

Romans 10:2-4 *“For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God’s righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.”*

WWJD? What Would Jesus Do

I remember in the early 2000's I would wear a bracelet with the initials W.W.J.D. on it. The purpose of the saying was to remind us to think through our actions and work to do what Jesus would do in any given situation or interaction. Furthermore, when I was in Seminary, I read one of the bestselling books of all time called *IN HIS STEPS* by author Charles M. Sheldon, written in 1899. This story is about a pastor who challenges his congregation to do nothing for the next year without first asking, "What would Jesus do?" The novel then follows a few different people and how their lives are transformed from this exercise.

While I absolutely love the premise of this challenge, I am concerned it would drive us to a work-based mentality. Good works are a fruit of our faith in Jesus Christ; our good works do not earn or prove our faith. I grew up in what would be considered "The Holiness Movement." This was a time in modern non-denominational churches where holiness was a pursuit and living righteously before God was the everyday goal. The problem is no one is perfect or holy—only Jesus is. This drove myself, and so many other young people, to strive for an unattainable perfection and lead to much guilt within church culture. Our faith became about what we did and did not do. While yes, our God has called us to a standard of behavior, he also gave us the Holy Spirit and the gift of grace that will bear the fruit of the spirit in and through our lives. To pursue a type of Holiness through our works and deeds is not only impossible, but also prideful.

As I have matured in my walk with Jesus, I have learned that only through him can I become Holy and Righteous before God. Not one thing I can do can justify me. Only Jesus, and the gift of Grace, can forgive my sins and make me Holy.

Let's consider this thought this week. We must let our faith in Christ bear fruit through our deeds not work to let our deeds lead us into faith. Let's surrender the striving to attain what is offered to us for free.

I love you and God loves you!

Pastor Eric Lundberg