

11 Steps to Becoming A Jerk for Jesus: Ecclesiastes 7:15-8:1

Preached by Pastor Mark Driscoll June 8, 2003

“Jesus, save me from your followers.” – bumper sticker

Continuing on his theme of having a good name/reputation (Ecclesiastes 7:1a), Solomon warns us of wrongly judging people by judging only outward appearances, while neglecting to rightly assess true character. One of the better biblical examples of this occurs in the gospels: Previous to the coming of Jesus, the Pharisees had a stellar reputation as the most virtuous holy men of their day. People aspired to be like them and followed their interminable list of man-made rules, never realizing that they were like “white-washed tombs”—pristine on the outside and rotting on the inside. Jesus, who could discern their motives, attacked their lack of righteousness by exposing their hearts.

Likewise in our day, what can easily pass for religious piety is little more than yet another band of jerks parading around with pointy fingers extended to everyone they meet. If you are a jerk for Jesus aspiring to grow in your immaturity, Solomon has conveniently provided you with 11 foolproof steps for becoming less pleasant than you already are:

Step #1 – devise a theology of karma and not grace whereby good things happen to good people and bad things happen to bad people, so that when people are hurting you can yell at them for being unrepentant sinners (7:15).

Step #2 – try to be more righteous in behavior and learned in Bible trivia than everyone else you meet (7:16-17).

Step #3 – take everything to a ridiculous extreme to that you can stay rigidly consistent and make certain to carefully ignore common sense and reality in the name of being biblical and godly (7:18).

Step #4 – try to get into positions of power in your church so that you can make lots of rules and tell everyone else what to do, but make sure you are an idiot and never speak with any wisdom (7:19).

Step #5 – never confess your sin and try hard to give the impression to people that you are never tempted, do not struggle, and have never failed in anything so they feel far less spiritual than you (7:20).

Step #6 – commit yourself to gossip by meddling in everyone else’s conversations in an effort to know what everyone thinks about you and what they say about you so that you can dig up dirt to confront them and bring them up for church discipline (7:21-22).

Step #7 – never accept the fact that you cannot know and understand everything, but frantically try to be all-knowing like God (7:23-24).

Step #8 – make sure you marry someone who is as painful and lifeless as you are so that you can function together like two barrels on a gun (7:26).

Step #9 – only find one or two men on earth that you enjoy or respect (preferably a dead author like Calvin or Wesley) and view all women as godless and worthless for ministry (7:27-28).

Step #10 – get involved in any stupid scheme that comes along to try and make people be just like you (7:29).

Step #11 – have a mean looking face that is very serious and devout so that you can appear as if you were in pain because the less happy you are, the more holy you are (8:1).

Jerks for Jesus often desire righteousness, which is good. But, Jesus was clear in Matthew 5:20 that, “...unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.” Simply, because non one is righteous in and of themselves

7758 earl ave nw seattle wa 98117

t: 206.706.6641 f: 206.706.6792

w: www.marshall.fm e: life@marshall.fm

(Romans 3:10), we have no hope of being righteous no matter how serious we are, how many rules we make, and how well we keep them.

Thankfully, we can be righteous--not because of what we do, but rather because of what Jesus has done for us by dying for our sin and rising in victory. Jesus' righteousness is given to us if we trust in Him (Romans 3:21-26). Because our righteousness comes by grace from Jesus, we are free to be a gracious and loving people who live transformed lives of joy and are thereby saved from our many sins, including our propensity for being religious jerks who think life is about us and not about Jesus.



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