

October 18, 2015

What Would Jesus Do?

Several years ago someone coined the catch phrase: WWJD or What Would Jesus Do? It was intended to remind us that in attempting to live for our Lord we should ask this question often. Of course we were soon inundated with merchandise from bracelets to tee shirts reminding us of this question until it really lost all meaning.

That was really too bad, because it is, I am convinced, exactly what we should be asking as we seek to live our lives for our Lord. Jesus wants us to imitate him, to be transformed by God's power into those who reflect him into the world. We need to understand what Jesus would do with any issue we face and for those of us who follow him his actions ought to become our actions.

So, over the next several weeks we will be looking at some modern challenges and asking the question; "What would Jesus do?" with this situation, or challenge, or issue. If you would like us to look at a particular issue or challenge or situation please feel free to bring that interest forward.

Not long ago I was driving into Salt Lake City taking the exit that I always take to reach my parent's home. I have become used to seeing a beggar right at the bottom of the exit ramp, and usually it has been the same beggar. This last trip I noticed that there was a new beggar, or one that I didn't recognize, standing on that busy intersection.

Of course my reaction to seeing this beggar was pretty much what it always is when I come in contact with someone who is poor or needy. My mind starts the same old debate...should I give them a few dollars...what will they do with it...does it matter...do I want to get involved...someone should do something.... Sound familiar? I think most of us have these debates when faced with the poor and those in need. So, let's ask our question: What would Jesus do?

Biblically there is a lot of direction addressing this issue. The Psalmist writes, "**Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed; rescue the weak and needy...**" (Psalms 82:3-4) Proverbs 31:8-9 says, "**Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy.**"

Jesus told his followers, "**Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will not wear out; a treasure in heaven that will not be exhausted, where no thief comes near and no moth destroys. For where your treasure is, there your heart will also be.**" (Luke 12:33-34) The Apostle Paul told Timothy to, "**Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share.**" (I Timothy 6:18)

The Word makes it pretty clear what the Father's expectation is, so what did Jesus do when he was faced with the needy? Twice during his ministry Jesus is surrounded by crowds who have had little or nothing to eat and desperately needed a meal. In Matthew 15:32 we catch a glimpse of Jesus' attitude toward these people when he says, "**I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they may collapse on the way.**"

The key in understanding what Jesus does in situations like this is found in his statement, "**I have compassion for these people...**" The Master was moved by his compassion for these needy people. In the same way, whenever I see the needy I am convinced that Jesus wants me to be moved by compassion to address their needs in whatever way I can.

As we seek
convinced, to be



to imitate our Lord and Savior we need, I am
moved as he was, by compassion for those who are

poor. In a world that doesn't always see the needs of others through eyes filled with compassion, we must, I think, keep our hearts from being hardened so that we can exemplify the compassion that moved our Lord. M