

# Confronting an Immoral World Jesus' Way

## Introduction:

- 1) Every day we're surrounded by an immoral world and all its challenges to our spiritual lives.
- 2) Listen to the apostle Paul's inspired words, which very much speak to the heart of the issue of living morally in an immoral world: *"And those who are Christ's [is that you? This next part tells if you are one of those who belong to Christ] have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires."* (Galatians 5:24)
- 3) Let's learn some things from Jesus about how he handled the world.

## I. **Jesus was determined to have an impact on the lives of others (because that's what living a moral and godly life demands of us.)**

### A. Jesus noted about those who would be his disciples:

1. *"You are the salt of the earth..."* (Mt. 5:13)
2. *"You are the light of the world..."* (v. 14)
3. *"A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden."* (v. 14)

### B. Determining to have a positive moral and spiritual impact on the lives of others was a **proactive** mindset Jesus had that makes all the difference in dealing with the lifestyles and influences of others. You see yourself as needing to set the moral and spiritual example in all your decisions and actions.

### C. Jesus was constantly talking to and showing others about living for God and how to do that. He tried to plant moral and spiritual seeds with every opportunity. Rather than succumbing to the negative (or even well-intentioned) influences around him, His life was centered on being a godly influence for others to follow. That's not always easy.

## II. **Jesus prayed when confronted with important life decisions.**

### A. Read Luke 6:12-16. One of Jesus' major life decisions was that of choosing the very men who would take the gospel to the world. That's a huge decision. And, before doing that Jesus thought it important enough to consult the Father in prayer. Not only that, but he spent all night in that prayer.

### B. What kind of important life decisions are you facing right now? We all face decisions that we know will affect the rest of our lives, in who are now and who we will become. Decisions like: Choosing a college, choosing a wife/husband, choosing a career, choosing post-retirement activities, etc. Then there are the spiritual choices as well.

### C. But, when was the last time you stopped and took the time to pray to the Father about a decision in your life, however big or small it may seem to you?

### D. Who we will be (physically & spiritually) a few years from now is dependant upon our decisions that we make right now.

## III. **Jesus overcame the overwhelming pressure of people who threatened to take away His time spent in personal spiritual refreshment.**

### A. **Luke 5:15-16:** *"However, the report went around concerning Him all the more; and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by Him of their infirmities. <sup>16</sup> So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.*

### B. What did Jesus do when everybody wanted a piece of His time?

1. Time spent with others is good, and in Jesus' case it was for the sake of influencing them for godliness.

2. But, we can become so busy with trying to be the spiritual strength and influence for everyone else that we become drained. Or we can get so wrapped up in the demands others place upon our time with them that we forget about the time we need to spend with God.
  3. Like Jesus we need to balance our time between others and God.
- C. Jesus would “often” slip away to a lonely place to pray. We need to do that for our own good, to have time for spiritual refreshment.

#### IV. **Jesus confronted temptation with spiritual reasons that were more important to him than the reasons to succumb to it.**

- A. When confronted with pressure to sin (temptation from Satan), He used God’s word, God’s standard for moral living to guide Him in His choices. He used God’s word as the escape route from sin. (Matt. 4:1-11) First notice a few things about the circumstances:
1. Jesus’ temptation took place in the wilderness (v. 1). What’s so significant about that? He was by himself. Nobody was around to see and hear. Anonymity is something that makes sin so much more inviting... the thought that “no one will know what I’ve done.” But Jesus knew that someone would see and hear and know.
    - a. Jeremiah 23:24: “Can anyone hide himself in secret places, so I shall not see him?” says the LORD; “Do I not fill heaven and earth?” says the LORD.
    - b. Hebrews 4:13: “And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.”
  2. Jesus had deprived himself of physical desires (food). No doubt he had an intense hunger at this point to satisfy his appetite.
  4. Verse 1 says that the Spirit led him into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. What would you think if you knew that the Holy Spirit had led you to a place for the sole purpose of allowing Satan to tempt you? This text is saying that it was God’s will for Jesus to be tempted (or tested). Doesn’t that sound crazy to you? Actually, if God hadn’t done it, if Jesus hadn’t been faced with the opportunity to overcome desires of the flesh, we wouldn’t have a Savior’s example to follow, and we would probably just make more excuses for our sin.
- B. There are three circumstances in which Jesus stood up to the challenge of living a moral life in an immoral world, three ways in which he was tempted. (Cf. 1 John 2:15-16) Notice that in each case Jesus overcame temptation by knowing, recalling, and using God’s Holy word.
1. Lust of the flesh: *“If you are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.”*
    - a. Here’s the million-dollar question we always end up asking when we face situations like this: “Would it have really been a sin for Jesus to turn stones into bread?” Did God’s word ever say, “Thou shalt not use miraculous ability to turn stones to bread”? Of course not! If you hadn’t eaten in 40 days, how badly would you have wanted to turn those stones to bread?
    - b. But, why would it have been a sin for Jesus to do it? Satan tries to get us to shift our dependence upon physical things.
    - c. Did you notice though, that Satan tried to get Jesus to prove who he was by doing what Satan said, even though the thing itself didn’t seem all that bad?
  2. Pride of life: *“If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written, ‘He shall give his angels charge over you,’ and ‘In their hand they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.’”* Notice that even Satan used

Scripture to persuade Jesus to listen to Him by thinking that the Scriptures say its okay. But Jesus, again, refers to Scripture for overcoming this great attempt at deception and temptation. Pride (thinking highly of ourselves) often blinds us from seeing the sin of various circumstances.

3. Lust of the eyes: *"The devil took him up on an exceedingly high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him, 'All these things I will give you if you will fall down and worship me.'"*

C. Equipping ourselves with knowledge of the Scriptures is what fashions our consciences for a ready response to the powerful temptation that appeals to our fleshly desires. The more we know God's word and apply it, the easier it will be to overcome temptation like Christ.

**V. Jesus had a view of this immoral world that was filled with love and not hatred. It's not just about surviving the world, but dealing with the world.**

- A. (Luke 9:51-56) Not an attitude of retaliation. Jesus was never out to get anybody, or get back at someone for their ill-intentions toward Him.
- B. A major part of immorality today stems from our attitudes toward people around us. If you hurt me, I'll hurt you. If I don't like you, I'm going to gossip about you to others, etc.

**VI. He would transcend immoral living by living with a purpose/goal.**

**VII. He would talk about godly living.**

- A. Talking with others about right and wrong gets us thinking more about how we are living it ourselves.
- B. It gets us talking about what we actually believe about certain things.
- C. It keeps our hearts and minds freshly in tune with thoughts of righteous living.

**VIII. Jesus humbled himself for righteous service to us in his life and in his death to help us deal with immorality. (Phil. 2:5-11; Matt. 20:28)**

- A. Service to others for their physical and spiritual benefit.
- B. Service to the Father to be pleasing to him and to glorify him before all.
- C. **Jesus willingly died for us to be freed from the bonds of sin...** For our immoral lives to be converted into God-like lives.
- D. If it took the death of Jesus to conquer the sin that so drastically rules and ruins our lives, then it is only reasonable that God has commanded us too to die to sin. In baptism we do what Jesus did. In repentance we go through a transformation.

**Conclusion:** Hebrews 12:1-3. When we take our eyes off of Jesus we stop realizing the highly compelling reasons to confront this immoral world with moral, spirit-filled living. Whatever moral challenge you're facing, Jesus is the answer to facing it and overcoming it.