thinking about what is best for others than thinking about what is best for ourselves. All kinds of people from the old to the young, the rich and the poor, the rich young ruler, to the little children felt loved by Jesus.

A third way that our lives might be changed is that we would strive to live lives of purity. If we would walk in Jesus' footsteps, this would be one result. Jesus was not at all seduced by the world. He did not permit wrong thinking of any kind to enter his mind. He did not permit wrongful speech of any kind to leave His lips. The question, "What would Jesus do?" would influence the TV shows, videos, and movies that we watched. It would influence the kind of music that we listen to. It would influence the kind of books that we read. It would even influence the kind of thoughts that we think.



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If we were to ask the question, "What would Jesus do?" this would surely influence the things that we say. We do not often consider the power and influence that our words have on others. James had some strong words to say about the negative influence what we say could have on people. With this in mind we should ask ourselves: "What would Jesus say? Would he tell that joke? Would he curse or use profanity? Would he slander others? Would he spread rumors? Would he gossip?" Of course the answer to all these questions is "No!"

But we must also ask what Jesus would say. He would speak up in favor of people who were being abused in any way. He would stand up for the lost and hurting. He would speak words of salvation and deliverance. Proverbs says: "Death and life are in the power of the tongue..." We can do a great deal of damage with our words, but we can also do a great deal of good. We must learn to say things that are like the words Jesus spoke—words that are filled with grace.

Finally, asking the question, "What would Jesus do?" would change what we value. In other words it would change the things that we consider to be high priorities in our lives. It is likely that we would begin to value people over things. We would recognize that they are persons who are destined either for everlasting life or everlasting judgment. This in turn would motivate us to share the Gospel with them.

We would also begin to value God's will. We would value obedience to God's will. Even committed Christians sometimes forget how much our salvation cost. It cost God the Father his Only Begotten and Beloved Son. It cost Jesus the horribly painful experience of a Roman crucifixion and the even more horribly painful experience of being abandoned by God. With this in mind we might be more inclined to obey Jesus' command, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself, take up his cross daily and follow me." If we were to obey that command alone, our lives would be radically transformed.

So let us allow the question, "What would Jesus do?" to ring in our ears and be branded on our conscience. Let us ask God to show us by His Spirit what Jesus would do if he were standing in our shoes.