

Man, In The Book

I was talking to a friend who played basketball in a Northern state that will remain nameless but is across the Ohio River. His former High School basketball coach was retiring and had coached at the same High School since dirt was invented. He is the coach with the most wins in the history of the state. This great coach wrote a book about his experiences and philosophy of coaching. What got my attention was a comment my friend made after reading this book. He said that he wished the coach he knew was the coach in the book.

How often do we wish the same thing? Perhaps we wish the supervisor actually lived up to his speech. The company actually lived up to its mission statement; or every car lived up to its hype. The fact is we are often disappointed in the difference between what should be and what is.

This can also apply to the church and its members.

For instance, we wish that fellow Christians live up to their commitment. When a person confesses Christ, they are confessing more than the fact that Jesus is the Son of God; they are confessing that Jesus is their Lord, and Master, "that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10.9) We say we are going to follow Jesus and obey His commands. After all that is what a servant does, he follows his Master. Yet many Christians do not live up to that responsibility.

We wish our fellow Christians will place Jesus first in their lives. Questions such as: "Do I have to come to services?" or, "Why do we have to have a Gospel Meeting?", would not come to mind. We would have just as many Christians at services on Sunday night as Sunday

morning and about that same number on Wednesday night. (Realizing the number present may vary a little due to travel, sickness, work schedules, or other reasons, but not due to saints forsaking the assembling of the saints).

What would it be like if every Christian met up to their job description provided in the Bible? I dare say every local congregation would be striving to grow and have unity as described in Ephesians 4. We would not see congregations dying on the vine or splitting over "personality problems." We would love our enemies and do good to all men. "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith." (Galatians 6.10) Zeal would be the order of the day as we would want to do more in service to God as described in Titus 3.1, "Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work"

The fact is I wish we all lived up to the example provided by us in the life of Jesus. I will admit to not obtaining that level of service and dedication. Yet that is what we are to be striving for. "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: Who committed no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously" (1 Peter 2.21-23).

The fact is I wish we could all meet the man in the Bible. I am of course speaking of Jesus. What if we could all sit at His feet and hear His words. Can you imagine hearing the parable of the sower or, the parable of the talents? How about seeing thousands fed with a few loaves of bread and a handful of fish? Just hear the word of God being proclaimed by the Son of God would be such a treat. What would it be

like to listen to Jesus answer His critics or explain more accurately a misapplied passage?

There are a couple of things I can say about desiring to see Jesus. First, He would live up to our expectations; if we are thinking of Jesus as our Savior. He was perfect in all He did so we would not be able to pick at His faults for there are none. Second, we can meet the man in the Bible every time we pick it up. By reading His words and the words of the inspired writers in the New Testament we are meeting Him. His words are powerful and life changing if we are willing to listen. We can be zealous for good works, growing together, seeking the lost, and serving Him faithfully if we will just follow His words.

Are you ready to be the Christian Jesus desires you to be? - Dennis Tucker