

# MARK JENKINS MINISTRIES

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Doing To Be OR Being To Do

Dear Friend,

Recently, while enjoying a fellow minister's message, he used a phrase that caught my attention and has not yet turned loose. The phrase was tacked onto the end of a larger point, but when I heard it the impact was like taking the lid off of buried treasure. The phrase was simply, "Doing to be or being to do."

On the surface these words might not make sense. But, I believe they describe much of the mentality of believers in the church today. The phrase speaks to the fact that all too often people are identifying themselves as Christians based on their actions or good works instead of on the new birth. In other words, their claim to Christianity centers around what they do or don't do, instead of who they are as children of God.

"Doing to be" then is the idea that if a person does enough of the right things they can safely consider themselves Christians. Consequently all their attention is focused on their actions instead of what Jesus accomplished for them on the cross. Sadly, this describes a large percentage of people's spiritual lives, both Christian and otherwise.

Like those who base their Christianity on their actions the same can be said of all world "religions". The common trait found in all world "religions" is the promise of the hereafter based on how much of a predetermined regiment a person is able to accomplish while on earth. Conversely, true Christianity is rooted in the acceptance of what **another** has accomplished in our place, who interestingly enough happens to be God. **Think of it, instead of man trying to appease an unsatisfied "god" with our actions; God Himself came and satisfied our deficiency with the sacrifice of Himself.**

How different is that as compared to "religions" such as one in which millions of followers are trained to pray so many times a day facing a certain city. Or, another that sends their young men out on bicycles or foot, dressed in white collar shirts and ties, spreading a message from door to door believing that their

actions are producing positive spiritual results. In other instances, people are taught to wear certain clothing, abstain from certain food or drink, be a good person, appease their “god” with certain sacrifices, and on and on it goes. The bottom line is that the religions of the world focus on the person’s actions.

While, this mentality has crept into today’s church, it really isn’t anything new. From the very beginning of Christianity the enemy has done everything possible to intertwine the idea that believers need to do something in addition to the work of the cross to truly “be” Christians. Instead of the early believers resting in their new birth and enjoying their place in God’s family as His children, “Judaizers” bombarded them with the doctrine that went something like this, “If you want to truly be Christians you must also follow the Law of Moses.” Keep in mind; it was the Jews who first received the message of salvation and the new birth. Since being born again was “new” to them, it was probably not too difficult for them to believe they must also continue to follow the law in order to truly be righteous.

Imagine the confusion the early church experienced trying to decide if it was necessary for them to continue to follow the law or not. On top of that, Peter had the revelation as recorded in Acts 10 that the Gentiles were to be welcomed into the family of God alongside the Jews. Gentiles, who had never kept the law a day in their lives, were now supposedly equal with the Jews. This became fertile ground for the doctrine of the Judaizers to be perpetuated, which went something like this; “In order to truly be righteous before God, you swine-eating Gentiles - you must keep the Law of Moses.”

So the “doing to be” idea that our good actions can somehow add to our righteousness, or conversely, our bad actions subtract from our righteousness has been plaguing the church from its inception. This teaching is guaranteed to keep a person locked in a prison of perpetual sin and condemnation, destined to a life of frustration with the focus of their attention always on their own actions instead of on Christ’s work on the cross.

The Apostle Paul could see the potential damage the message being spread by the Judaizers would have on the church’s development. So, when he witnessed one of the original 12 disciples, Peter, succumbing to the pressure of this false doctrine, Paul addressed Peter’s wrong actions in no uncertain terms. Think of it, the fate of the early church hung in the balance and here was one of the original 12 disciples who walked with Jesus giving place to a false doctrine that focused on “doing to be” instead of “being to do”. “If you do these things then you will be more righteous” instead of **“Your new birth has made you righteous”**.

Paul knew that he had to address this problem directly and do it in such a way that Peter and everyone else who heard it would never forget. You talk about

being “called on the carpet”. Paul called Peter out and declared Peter’s actions were those of a hypocrite. This can be found in Paul’s letter to the churches of Galatia (in Galatians 2).

Allow me to set the stage for you. By the time of this incident between Paul and Peter, several years had passed since God had given Peter the revelation that the Gentiles were to be welcomed into the family of God alongside the Jews. Paul’s mission had been to carry this message of righteousness by faith in Jesus to the Gentile communities throughout the Middle East. Peter, who had come to witness Paul’s work with the Gentiles of Antioch, had been interacting with the Gentiles, even eating with them, until a group of Jewish leaders visited them from Jerusalem.

Peter’s lack of conviction regarding the Gentiles being truly saved by grace was evident to everyone present, especially Paul. But, Peter was demonstrating more than his lack of conviction about the revelation regarding the Gentiles. He was also demonstrating his doubts about the message of grace outside of the works of the law, as evidenced by his compulsion to separate himself from the Gentiles. This was clearly his attempt to abide by the Law of Moses and appease the Judaizers.

Paul refused to turn a blind eye to Peter’s actions. He made a point of exposing Peter’s shortcomings for all to see in an effort to shine a light on this dangerous doctrine of “doing to be.” Tension must have filled the air as Peter, after hearing about the approaching leaders from Jerusalem, began to separate himself from the Gentiles that he had been conversing with. When it was clear to the Gentiles that something was different, Paul corrected Peter’s hypocrisy. (Galatians 2:11)

***“But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed.”***

Undoubtedly, this was a painful situation for Peter because it exposed what was truly in his heart; **uncertainty**. Even though he had walked with Jesus for all that time Peter still was uncertain about what the death burial and resurrection really provided for humanity. Peter witnessed Paul’s conviction to the belief that the Gentiles were now equal with the Jews; the Law of Moses had been fulfilled and grace was now the order of the day. But, Peter’s witness of Paul’s conviction wasn’t enough to offset his own fears and uncertainties. Consequently, when the leaders from Jerusalem were approaching, Peter’s actions revealed his heart.

I can only imagine the fearful thoughts that must have been racing through Peter’s mind. “Is it really true that we are saved by grace alone and not Law?”

“Are the Gentiles in God’s family?” “What will these leaders from Jerusalem think about me if they see me eating with the ‘dirty’ Gentiles?” Finally, Peter gave in to his fears and uncertainty and separated himself from the Gentile converts.

Paul’s correction of Peter addresses this entire issue of “doing to be” instead of “being to do.” Paul said; (Galatians 2:14)

***“But when I (Paul) saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the Gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, ‘If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? (15) We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles. (16) Know that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.’ ”***

Paul’s message to Peter, and to the church as a whole, is that the Gospel of grace is a message of righteousness through faith in the finished work of the cross and is not dependent upon our actions. The idea that by abiding by the law we are somehow more righteous robs us of the full impact of what Jesus accomplished for us on the cross. If our actions could in any way make us righteous then Jesus’ dying on the cross was in vain. (Galatians 2:21)

***“I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law then Christ is dead in vain.”***

This means that “doing to be”, in other words, doing good works or following the Law of Moses in order to be righteous, is false.

The truth is that when we make Jesus Christ the Lord of our life we are reborn in to God’s family and are now the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus. (II Corinthians 5:21)

***“For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.”***

Through our identification with Jesus on the cross in substitution for us and our sin, we are the beneficiaries of the greatest inheritance of all time; entrance into the family of God, heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. (Romans 8:17)

***“And if children, then heirs, heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ...”***

Our inheritance is something that mankind could never achieve on its own merit; **righteousness as God's child**. Our acknowledging that this is who we are, righteous children of God, will result in righteous actions, which will bless our Father and the body of Christ as a whole. These acts of righteousness are born out of knowing who we are as born again children of God. They are not in any way done to try and earn righteousness they are born out of a believer's knowing that they are righteous, "being to do". This is what the world is waiting to see; the body of Christ "being to do."

In order for the body of Christ to impact the world in these last days, believers must embrace the revelation of God's grace establishing our righteousness completely independent of our actions. Until believers are convinced of their righteousness apart from their own actions they will never be able to successfully withstand the barrage of condemning thoughts of the enemy. Like Peter, they will succumb to the pressures of others who continue to focus on "doing" instead of "being".

A caveat I feel compelled to add here is regarding the error that the message of grace has been subjected to as of late. Even though our righteousness is the result of Jesus' actions and not our own, grace is not a Christian's license to live a life of lasciviousness. Paul wrote about this kind of thinking. (Romans 6:1)

***"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?"***

If a person is under the impression that they can live a lifestyle that gratifies all their carnal desires because of grace, then I honestly question their conversion to begin with. As for any leader who would recklessly teach this idea of "grace" that condones a lifestyle of sin, I question the source of their revelation. This kind of teaching will result in deceived people heading down a path that will end up in eternal damnation.

We need to settle in our hearts once and for all that our efforts to earn our own righteousness are vain. Then learn to rest in the knowledge that we are righteous because this is who we are born to be the moment we make Jesus Lord of our lives. Out of this position of knowing who we are and being the children of God we are called to be, the righteous "doing" will be the result. No longer will we "do to be" now we can rest in our "being to do".

~ Jesus Loves You!

*Mark Jenkins*