

What Would Jesus Do?

Gary Watson

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GRACE DOCTRINE CHURCH

St. Charles, MO 63121

Have you ever heard, or maybe used the phrase, “What Would Jesus Do”? I hear this from many people, and I thought I would save you some time and money and tell you “What Jesus Did”.

Would I shock you if I told you Jesus Christ left us the answer to this question? You know the answer is found in the Word of God...the mind of Christ!

Let's start with an introduction:

Charles Spurgeon, a well-known evangelical Baptist preacher in London, used the phrase “what would Jesus do” in quotation marks several times in a sermon he gave on June 28, 1891. In his sermon he cites the source of the phrase as a book written in Latin by Thomas à Kempis between 1418 and 1427, “Imitatio Christi” (The Imitation of Christ).

The Rev. A.B. Simpson, founder of the Christian and Missionary Alliance Church, wrote both the lyrics and music of a Gospel Hymn “What Would Jesus Do” with a copyright date of 1891.

Charles Sheldon's 1896 book “In His Steps” was subtitled “What Would Jesus Do?” Sheldon's novel grew out of a series of sermons he delivered in his Congregationalist church in Topeka, Kansas.

In 1993, Garrett W. Sheldon (great-grandson of the original author) and Deborah Morris published “What Would Jesus Do?” A contemporary retelling of Charles M. Sheldon's classic “In His Steps”. Garrett Sheldon states that his updated version “is based on many actual events in the lives of believers”.

A youth group leader at Calvary Reformed Church in Holland, Michigan, named Janie Tinklenberg, began a grassroots movement to help the teenagers in her group remember the phrase; it spread worldwide in the 1990s among Christian youth, who wore bracelets bearing the initials “WWJD”. Later, a sequel bracelet was generated with the initials “FROG,” to provide an answer to “WWJD.” “FROG” was an acronym for “Fully Rely on God”.

In 2005, Garry Wills wrote “What Jesus Meant”, in which he examined “What Would Jesus Really Do” (also a book review in Esquire Magazine).

In April 2010 a film, “WWJD”, starring Adam Gregory and based on “In His Steps” by Charles Sheldon, was released on DVD. On March 31, 2015, a sequel film was released “WWJD What Would Jesus Do? The Journey Continues”. The second film using the moniker “WWJD”

[It](#) was “[The Woodcarver](#)” which was released in 2012. It has a similar theme but different characters. (Wikipedia)

It wasn’t until the early 2000’s that you could actually purchase WWJD bracelets and t-shirts.

How do you know “What Jesus Would Do”? You must develop His mentality and His intentionality.

Jesus Christ is our “template”. We have His example to follow.

Let’s first look at [1 Peter 2:21](#):

[1 Peter 2:21](#): “For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example (“ὕπογραμμός” – “*hupogrammos*”) for you to follow in His steps.”

“Leaving” – The present active participle of “ὕπολιμπάνω” – “*hupolimpano*” – meaning to bequeath or leave behind.

“An example” - accusative singular masculine of (“ὕπογραμμός”) “*hupogrammos*”. This word is a “hapax legomenon” in the Greek New Testament.

Definition: Hapax legomenon (plural: hapax legomena; sometimes shortened to hapax) literally means “(a thing) said only once” in Greek, and it was originally used in Biblical studies to refer to a word that appears uniquely in one place in the Old or New Testament.

1. The noun “*hupogrammos*” is used only one time in the Greek New Testament.
2. It means pattern, or example.
3. It is derived from the word “*hupographo*” which literally means, to write under. “*hupo*”; a preposition meaning under, and “*grapho*”, the verb, meaning “to write”.
4. Put in context, “γράφω” – “*grapho*” this is an aid given to beginning students learning to write the letters of the alphabet. An alphabetical template.
5. Definition of “*template*” from the “Encarta Dictionary”: [Something which serves as a master pattern from which other similar things can be made. A pattern or a mold.](#)
6. This was a style used to copy a text or work of art much like a tracing.
7. Very similar to a template something which serves as a master pattern from which other similar things can be patterned or molded.
8. The life of our Lord is our pattern or template. We are to be cut in exactly the same mold if we are to replicate His lifestyle and thinking as per:

Romans 12:2: “And be not conformed to this world but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is good and acceptable and the perfect will of God.”

9. Using a tool and die makers analogy, it took our Lord 33 years to produce and refine the template that he has now passed on to us.

Living the Spiritual Life will cut you into the image of Christ Jesus our Lord.

Using the template produces a perfect fit every time.

10. Mess up the template and the results of reproduction will be distorted.

11. The template left by our Lord is a pattern for our thinking and actions for the purpose and with the results that we should walk in His steps.

Notice I Peter 2:21 again. “That you should follow”

This is the aorist active subjunctive of “*epakoloutheo*” – (“*ἐπακολουθέω*”). The subjunctive mood indicates your volitional choice. It means to be in the same way or to follow after, follow his path, walk in his steps.

You do know there are mandates in scripture where our Lord gives us direction to follow Him?

Matthew 11:28: “Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.”

“Come” is an adverb which is a rare “imperative” “*δεῖτε*” – “*deute*” or in the English “come”.

This same word is used in Matthew 4:19 when our Lord told Peter and his brother Andrew “Follow” Me and I will make you “fishers of men”.

This is not a request; it is the intent of our Commander (The Lord Jesus Christ) that we come to Him or follow after Him.

1. He is our guide when walking the lanes of life.
2. He has gone before us and marked the trail we are to follow.
3. We can follow His path or veer off into the minefields of life.
4. Every time you show up for bible class you are fulfilling this mandate.
5. When our Pastor teaches us, he is identifying the trail markers the Lord left us.

6. He was here before you. He took the point.
7. He identified the minefields of religion, politics, trusted friends, and satanic temptation.
8. Never forget, He went through it alone, and so will you.
9. Your friends may desert you; religion will curse you; politics will imprison you, and your family may reject you. But your Heavenly Father will never turn His back on you.

2 Chronicles 16:9: “For the eyes of the Lord move to and fro throughout the earth that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His.”

Proverbs 5:21: “For the ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord, And He watches all his paths.”

Now let's a quick look at Matthew 11:28-30:

Vs. 28: “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”

Vs. 29: “Take (Imperative) My yoke upon you and learn (Imperative) (to increase in knowledge, to be informed) from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Vs. 30: “For my yoke is easy and my burden light.”

We have two imperative mandates: “Take” and “Learn” (both volitional).

We have two descriptive verbs of the believer or unbeliever “Labor” (to work or toil till exhausted) and “Heavy Laden” (Loaded down with burden of unwarranted adversity)

We have “Rest”: (To recover and collect your strength, to refresh you, promised in two separate places.)

We have two descriptive adjectives of our Lord's personality profile. “Meek” (A gentle master) and “Lowly in Heart” (His humility).

Philippians 2:5-7: “Have this attitude in yourselves, which was also in Christ Jesus,

Vs. 6: Who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,

Vs. 7: but made Himself of no reputation and took upon Himself the form of a servant (Doulos) and was made in the likeness of man.”

Mark 10:45: “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.”

We have two more descriptive adjectives of His load He will give us “Easy” ([Manageable, pleasant](#)) and “Light” ([Not heavy, easy to move](#)).

PRINCIPLES:

1. Those who study, grow, learn, and apply God’s word find relief from the burden of religion, problems in life, guilt, testing, etc.
2. Those who do not continue to struggle with a load that he cannot manage.
3. This explains why those advancing to spiritual maturity can have a Relaxed Mental Attitude in spite of the testing in the devil’s world.
4. Those who do not, have no hope and no relief, for they must fight to stay afloat.
5. As long as you are willing to use your volition to obey these two imperatives, you will find rest.
6. The active voice of “**take**” implies you must “*take action*.”
7. The action is to pick up the “*zugos*” ([yoke](#)) and allow the Lord to take the reins.
8. He may need to “*goad*” you a bit so that you will stay on course, but your path will be straight.
9. In Hebrews 12, the writer instructs us in matters of sin and discipline.

Hebrews 12:12: “**Strengthen your tired arms and weak knees. Keep walking straight paths so that your injured leg won’t get worse. Instead, let it heal.**” ([Keep moving forward as you recover from your discipline.](#))

Those not following our Lord’s example and instruction have no direction and no one to instruct them. They reject truth and ignore encouragement to study truth and therefore they seal their own doom.

Proverbs 1:32: “**Fools destroy themselves because of their indifference but whoever listens to me will live without worry and will be free from the dread of disaster.**”

Proverbs 12:15: “**A stubborn fool considers his own way the right one, but a person who listens to advice is wise.**”

We have the main verb: “**Come**” and it is the imperative use of the Greek word: “*Deute*” – “*δεϋτε*”

“**All ye that labor**” - It means to be exhausted or tired or weary. The question is [why are you weary](#)? The answer is you have been “**heavy laden**”.

The Greek word here is “*phortizo*” – “*φορτίζω*”. It means to carry a load too heavy, a load placed on you causing some form of discomfort or suffering, mentally or physically. The burden may be self-induced, or some other form of testing but, either way, the burden is real. It may be unbearable, too much to endure in the human realm.

Remember Job 14:1: “**Man born of woman is of few days and full of trouble.**”

Look at the relief our Savior offers if we obey this mandate.

“**I will give you rest**”. We have the verb “*anapauro*” – “*ἀναπαύω*”. It means to refresh or to recover.

Do you not remember 1 Corinthians 10:13:

“**No temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.**”

Matthew 11:29 we see the aorist active imperative of “**Take**” – “*airo*” – “*αἶρω*”. To take up upon oneself, to lift up.

Here is the key word in this verse “**Yoke**” the masculine noun “*zugos*” – “*ζυγός*”. The yoke is the template that cuts us into his image.

What exactly is this “**yoke**”?

- a) It is a metaphorical use of a wooden beam that is attached over the head of a pulling animal, Oxen or Mule.
 - b) The yoked one is the subservient one, and he is controlled by the one who holds the reins.
 - c) It gives the connotation of sub service or a link between two people.
 - d) It is our voluntary submission to His rule and direction; a direct mandate to learn and use the Protocol Plan of God. 2 Timothy 2:15; Matthew 11:29; 2 Peter 3:18
1. This is none other than Occupation with Christ.
 2. He alone controls our destiny and direction.
 3. The only way you will ever have complete fulfillment in life is to recognize what Paul taught. “**For me to live is Christ**”.

Colossians 3:17: “**And whatever you do in word or deed do all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ giving thanks to God the Father through Him.**”

4. The greatest enemy to occupation with Christ is self!
5. Arrogance is the deceiver of self through an unrealistic self-image.

James 1:22: “Be a doer of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”

6. The arrogant one will never pick up the “yoke” because he seeks to receive and not serve.
7. Picking up that “yoke” requires reciprocal love motivation.

Why would the Lord mandate us to yoke ourselves to him??

The answer is simple. Ephesians 3:16: “That he would grant you according to the riches of His glory to be strengthened with might by his spirit in the inner man.”

8. This “yoke” or “zugos” that our Lord instructs us to pick up and put on is a metaphorical picture of positive volition to the protocol plan of God. It is an exact copy of the spiritual life tested and deployed by our Lord. We pick it up and put it on, then God the Holy Spirit begins to go to work shaping and molding us until we replicate the life of Christ.

Ephesians 2:10: “For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto divine good production which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

9. This template is invisible and applied to the soul. Paul recognized the finished work of God the Holy Spirit when he said in Ephesians 3:16: “So that He would give you according to the riches of His glory, His very own power so that you may be strengthened in the inner man by means of the Holy Spirit.”
10. Remember, you cannot pick up the “yoke” if you do not obey the imperative of “deute” or “come”.
11. The “yoke” is “easy” – (*christos*) good, gracious, kind. His “yoke” is manageable, and uplifting, gentle and edifying.
12. 1 Peter 2:3: “If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious.” This word “gracious” is the same word used here and translated “easy”.

PRINCIPLE: This voluntary submission to the “yoke” of our Lord will not drain nor weaken you, but instead make you stronger.

PRINCIPLE: Our Lord will never subject you to unrealistic goals nor burden you with unnecessary ritual.

So, if I were to identify the personality profile of our Lord that we should follow, part of it would definitely include: