

*Thanks to our Speaker
Austin Watts*

Upcoming Events

June 6 (Next Sunday)

Welcome! Brother Jack Critchfield and wife Noemi

June 13, 3:30 p.m.

Business Meeting

Transformation

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

Romans 12:1-2

June Birthdays

9 Debbie Pescador

June Anniversaries

5 Kurt & Debbie Hoffman 9 Sue Tanner

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.

Sunday.....10:45 a.m.

Sunday.....6:00 p.m.

Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Temporary Meeting Times

Sunday.....10:00 a.m.

Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Preacher:
(Vacant)

Church of Christ

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Indio Informer

Vol. 32 No. 22

May 30, 2021

Imitation vs. Transformation

By Joe Chesser

You may not have read it, but I know you have heard of it. The book, *In His Steps: What Would Jesus Do?* has sold over 50,000,000 copies. It's one of the best-selling books of all time. More recently the concept of WWJD was popularized with wristbands, t-shirts, and jewelry. It's an awesome concept. In all situations, ask ourself "what would Jesus do?" and act on it. After all, we all want to imitate Jesus in everything we do ... right? Well, yes and no.

An article written by John Coe challenged me to think more deeply about this (the article: *Resisting the Temptation of Moral Formation*). While imitating Jesus is quite good, there can also be something about it that can be quite wrong. You see, character imitation that does not come from a transformed heart is not fully what Jesus came to produce in his disciples. Behavioral modification because that's what Jesus did is only "me" choosing externally to be conformed to his actions. So, in every situation that arises I would need to stop and think, "What would Jesus do?" Then "I" would have to determine what Jesus would do in that situation, and then decide if "I" would act like him.

There is something better. It's called transformation (Romans 12:2). So, what's the difference between the two? Imitation makes decisions with the head. For example, I know Jesus was compassionate, so my head tells me I need to be compassionate. One flaw is that I can't do everything Jesus did. Another is that I can act with compassion without being compassionate at all. Imitation does not require my heart to be in it. In fact, my heart

may even oppose the action my head says is the right thing to do. Perhaps that's one reason why there is sometimes conflict within us: my heart's not in the things I know I should be doing.

But when my heart is transformed, things are different. I don't want to just act like Jesus, I want to be like Jesus. I want my transformed heart to guide my head to act like him. I not only want to be compassionate like he was, I also want to be compassionate why he was. I want to love people so much that whenever I see a need for compassion, I won't have to ask, "What would Jesus do?", I'll just do it ... like the Good Samaritan Jesus told us about (Luke 10). That's not to say that the head is not engaged. It is. It is a necessary part of being like Jesus. In fact, a renewed mind is a necessary step in a transformed heart (Romans 12:2). But now my head and my heart are acting in unity. There'll be no internal conflict when my transformed heart guides my head into acting like Jesus.

So now, when I ask WWJD, it will be because I have Jesus in my heart and want to be like him in every way possible. It will not be a burden to act like him or to keep his commandments because our hearts are filled with his love (John 14:15; 1 John 5:3). Turmoil and guilt are replaced with joy and peace. The need for perfection is eliminated when our transformed hearts are walking in the light with Jesus (1 John 1:7).

Imitation or transformation? Which have I been choosing?

Different but United

By Bill Brandstatter

The recent Republican presidential debate showed difference but equality. Each candidate had his/her own slant on the way things ought to be done, but they were all united in the belief that we need a new president.

Many in the religious world believe in unity in diversity. Some believe denominations are okay. Diversity is the name of the game in many circles. Some might say that all the diverse religious groups that claim to follow Christ are all part of the church of Christ.

The Bible talks about being different but equal. The Bible speaks of just one church. Christ is the head of that one church. He built it and it should bear His name. (Matthew 16:18) It is referred to as "*His body*." (Ephesians 1:22, 23; Colossians 1:18) Just as Christ only had one body while on earth, He still has only one spiritual body. (Ephesians 4:4)

Christ prayed for unity of all believers. He said, "*That they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You.*" (John 17:21)

The apostle Paul pleaded, "*That there be no divisions among you, that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.*" (1 Corinthians 1:10)

There was just one church in New Testament times. There were different congregations in various locations. They talked and practiced the same thing. (1 Corinthians 4:17; 7:17) That obviously is not the case today.

Each member was different from the other members. So, the apostle Paul reminded the church, "*For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.*" (1 Corinthians 12:12)

There was unity of believers in practice and belief, but each member was different. Let us today get back to the simple unity of the New Testament church. God will be pleased.