

Pastor Ray's Ramblings:



“Do as I say,” is an emphatic directive many of us heard as children. This statement was completed to express “Do as I say and not as I do.” The origin of it is unknown except to be traced to a 1911 article in “The Spectator”. Other sayings expressing the same thing are traced to middle ages but it seems that ultimately the principle that the saying expresses comes from none other than Jesus as he spoke to the crowds as recorded in Matthew 23. “The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses seat. So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they practice not what they preach.” Frequently Jesus exposes the hypocrisy of people who say one thing and live lives totally inconsistent with that. Our culture is no different from that which Jesus encountered when it comes to encountering great hypocrisy. I thought of some examples:

- The crusade against the second amendment by celebrities and politicians who themselves are surrounded by armed bodyguards and who celebrate violence and brandish every imaginable kind of weapon in the movies they make their livelihoods from.
- The open boarder people who themselves live in walled estates and are themselves protected from any intruders by advanced security systems.
- The people who advocate for the slaughter of 60 million innocent lives (and still counting here in America since the 1960's) and say it is for health reasons and because a woman's body is nobody's but her own.
- The paid protestors and anarchist demonstrators who rail against anything that their handlers tell them to without really having a clue about what the issues really are.
- The powerful elites in places that used to champion free speech and individual expression (educational institutions) who now restrict honest debate, silence discussion and seek to shame individuals whenever they might not propagate the group think of the politically correct collective.
- One could list dozens of examples of people who by their lives express a complete divide between their lives and their speech.

And to some degree every one of us has to admit that the testimony we speak of is not always identical to the life we live out. But that precisely is what we are encouraged to confess as we seriously consider the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We can rejoice that the One we seek to emulate has zero inconsistency between life and speech - our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The more we contemplate our Lord and Savior the more we realize how absolutely true was his life is mirrored to his words. We enter Good Friday knowing fully our lives are very inconsistent. To deny it is hypocrisy. And so we can with some integrity declare, “Do as I say and do not do as I do.” Then we can ass, “Do as Jesus says and do as He does.”

This gives more understanding to the numerous ways Jesus encouraged people to take up their cross and follow Him, to reject the teachings of this world, to follow example in Word and deed. As we, as followers of Jesus Christ, consider the transforming influence Jesus has in our lives, may it make us more and more like Him. That means we will be humble and gentle in heart. We will speak the truth lovingly and boldly, even if we become targets of ridicule and rejection. We will so try to live our lives so that we can with more and more integrity say “Do what I do.”

Music Note:



Easter Morning our Chancel Choir will be singing “Easter Song” by John Peterson. John Peterson, the creator of “Easter Song” lived in Grand Rapids for 10 years. He was head of the music publisher Sing operation, and served on the board of Gospel Films in Muskegon. Our own Van Harden sang with him in Muskegon. His cantatas have sold over 40 million copies.

Book Circle:



On April 17, Book Circle will meet at the home of Marjorie Salata at 10:00 a.m. The program will be a recording about Chaucer who lived in the middle ages and wrote a work called “The Canterbury Tales.” Canterbury was the scene of the martyrdom of Samuel A Becket, the archbishop of Canterbury.

