

Practicing the Gospel

One of the great criticisms of Christianity is that many who claim to be Christians don't live any differently from the rest of the world. While we don't have to live like odd people, our lives should reflect a qualitative difference because Jesus is our Lord. The apostle Paul tells us in **Colossians 2:6-7**: *"Therefore, as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, having been firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude."* Paul emphasizes not just being Christians in name, but being Christians in all that we do. The term "walk," commonly used in the Bible to describe the Christian life, is in the present tense, indicating continual walking; it's our daily routine. Because the Holy Spirit now lives within our hearts, He enables us to do what we couldn't do on our own. Not only should we speak the gospel with our lips, but we should also demonstrate it in our lives. People need to see Christ in us. **Charles Spurgeon** called this adorning the gospel or dressing up the gospel. He wrote, *"What is appropriate to the gospel? Well, holiness suits the gospel. Adorn the gospel with a holy life. How pure, how clean, how sweet, how heavenly the gospel is. Hang, then, the jewels of holiness around your neck and place them as rings on your hands. The gospel is also to be adorned with mercifulness. It is all mercy. It is all love. There is no love like it. 'God so loved the world.' Well, then, adorn the gospel with the suitable jewels of mercifulness and kindness to other people."* When we share the gospel, it must be clothed in love and carried with a genuine burden for our neighbors in our hearts, as much as for our enemies. **Colossians 3:14**: *"And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."* Jesus tells us to be filled with truth and love, especially for those of us who are Christians. **Ephesians 5:15-17**: *"So then, be careful how you walk, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."* We live in the wisdom of the Gospel toward unbelievers. In our everyday behavior, we should recognize that unbelievers are closely watching us. The world is more interested in our "walk" than in our "talk". One theologian has said, *"I'd rather see a sermon than hear one, any day."* Meaning that we not only confess and praise Christ with our lips, but our behavior should correspond with our talk. It should never be said of us, *"High talk, low walk."* As **Billy Graham** has said, *"I have one message: that Jesus Christ came. He died on a cross, He rose again, and He asked us to repent of our sins and receive Him by faith as Lord and Savior. And if we do, we have forgiveness of all our sins."* What a great testimony to share with others. Wherever Billy Graham went, he always proclaimed the Gospel. We should ask God to help us be like that. The Gospel is the only beam of light shining in this dark world, and it can brighten any life and dispel every shadow. As Christians, we're not worried about our future. We know where we're going because of the Gospel. We know Him who has prepared the way for us, and we are more than conquerors through our Lord Jesus Christ. My hope is that we all discover this for ourselves.