

FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember the health concerns of *Gerald Eaton, Joey Avance, Jerry Schnelle, Bonnie Allgor, Pat Buls, Sonny & Cathy Monaghan, Beth Ellen, and Pete Rowland.*

If you need to make any changes to the directory (phone number, address, picture), please see Bryan.

Jennie and baby Riley are healthy. Thanks for the prayers and meals and concerns for our family!

Jesus and the apostles again and again stressed the importance of truth: that the truth shall make man free; that one is sanctified by truth; that those who pervert truth will be accursed; that anyone who goes beyond truth is cut off from God; and that people who love not the truth and believe a lie will be condemned (John 8:31–32; 17:17; Galatians 1:6–9; 1 John 9; 2 Thessalonians 2:11–12). If Bible students cannot determine truth from error, then all are condemned to eternal damnation.

There is, for example, a way of worship that is in “spirit and truth” and there is a way of worship that is based on the doctrines of men and is vain (John 4:24 and Matthew 15:1–9). Since the word of God is truth and the scriptures are the basis of righteousness, one must as the Bereans search the scriptures daily to see what is true. Those that do will learn that brethren in the first century spoke to one another in hymns and spiritual songs, assembled on the first day of the week to observe the Lord’s Supper, gave into a

treasury as they were prospered, continued steadfastly in prayer, and taught and edified one another by the teaching of God’s word (Ephesians 5:19; Acts 2:42; 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23–26; 14:1–40; 16:1–2). Is there anyone who would affirm that any of these practices are not based on truth?

We learned these practices from the Scripture, and we can learn also from scripture what the “work” of the church is, how churches were “organized,” “how believers became members,” what “name” they exalted and honored, and what “purity” and “holiness” demanded of them.

What God taught and approved of in these matters is what we are devoted to and if we practice them we will be identified with the practices of the “one true church” that Jesus built through the work and preaching of the apostles. This we are committed to and invite all men to join us in these practices.

WWJD? John R. Gibson

A few years ago bracelets with the four letters WWJD were all the rage—and what a great sentiment was expressed by those simple wristbands. Truly our lives would be altered if every decision, every moment was controlled by a reflection on what would Jesus do if He were in our situation, for Jesus should be our great example (1 Peter 2:21; 1 Corinthians 11:1). The underlying concept behind WWJD was excellent, but in practice it often came up short because it was treated as a subjective thing. Many reached their conclusions as to what Jesus would do or say about situations, questions, doctrinal matters, etc.

without really knowing what Jesus had already said or done.

WDJS?

While the question “What would Jesus do?” is vital, it must be preceded by the question, “What did Jesus say?” As the one with all authority, His commandments are to be obeyed (Matthew 28:18-20). To ask WWJD is to acknowledge Him as Lord, but let’s not forget the question He once asked in Luke 6:46, “But why do you call Me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and not do the things which I say?” Are we so committed to abiding in His words of truth, the words which will judge us, that we can know what He would do because we have listened to what He said (John 8:31, 32; 12:48)?

And as we begin to appreciate that WWJD must begin with WDJS, we need to be aware that all the words of Jesus are not found in the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. If we take only the “red letters” we will miss a lot of what Jesus said, for shortly before His death He spoke to His apostles with these words: “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.... “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come” (John 14:26; 16:12, 13). Because the Holy Spirit did that which Jesus said He would do, Paul could challenge those at Corinth to acknowledge that His writings were not his own, but were instead the commandments of the Lord (1 Corinthians 14:37).

WDJD?

Closely related to the idea of learning what Jesus said is knowing the answer to the question, what did Jesus do? While the New Testament writers do not provide us with every detail of His life, we are given many concrete examples that allow us to “walk just as He walked” (1 John 2:6) and “follow His steps” (1 Peter 2:21). And to reinforce the idea that asking what Jesus would do is not to be a subjective, emotionally-charged decision, 1 John 2:3-6 makes it clear that walking as He walked is parallel to keeping His commandments and His word.

So WWJD?

If we have committed ourselves to knowing what Jesus has said, both personally and through His spokesmen, and have carefully studied what Jesus did as He set an example for us, then the answer to WWJD in the following will not depend upon our own suppositions or emotions. Knowing what He said and did, What Would Jesus Have Us Do if...

Facing a choice between that which would be personally painful and that which the Father desires?

We have become weary and discouraged?

We meet an immoral person willing to listen? Men are substituting their traditions for the word of God?

Invited to a movie featuring nudity and sexual scenes?

Our marriage is in trouble because of an inability to forgive?