



Following Jesus in a Secular World

By Karen Sue Nyquist



1. **Western Culture and Christianity are not the same thing.** - When people confuse Western secular culture with Christianity, they may decide that Christianity is a weak religion, without good morals. Also, if they see “Christians” not living morally, they can compare them with others who are, and decide that their religion is a stronger, a more moral religion than Christianity. We have to realize that not all people who say they are Christians are really saved or they are not fully following what Jesus and the Bible says.
2. **Followers of Jesus Have Good Morals** - There are many more who are following Jesus’ teachings and are living moral lives. We cannot be conformed to this world. “And do not be **conformed to this world**, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” (Romans 12:2).
3. **Let’s see what Jesus and the Bible say about how to live morally.**
 - a) **Love God and Others** - Jesus said, “You shall **love** the Lord your God with all your **heart**, with all your **soul**, with all your **strength**, and with all your **mind**,’ and ‘your **neighbor as yourself**” (Luke 10:27).
 - b) **Loving and Respectful Family Roles** - “Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in everything... Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her... let the wife see that she respects *her* husband...” (Ephesians 5:24, 25, 33). “Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as *being* heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered” (1 Peter 3:7). “Wives love your husbands” (Titus 2:4). Children, obey and honor your parents in the Lord. Ephesians 6:1-2
 - c) **Divorce** - “It has been said, ‘Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.’ But I (*Jesus*) tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery.” (Matthew 15:31-32).
 - d) **Dressing Modestly** - “In like manner also, that the women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with propriety and moderation, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or costly clothing,” (1 Timothy 2:9).
 - e) **Work** - “Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, **working** with *his* hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.” (Ephesians 4:28).
 - f) **Providing for Your Family** - “But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever” (1 Tim. 5:8).
 - g) **Treating Women with Pure Respect** - “Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with **absolute purity**” (1 Timothy 5:1-2).
 - h) **Sexual Purity** - “For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality” (1 Thessalonians 4:3). “let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband. Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.” (1 Corinthians 7:2-3).
 - i) **Racism** - Racism is when someone judges another person or group by their race, not by their character. There can be racism against Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, Native Americans, Pacific Islanders, Jews, Whites, people of different religions or cultures, etc.

“For *the Lord* does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but **the Lord looks at the heart** (*the character*).” (1 Samuel 16:7).
“Then God said, “**Let Us make man in Our image**, according to Our likeness;” (Genesis 1:26).
“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for **you are all one** in Christ Jesus.” (Galatians 3:28). “Then Peter opened *his* mouth and said:



“In truth I perceive that God shows **no partiality**. But in every nation **whoever** fears Him and **works righteousness is accepted** by Him.” (Acts 10:3:34-35). “You shall **neither mistreat** a stranger **nor oppress** him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” (Exodus 22:21)
“Therefore **love** the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Deuteronomy 10:19).

j) Hospitality - “Rather, he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.” (Titus 1:8).

k) Drinking Alcohol - Many Followers of Jesus believe that they are not to drink alcohol at all, others believe you can but not enough to have your mind effected. The Bible warns against alcohol saying, “Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit,” (Ephesians 5:18). Debauchery means “excessive indulgence in sensual pleasures,” which is not acceptable to God.

l) Fruit of the Spirit - “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.” (Galatians 5:22-23).

4. Don't Judge Too Harshly - When you see true Followers of Jesus, you will see their moral lives. But don't judge too harshly, no one is able to live a perfect life. “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,” (Romans 3:23). Only Jesus is holy and has no sin. “*who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and has become higher than the heavens” (Hebrews 7:26). That's why we follow Him. Some Followers of Jesus are new believers and have much to learn, they need to grow, and become more disciplined. Please, have patience.



5. Remember, following Jesus does not mean you are denying your culture or accepting the western culture. There are Jesus followers all around the world of many cultures.

6. What will happen if you choose to follow Jesus? You'll receive:

a) Your sins being paid for or atoned for - God said, “The soul who sins shall die” (Ezekiel 18:4). “You have committed a great sin. So now I (Moses) will go up to the Lord; perhaps I can make **atonement for your sin**” (Exodus 32:20). “And He Himself (**Jesus**) is the **propitiation (atonement, sacrifice, payment) for our sins**, and not for ours only but also for the whole world” (1 John 2:2).

b) Forgiveness for bad deeds/sins - “having wiped out (*erased*) the handwriting of requirements **that was against us**,... And He (*Jesus the Messiah*) has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross” (Colossians 2:14).

c) Rewards for your good deeds - Jesus said, “Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord” (Matthew 25:21).

d) Reconciliation with God - “Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,” (2 Corinthians 5:18).

7. If you have decided, then here is a suggested prayer: Jesus, I know that I am a sinner and that You died to make atonement for my sins, then rose again. I know that you are calling me and I want to become a Follower of You. Please, continue to teach me Your way. I will obey You as You lead me. I now accept you as my Lord and Savior. Name _____ Date _____



Now that you have asked Jesus into your heart, He will start revealing Himself to you. But to steadily improve your relationship with Jesus, spend time with Him. Start talking (praying) to Him. Read His book, the Bible, where He reveals Himself even more clearly. Go to a good church where you feel God's presence, they preach the Bible, and you can fellowship with other believers. We learn much about God from each other.

GOD BLESS YOU! NationTakers Ministries

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