

## ***The Proof is in the Doing***

In Matthew 21:28-32 Jesus tells a parable about a man who had two sons. He came to the first one and said, "Son, go, work today in my vineyard." The son told his father he would not go, but afterwards he regretted saying that and went to work. The father went to the second son and also told him to go work in the vineyard. This son said, "I go, sir," but he did not go. Jesus then asked His audience, "Which of the two did the will of his father?"

This seems like such a simple question that it doesn't even need to be asked, but with this question Jesus is teaching an important lesson that we often fail to apply to our own lives. Jesus is reminding us that the proof of our love, faith, and reverence for God is in the *doing*, not the *saying*. How many times is this lesson taught throughout the pages of the New Testament?

"Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. **You will know them by their fruits.** Do men gather grapes from thorn bushes or figs from thistles?" (Mt 7:15,16).

"Not everyone who **says** to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who **does** the will of My Father in heaven" (Mt 7:21).

"But be **doers** of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1:22).

"What does it profit, my brethren, if someone **says** he has faith but **does not have works**? Can faith save him?" (James 2:14).

"My little children, let us not love in **word** or in **tongue**, but in **deed** and in **truth**" (1 John 3:18).

Every one of these verses is well known to us, but do they express a principle by which we live? Do we claim to love Jesus, but yet fail to keep His commandments? Do we profess to love one another while refusing to actually do good to one another? Do we just give lip service to Paul's command to give preference to one another (Romans 12:10)? When we examine ourselves do we do more than just acknowledge our weakness, or do we set about to affect change in our lives?

The point is this; make up your mind, today, to stop talking about what you **need to do** and get busying **doing it!** Pick just one thing you know you **need to be doing** and just **do it**. Maybe you **need** to be more hospitable; **invite** someone over. Maybe you **need** to be a better father; **sit down** and **talk** to you children. Maybe you **need** to study more; **open** your Bible and **study**.

They say the road to hell is paved with good intentions. The reason this statement is true is because God doesn't accept lip service; He only accepts true service from the heart. Don't allow the guilt of past failures to keep you on the road of good intentions. Simply decide today that you're going to travel the road of good works, for *it* is the road that leads to forgiveness, mercy, and eternal life.

- by Simon Harris

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## ***A Flawed Comparison***

Trying to compare drinking alcohol and other "bad habits" just doesn't work, unless we are actually talking about drugs that significantly alter sobriety and the ability to make sound judgments. There are plenty of those types of drugs, but comparing drinking to something like eating donuts is ludicrous. We aren't just talking here about long-term health. We are talking about the immediate effects that destroy one's ability to think. If eating donuts does that to you, then by all means quit eating them. But I have yet to meet the person who destroyed a family or killed someone in a car wreck over losing one's mind on donuts. If that kind of comparison is the justification for drinking today, then sell it elsewhere.

- by Doy Moyer

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## ***An Offer You Shouldn't Refuse***

Daily we are confronted with a variety of "special offers". Many techniques are used to encourage our favorable response. Often we are urged to buy with the suggestion that this product fills some great need, or that it will only be offered for a limited time. Others tell us of new products, or special deals. Sometimes we are told that we have been specifically chosen for the privilege of participation. All of this is intended, of course, to get us to make some positive commitment.

There is another offer that comes to us which is different from those previously described. But with this offer, every incentive is really true. It fulfills a great need, it speaks of opportunity both special and for a limited time, and it involves that which is always new. But, perhaps most importantly, it provides a truly genuine privilege of participation. The offer of which we speak is that which has been extended by our Lord Jesus Christ:

*Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."* (Matthew 11:28-30)

This offer concerns that which is of the greatest value - your eternal soul (Mark 8:36,37). It is certainly worthy of your most careful consideration. Think!

**- by Greg Gwin**

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