
EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

“...FOR THE EQUIPPING OF THE SAINTS FOR THE WORK OF SERVICE...” ~ EPHESIANS 4:12

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WHAT JESUS REALLY SAID

By Shane Scott

If you think Jesus wants you to hate people because they do not believe what you believe, then you don't know the Jesus of the Bible. That Jesus said, **“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven”** (Matthew 5:44-45). Jesus expects His followers to be kind to all people.

If you think Jesus doesn't care what people believe, then you don't know the Jesus of the Bible. That Jesus said, **“If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free”** (John 8:31-32). Jesus expects His followers to know the truth.

If you think Jesus won't accept sinful people on the margins of society, then you don't know the Jesus of the Bible. That Jesus was called **“a friend of tax collectors and sinners”** (Matthew 11:19). Jesus invites anyone and everyone to follow Him.

If you think Jesus wants sinful people to remain unchanged by their relationship with Him, then you don't know the Jesus of the Bible. That Jesus said, **“I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance”** (Luke 5:32). Jesus calls us as we are but does not leave us as we are—He changes us.

If you think Jesus approves of holding others to a standard you are unwilling to apply to yourself, then you don't know the Jesus of the Bible. That Jesus said, **“Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and with the measure you use it will be measured to you”** (Matthew 7:1-2). Jesus doesn't want His followers to be hypocrites.

If you think Jesus doesn't want His followers to admonish each other when they need spiritual correction, then you don't know the Jesus of the Bible. That Jesus said, **“First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye”** (Matthew 7:5). Jesus expects His followers to “remove specks” in each other's lives.

If you think Jesus approves of trapping others in sin to score points, then you don't know the Jesus of the Bible. That Jesus said, **“Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone...”** (John 8:7). Jesus does not condone playing games with people's lives.

If you think Jesus approves of remaining in sin because other people have rotten attitudes, then you don't know the Jesus of the Bible. That Jesus said, **“Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more”** (John 8:11). Jesus does not condone excusing sin in our own lives.

If you think Jesus is too remote to care about you, then you don't know the Jesus of the Bible. That Jesus said, **“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest”** (Matthew 11:28).

If you think Jesus never expects us to bend our wishes, desires, and inclinations to His will, then you don't know the

Jesus of the Bible. That Jesus said, **“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me”** (Luke 9:23). Jesus wants followers who will put God’s will ahead of their own, just as He did.

[Taken from *focusmagazine.org*]

THE MOMENT OF TRUTH

By Robert F. Turner

From the Spanish bullring, where the cool nerve, the Matador has long been regarded with national pride, comes the expression, *“moment of truth.”*

El Torro and the man! The massive beast, nostrils aflame, goaded to hot fury, perhaps symbolic of all man’s foe, is ready to drive a cruel horn into his vitals. In previous charges the man has led the bull closer and closer with the cape—but always to pass. Now the beast must be brought to ground. Skillfully the sword must be placed so that the maddened rush of the bull drives the blade to its destiny. With this savage lunge, the beast dies, or sweeps el Matador aside in a crushing mingle of blood and dust.

The flashing caps, the splendid uniform, the wild cheers of the packed stadium—all glorious, but none kill the bull. Boasts of billboards, expectations of the sports writers—all meaningless now. It is the awful *“moment of truth.”* The man is truly El Matador—“the killer”—or is swept to ignominious defeat. As I contemplate this spectacle I realize how surely we all face our “moment of truth.” This generation has scarcely known hardship. Depression is meaningful only to grandparents; and the, horrors of war

are seen as foreign products, by citizens of a powerful winning nation. How would we face a disastrous national crisis?

We have posed as Christians. Baptized into Christ, we “attend” church, sing, pray, and partake. We say we love God, and acknowledge that God must come first; but rarely is our dedication to this principle fully tested. What knowledge, what moral fiber have we developed by which to meet our spiritual “moment of truth?”

When our practice is questioned do we become angry? Is our defense the flimsy garment of tradition? El Torro cuts swiftly through such. Are we artful winners of our own “straw” arguments? One day we must face a genuine foe. Do we judge ourselves by ourselves? One day God will judge us in righteousness, for eternity; and we will face an awesome, irrevocable and final “moment of truth.”

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NOTES: _____

AM LESSON:
You Can Understand
the Bible

PM LESSON:
Eschatology:
The Final Judgment

**“GO THEREFORE AND MAKE DISCIPLES...”
(MATTHEW 28:19-20)**