

## **HOW TO LIVE LIKE JESUS**

**John 8:48-59**

**By Andy Manning**

### **I. Intro:**

1. Christ came for several reasons.
  - i. He came to die for our sins.
    1. **Mark 10:45** “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”
    2. **Luke 19:10** “For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost.”
  - ii. He came to preach.
    1. **Mark 1:38**
  - iii. He came to reveal the unseen God.
    1. **John 1:18** “No one has ever seen God. The one and only Son, who is himself God and is at the Father’s side—he has revealed him.”
  - iv. He came to destroy the works of the devil.
    1. **1 John 3:8** “The Son of God was revealed for this purpose: to destroy the devil’s works.”
  - v. He came to show us how to live.
    1. **Romans 13:14 (GW)** “Instead, live like the Lord Jesus Christ did, and forget about satisfying the desires of your sinful nature.”
    2. **1 John 2:6** “The one who says he remains in him should walk just as he walked.”
2. God calls us to imitate Jesus Christ.
3. Some people have a passion to be unique; to stand out; to be different from the norm. Other people desperately want to fit in; they want to look like everyone else. But our goal as Christians is not to be different, or to fit in, but to be like Christ.
4. Lydia tells our kids all the time. “Girls, if ever you’re in a situation and you’re not sure how to act, just act like Mom. And boys, just act like Dad.” Jesus says the same thing to us. How do you know how to act in life? How to behave? Just act like Jesus.
5. Why? Not to be saved, but because we are saved.
6. What does that look like?

### **II. Text: John 8:48-59**

1. 48 The Jews responded to him, “Aren’t we right in saying that you’re a Samaritan and have a demon?”
  - i. Why did they insult Jesus? Because He had just said that their father wasn’t Abraham, or God, but the devil. They didn’t like that.

2. 49 “I do not have a demon,” Jesus answered. “On the contrary, I honor my Father and you dishonor me. 50 I do not seek my own glory; there is one who seeks it and judges. 51 Truly I tell you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death.”
3. 52 Then the Jews said, “Now we know you have a demon. Abraham died and so did the prophets. You say, ‘If anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death.’ 53 Are you greater than our father Abraham who died? And the prophets died. Who do you claim to be?”
4. 54 “If I glorify myself,” Jesus answered, “my glory is nothing. My Father—about whom you say, ‘He is our God’—he is the one who glorifies me. 55 You do not know him, but I know him. If I were to say I don’t know him, I would be a liar like you. But I do know him, and I keep his word. 56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day; he saw it and was glad.”
  - i. This is a clear declaration of Messiahship. The Jews believed that Abraham knew that the Messiah of God was to come from his line, and he rejoiced in this. Some Rabbis taught that God gave Abraham a vision of the entire history of Israel, and so he knew of the time when the Messiah would come. Jesus was saying that Abraham knew He would come, and He rejoiced.
5. 57 The Jews replied, “You aren’t fifty years old yet, and you’ve seen Abraham?”
6. 58 Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, before Abraham was, I am.”
  - i. Some argue that Jesus isn’t God because He never claimed to be God. But He did, and this is one of the best examples.
  - ii. This is a very direct claim to deity. First, it is a claim to be eternal, and only God is eternal. He didn’t say before Abraham was I was, but before Abraham was I am. Abraham lived two-thousand years before this incident. Second, He uses the Greek words *ego eimi* (“I am”), which is the way that God described Himself to Moses in the story of the burning bush. God told Moses, “Say to the Israelites: I AM has sent me to you (Gen 3:14).” That story was originally written in Hebrew, but when it was translated into Greek a couple of centuries before Christ, the Jewish scholars used the words *ego eimi*, “I am.” Those are the same words used by Jesus in this story.
7. 59 So they picked up stones to throw at him. But Jesus was hidden, and went out of the temple.
  - i. In case you aren’t convinced that Jesus was claiming to be God, this verse should settle it. It is the reason the Jews tried to kill Him. He was claiming to be God.

### III. 5 Ways to Imitate Christ

#### 1. Do not seek revenge. 48-49

- i. The Jews insulted Jesus, calling Him a Samaritan and demon-possessed.
- ii. What did they mean by Samaritan?
  1. The Samaritans questioned their claim to be the true children of Abraham. They saw the Samaritans as physical and spiritual half-

breeds. They were descendants of Abraham who had remained in the northern kingdom after its fall and intermarried with pagans transplanted there by the Assyrians (2 Kings 17:23-24). When they offered to help rebuild the temple after the exile, the Jews refused and the Samaritans were insulted (Ezr 4:1-3). The bitter rivalry intensified during the intertestamental period. The Jews avoided dealing with the Samaritans altogether. Some even refused to travel through their region (Lk 9:51-53).

2. **MacArthur** “By calling Jesus a Samaritan, the Jewish leaders were in effect labeling Him a false teacher (because He obviously did not agree with their interpretation of the Law), and a traitor to Israel (since He allegedly sided with Israel’s bitter enemies the Samaritans).”
  3. **Barclay** “What did they mean by calling him a Samaritan? They meant that he was an enemy of Israel, for there was deadly enmity between the Jews and the Samaritans, that he was a law-breaker because he did not observe the law, and above all that he was a heretic, for Samaritan and heretic had become synonymous.”
- iii. What did they mean by “have a demon”?
    1. They had accused Jesus of this before. Mk 3:22; Jn 7:20
    2. They also accused John the Baptist as having a demon (Mt 11:18).
    3. **MacArthur** “To say someone was demon-possessed was tantamount to saying that he was insane, since demon-possessed people often acted irrationally”
  - iv. Jesus did not return insult for insult. He merely said, “I do not have a demon.”
  - v. **1 Peter 2:23** “when he was insulted, he did not insult in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten but entrusted himself to the one who judges justly.”
  - vi. When Christ was being crucified, He was beaten, and mocked, and criticized, and falsely accused, and betrayed, and abandoned, and robbed. Yet He looked upon the people and prayed, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.”
  - vii. Christians do not seek revenge. We do get even. We do not stay mad at people. We forgive. Instead of hating our enemies, we love them and show kindness to them.
  - viii. **Romans 12:17-20** “Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Give careful thought to do what is honorable in everyone’s eyes. If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Friends, do not avenge yourselves; instead leave room for God’s wrath, because it is written, Vengeance belongs to me; I will repay, says the Lord. But if your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is

thirsty, give him something to drink. For in so doing you will heap fiery coals on his head.”

- ix. God doesn't command us to like our enemies; or to trust our enemies; or to be best friends with our enemies. He commands us to forgive them – to show them love and kindness.

## 2. Honor God. 49-50

- i. After the Jews said he had a demon, Jesus replied, “I do not have a demon. On the contrary, I honor my Father.”
- ii. What did He mean by honoring the Father?
- iii. “Honor” is a synonym for “glorify.” To honor or glorify God is to reflect God. It is to show God's goodness and greatness through your life. It is to display the superiority of life in Christ. It is to make God famous. To make God look good.
- iv. The natural thing to do is to concern ourselves with what people think about us; with our reputation; we want people to admire us; to praise us; to be impressed with us; to respect us. But honoring God means changing your focus from self-glorification to God-glorification. It means making your life all about God rather than yourself.
- v. **Galatians 1:23-24** 23 They simply kept hearing, “He who formerly persecuted us now preaches the faith he once tried to destroy.” 24 And they glorified God because of me.
  - 1. Before becoming a Christian, Paul was a zealous persecutor of Christians. But then God saved Him, and He became the most zealous Christian missionary. When other Christians saw Paul's life, they glorified God. They praised God. Paul's transformation made them say, “God is awesome.”
  - 2. That's the goal in glorifying God. The goal is that when people see your life, they will think, “God is awesome!”
  - 3. **Matthew 5:16** “... Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”
- vi. Jesus told us to be the salt of the earth (Mt 5:13). Salt makes people thirsty. We are to live in such a way that makes people spiritually thirsty. We are to attract people to Jesus.
- vii. **1 Corinthians 10:31** “So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God.”
  - 1. To honor God means that you seek to make God look good in everything you do.
    - a. Glorify God with your schoolwork.
    - b. Glorify God with the way you treat your siblings and your parents.
    - c. Glorify God with the way you talk.

- d. Glorify God with your sexual morality.
- e. Glorify God with your marriage.
- f. Glorify God with your finances.
- g. Glorify God with your profession.

### 3. Evangelize. 51

- i. **Verse 51** "Truly I tell you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."
- ii. "Truly I tell you."
  - 1. This is translated by the KJV, "Verily, verily, I say unto you."
  - 2. Hendriksen notes of the word: "In every case . . . in which this word occurs in the New Testament it introduces a statement which not only expresses a truth or fact . . . but an important, a solemn fact, one that in many cases is at variance with popular opinion or expectation or at least causes some surprise."
- iii. Jesus is being attacked. He was called a Samaritan and a demoniac. And His response was to tell them how to be saved.
- iv. Jesus came to earth to save us from our sins, and He has given that mission to each of us; to go into all the world and make disciples; to be His witnesses.
- v. Some of Christ's first disciples were fishermen. When Jesus called them, He said, "Follow me, and I will you fishers of men."
- vi. You are not on this planet just to have fun; or to make a name for yourself; you are here to serve the Lord, and that means first and foremost to be a soulwinner. To be a fisher of men.
- vii. We all have family and friends who need Christ. God's purpose for you is to try your best to reach them for Christ.

### 4. Obey God's word. 55

- i. **John 8:55** "I keep his word."
- ii. Obedience. This is what the Christian life is all about. Obeying God.
- iii. **John 6:38** "For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me."
- iv. Perhaps the best example of obedience in the Bible is the story of Abraham and Isaac (Gen 22). God promised Abraham and his wife Sarah to give them a son, but the promise wasn't fulfilled until Abraham was 100, and Sarah was 90. Imagine how much they cherished their son. Then when Isaac was a young man, perhaps a teenager, God commanded him to sacrifice Isaac. This is not what Abraham wanted. This is not what would make Abraham happy. This was not going to help Abraham's marriage. This was not going to make Abraham's life more fun. This was the greatest sacrifice God could require. But Abraham set aside His will for God's. He set aside His desires, His happiness, His plans for God's. Just as Abraham raised the knife to kill his own son, an angel stopped him. God provided a ram for the sacrifice, and

then God blessed Abraham. God said, “Now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your only son from me.”

- v. Abraham gave that place a special name – Jehovah Jireh. It means “The Lord Will Provide.” The main reason we struggle to obey God is for fear that our needs will go unmet. We will not be able to make ends meet; to pay the bills; to find a spouse; to get promoted; to get hired; to pass the test; to find happiness. And so we sin and disobey God to try to meet our own needs. But God promises that if you will obey Him, He will meet your needs (Phil 4:19).
- vi. **Matthew 6:33** “But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be provided for you.”

#### 5. Embrace suffering. 59

- i. Christ was persecuted in this passage. First, he was called a Samaritan (an enemy of Israel), and then a demon (evil and insane). Then at the end of the exchange they picked up stones to kill Him. Christ knows all things. He knew that His mission would get Him into trouble, but He did it anyway. He embraced suffering.
- ii. To be like Christ you do God’s will, even if it might get you into trouble; even if it will lead to hardship.
- iii. I want to talk you out of wimpy Christianity. Wimpy Christians love Jesus until He asks them to do something hard, to suffer, to sacrifice, and then they quit. But tough Christians stay in the game; they don’t quit; they press on, no matter the cost.
- iv. It is very natural to avoid pain and hardship; to seek the easiest, quickest, safest, cheapest way. But there are times when, if we are to be like Christ, we must embrace suffering; we must make sacrifices.
- v. Most of the time, the quickest way to get ahead in life is to not be Christlike. The quickest way to get ahead is to lie, cheat, steal, keep your head down, keep your mouth shut, and just mind your business. But our calling is not to get ahead; our calling is to be like Christ. And that means we must embrace suffering.
- vi. We must be willing to suffer for Jesus, if that’s what God requires.
- vii. You can either be an “Until” Christian or an “Even if” Christian. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego are the example for us. They were three Jewish men, young men, who were working for the government under King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. King Neb decided to make a giant gold statue and told everyone to bow down and worship it or be burned alive in the fiery furnace. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused. They were brought before the king, who was furious. He gave them one last chance, “Bow down or burn.” Notice their response in **Daniel 3:17-18** “If the God we serve exists, then he can rescue us from the furnace of blazing fire, and he can rescue us

from the power of you, the king. But even if he does not rescue us, we want you as king to know that we will not serve your gods or worship the gold statue you set up.” Did you notice the words “even if”? Even if we have to die, we will not bow down. An “Until” Christian serves God until it gets hard or costly or dangerous, but an “Even it” Christian serves God even if it gets hard, or costly, or dangerous. To be like Christ, embrace suffering.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

1. One of the most famous Christian books of all time is the classic *In His Steps*, by Charles Monroe Sheldon, published in 1896. The main character is Reverend Henry Maxwell, the pastor of the First Church of Raymond. One Friday afternoon as he was preparing his sermon a man out of work shows up at his door and asks for help. Pastor Maxwell listened to his complaints, and then sent him away without helping him. That Sunday during the sermon the same homeless man, Jack Manning, walked into the sanctuary, and walked up to the front of the church and stood in front of the pulpit. And he confronted the congregation about their lack of compassion. Then he collapsed, and a few days later he died. Deeply moved by this event, the next Sunday Reverend Maxwell presented his congregation with a challenge: Do not do anything without first asking, ‘What would Jesus do?’”
2. That’s how the Bible calls us to live: WWJD? In every situation ask, “What would Jesus do?”