

**Chapter 51: 'Do As I Say, Not As I Do'**

**Life Application Verses:**

**Matthew 23: 1-12, 28.** <sup>1</sup> Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: <sup>2</sup> "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. <sup>3</sup> So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. <sup>4</sup> They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. <sup>5</sup> "Everything they do is done for people to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; <sup>6</sup> they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; <sup>7</sup> they love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to be called 'Rabbi' by others. <sup>8</sup> "But you are not to be called 'Rabbi,' for you have one Teacher, and you are all brothers. <sup>9</sup> And do not call anyone on earth 'father,' for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. <sup>10</sup> Nor are you to be called instructors, for you have one Instructor, the Messiah. <sup>11</sup> The greatest among you will be your servant. <sup>12</sup> For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted; <sup>28</sup> In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.

I recently had an email conversation with someone in the city, a person who holds a very prestigious position of great influence across the landscape within the area. IN this e-conversation, the political positions of myself and this other person came up in the conversation, and I noted that I was an Independent, moderate conservative, Christian. The following is an excerpt of the response I received:

"I, too, am an independent, but probably more of a liberal than a conservative, although most people who know me would say that I am extremely religious. I just think I'm a "thinking" religious person because I don't necessarily equate the traditional Christian values I keep hearing about with the actions I see many 'Christians' demonstrating, but that's a conversation for another day."

When I read this response, I first thought about myself. Then in my Bible readings while writing this chapter, I read the Life Application Verses and these Holy Words reminded me of this noted conversation. A little more reflection caused me to think of our Heavenly Minded connection to Jesus and His teachings, particularly the Life Application Verses. Then a bit more reflection caused me to think of times when I had committed this 'outcome' where I didn't practice Earthly Good from the 'inside-out.' What this means to Christians in every conceivable corner of the World is that we are not about 'Do as I say, not as I do.' We are about what Jesus said in *Matthew 23: 23-24* (NIV Leadership Bible), "Woe to you, teachers of the law and

Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel.” Spot on and yes, Way, Spot On! If Jesus were to ask the following question, “Who has committed this sin?”, what would our response be? I will be the first to lift my hand in shame. It begs the counter intuitive idea that we are not to be involved in ‘Do as I say, not as I do’, but ‘Do as I do in Honor and Service to God in Christ Jesus’ because as a follower of Jesus, that’s what people see, hear, and believe. As the individual said in the email response, “...I don’t necessarily equate the traditional Christian values I keep hearing about with the actions I see many ‘Christians’ demonstrating...” If these words don’t grab us...wow!

I think that this person’s response is a wake-up call for Christians everywhere! Now, I know that we are not perfect, we don’t live in the *Land of Nirvana*, nor do we live our lives error-free! I also believe that God knows this and Jesus warned **and** comforted us of this in His teachings! Well, if we are unable to follow the Teachings of Jesus before our fellow Brothers and Sisters and the community in which we live to the extent that we fail to hold fast our traditional Christian values before these people, what Hope do we have? Let me give you the following scenario in response:

As I have mentioned in another chapter, I recently read the book, *Turn This Ship Around* by L. David Marquet. In the text, Marquet (A retired Navy Captain), allowed his junior officers and men to state their intent to do something by saying, “Captain, I intend to...” and Marquet would give the okay to continue by responding, “Very well.” If you take this process to Heart in your life (and mine also), then we should be Heavenly Minded before God in service to Jesus Christ by saying every waking moment, “I intend to...” What do we intend to do? Be conscious of our Service to God in every waking moment to do what is right before the Throne of God, as Jesus Christ is seated at the Right Hand of the Father. How can we possibly do this? We get tired, run down, and we are prone to fall down in our journey. Yes, that’s true, but I want you to Earthly Good think about something in reality. When you see your local law enforcement officer in a cruiser sitting within view as you approach a four-way stop, what do you do? Faint?!

Which of the following things would you like to do, consider doing, or actually carry out as a matter of, "I intend to...": [Emphasis here = INTENTIONAL, RESPONSIBLE CHRISTIAN actions]

- 1) I see the Police Officer and I speed up and go through the four-way, smiling at the officer as I wave at him/her as I go by in total disregard for the Local Safety Ordinance that the four-way means everyone should stop for the safety of all drivers; rather, 'I intend to' ... go through the four-way four-times as fast as the posted speed limit because four-way intersections mean to go 4 times as fast through the intersection. Not only do I get a Personal Invitation Note from the Officer, but I get a note that says my fine is four times the normal rate. I get all defensive and radical over the issue; **[Don't try this at home!]**
- 2) I slow down almost to a stop, but my brakes are so sensitive that to bring the car, truck or SUV to a complete stop is hard on the vehicle, so it's best to not stop my vehicle completely. This means that I am 'barely' moving as I 'roll' through ever so slowly at the intersection, and the officer is smiling as he/she knows that some cars have these types of 'sensitive-braking-systems.' Then I get sensitive when the officer writes me a personal note in the form of a personal ticket or citation; 'I intend to...???' **[Don't try this at home!]**
- 3) You firmly apply the brakes about 2 feet from the stop line on the pavement, and produce a bounce—which means, when you stop quickly, your vehicle is caught in the Law of Physics that says for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. You stop suddenly, your vehicle noses-down, and the sudden stop then makes the vehicle 'bounce' back in the opposite and equal direction, and then you use the opposite reaction to the already equal and opposite reaction and you apply the gas—which gives the appearance that you 'almost stopped' in an instant in time, but you actually didn't really stop, you just gave the appearance of doing so; the Officer then walks to your window, and says, "I intend to...", and you know the rest of the story...; **[Don't try this at home!]**
- 4) Or, you see the four-way stop. You see the officer. You slow down, apply the brakes, and you come to a complete stop for a full three seconds—after the laws of physics have stopped the rocking motion of the vehicle. You do all of this because "I intend to..." follow the law as written, as it pertains to me as a citizen; as it has cause-and-effect in the safety of other drivers and myself; as it pertains to what the Officer might see me doing in the

Line of Duty during his or her shift; as it is right in the Sight of God to Obey the Laws of the Land because He is the author of all Things Good and Right; as it is right that I stop whether the Officer is sitting there in the vicinity or not; and, as it is just and right to be an example to others in front of me, behind me, and to either side at the four-way stop. **[DO try this at home!]**

It's not to do as I do just because the Police Officer is looking or not looking, there or not there, has arrest powers or does not have arrest powers, and so forth. God is always in Plain Sight—have you ever thought about that? In plain sight is right there, where He can see you; He can see the hairs on your head (or in my case, the lack of hair on my head). As Jesus told us in the Life Application Verses, "But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach." This part of the verses is a warning from Jesus about us doing what we know and have heard from God's Word and from Jesus Himself: **Practice What We Preach**—in word, deed, and thought. When we fail to do this, we end up with the comment from the person's email earlier: "...I don't necessarily equate the traditional Christian values I keep hearing about with the actions I see many 'Christians' demonstrating, but that's a conversation for another day." This is a conviction of not living our lives as we should before God. In the Life Application Verses, Jesus makes it so clear to us, yet what do we actually do every day to demonstrate the Truth of the Words of our Savior? We must be about the business of "I intend to..." for God at all times.

I intend to not go about in my thinking "Do as I say, not as I do", because we are what we think, are we not? If we think about eating that slice of pie, and we eat it, we are what we eat; if we think about rolling-through that four-way stop, and we roll through it, we are what we demonstrate in our driving; if we think that being late to work is okay, and we are late more often than we are on time, then we are what we show others about punctuality; if we miss God-given opportunities to witness to a lost co-worker or friend, and in our Heart we know God has moved us in the Spirit to witness, we are what we failed to do and our co-worker or friend has missed an opportunity to Hear the Salvation of Jesus Christ; if we use salty language because it is 'politically correct' and doesn't harm anyone, we are what we sound like to others in Confessing Christ on Sunday and cussing that citation on Monday; and, if we don't consider

our actions, words, kindness, attitudes, Prayer life, Bible study, and all of our “traditional Christian values” others keep hearing about, will they see us ‘Christians’ demonstrating non-Christian actions that Jesus described in the Life Application Verses? God help us to live for YOU!

Let me give you this example from what our Lord and Savior identified about hypocrisy. In verse 4, Jesus said this: “They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.” WOW! (That statement needed an ALL CAPS response!) You know anyone like that? That truth from Jesus is the epitome of, ‘Do As I Say, Not As I Do Hypocrisy.’ We are told not to judge, unless we want to be judged; but, I just gotta say this... I’ve seen this piling on of others by those in authority, yet they will not lift a finger to help with the heavy load that they place on others. Oh, now, they look good, and sound good, and they have good meetings, and all of that is ‘for show.’ If you read the writings they use for validation of these things, you’d think they rode the Mountain Tops throughout their tenure in these leadership positions—for they have not read the Life Application Verses, or if they did, they did a cursory job and it didn’t Take-to-Heart. *Some of these leaders are professing Christians.* And, I’ll stop right here and you know why? Because it is a very simple premise: Jesus saw every little dot and tittle that these hypocrites loaded onto the backs of others while they kept themselves from lifting a finger to help. I believe with everything in me that these events in our lives will be set right—either in this life or at the Judgment Seat of God—if we bring these burdens to God and we ‘I intend to...’ be faithful in these situations. You see, ‘I intend to’ means—deliberate, thought-out, action!

We are all guilty of being in situations that are hypocritical at times; we say one thing, and do another. But what Jesus accused the Pharisees of doing was His identification of pure, unadulterated sin: “They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.” Jesus then intensifies this Sin in verse 28: “In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.” Another WOW is needed! To address these Holy Words of Jesus, I’d like to list a few things that might help you/me/us to offset hypocrisy. We will use the nomenclature of, “I intend to...” and specify the 12 items

below in the Shadow of the Life Application Verses. To avoid hypocrisy and live our lives as Christians before our friends, family, and the community in which we live, remember to live your life as 'I intend to...' The items listed below are things that you can do to be intentional in your Christian Life. Remember that our walk and talk should be complementary, not dichotomous. We should never, ever intentionally or otherwise cause a person to feel: "I don't necessarily equate the traditional Christian values I keep hearing about with the actions I see many 'Christians' demonstrating." **Thus, live your life as 'I intend to ...':**

1. **Study** my Bible every day and **Pray** without ceasing (v. 8-10);
2. **Think** before I speak, filtering my words through The Holy Spirit in my Life (v. 12);
3. **Honor** The Life **of** Jesus by Living a Life **for** Jesus;
4. **Seek** Heavenly Minded into my life, so that my life is an example of Earthly Good;
5. **Show** unto others as I would have them **Assign** unto me--A Follower of Christ;
6. **Say** what I believe, **Act** on what I believe, and **Admit** my failure when I fall down;
7. **Practice** traditional Christian values so that others know they are true by my actions;
8. **Remember** that I am an example – good, bad, or indifferent;
9. **Avoid** hypocrisy as often as I can, because I intend to be a good example;
10. **Remain** faithful to my Family, my God, and my Lord Jesus Christ;
11. **Serve** humbly so that God might lift me up to His chosen service (v. 11);
12. **Be** intentional in my Walk with Jesus, and remain on the Path of Everlasting Life.

**A Question of Curiosity:**

Which is better? To hold one's tongue in times of difficulty and let others see our Faith Lived before them, or to speak one's mind and cause confusion in the minds of others who hear us talk about our Christianity, yet our actions drown out our words... And you say?

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**"Hypocrites in the Church? Yes, and in the lodge and at the home. Don't hunt through the Church for a hypocrite. Go home and look in the mirror. Hypocrites? Yes. See that you make the number one less."**  
~ Billy Sunday ~

**"The best sermons are lived, not preached."** ~ Cowboy Wisdom ~

**"Sincerity makes the very least person to be of more value than the most talented hypocrite."**  
~ Charles Spurgeon ~

**"Sir, my concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side, for God is always right."** ~ Abraham Lincoln ~

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**My Prayer For You:**

Heavenly Father, I write this prayer for myself because any mention of hypocrisy starts with me. I ask for guidance in my walk so that I might remain aware of what I say and what I do. I ask forgiveness if I have offended anyone because of my words and deeds that were contrary to Your Holy Word. I ask that if anyone is reading this, may they be moved to examine their own life and determine if there is any hypocrisy that needs to be purged from their daily lives. Oh God, that I would never cause someone to feel as if my traditional Christian values meant so little that I have dulled their view of Who You truly are and that I have blurred the Salvation of Jesus Christ in their own lives. What I have read in these Life Application Verses in which Jesus was holding the rulers of the day accountable is as applicable to us today as it has ever been, maybe even more important! It is a terrible thing that we do when we say we are Followers of Christ and yet, we demonstrate our willingness to indulge in activities that are not acceptable in Your Sight. Give us wisdom to discern that our Walk with You must be aligned to Your Holy Word and that our actions speak so loudly, people are truly unable to hear what we have to say when our actions give a 'falseness' to our walk. I pray for everyone who struggles with this difference between what we say and what we do. I pray that our lives will be manifested by what we do and how we serve You before the eyes of a community and One Nation Under God. Forgive us, Lord, for our shortsightedness in all things Holy. In the Name of Christ Jesus, Amen.

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*Raise your right hand and repeat after me:*

**“Preach the  
Gospel daily, and if  
necessary, use words.”  
So Help Me God!**

(A favorite saying of 41<sup>st</sup> President George H. W. Bush (in quotes)...)

\*\*\*Note: This concept, when practiced *Faithfully*, is anti-hypocrisy. \*\*\*