

# THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

March 25

2018

## "FOLLOWERS OF JESUS"

Someone has said that the world is filled with two classes of people, leaders and followers. This may be true, however I am convinced that we are all both leaders and followers at some time in our lives. If by "leader" we mean someone who is followed or imitated by someone else then we are all "leaders." The only way we could never be a leader is to isolate ourselves from all other people. Then, and only then, could we be sure that we would have no influence, whether good or bad, upon others. Since we do have contact with others around us we should realize that others will be influenced by what we say and do.

Also, whether we wish to admit it or not, we all spend our lives as "followers." From the time we are born we follow the example of those around us. Little children soon seek to imitate the example of their parents. They will learn to say the things they hear their parents say. They will soon imitate the actions of their parents. That is why parents need to be so careful about the things they say and do.

The Bible teaches that we are to be followers of Jesus. Jesus said, *"If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me"* (Matt. 16:24). Peter said, *"For hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, that ye should follow his steps: who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled not*

*again; when he suffered, threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: who his own self bare our sins in his body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed"* (I Peter 2:21-24).

To be a follower of Christ we must do more than just verbally claim identity as a follower of Christ. The true follower will follow the example of Jesus. We will follow His example of obedience. Paul said he became *"obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross"* (Phil. 2:8). The person who will not obey the will of the Father can never be identified as a follower of Jesus.

A follower of Jesus must also deny himself. Jesus prayed to the Father, *"not as I will, but as thou wilt"* (Matt. 26:39). As long as a person is concerned about doing his own will or pleasing himself he can never be a follower of Jesus. Jesus gave Himself for us. He suffered for us. He died for us. Peter says that in doing this he left us an example that we should follow his steps.

Many today complain about their lot in life. "It just isn't fair, the way I'm treated" is the declaration of many. May I ask you a question? What was fair about the treatment received by Jesus? He did no sin. He was innocent, yet he suffered and died upon the cross. Again I ask, are you a follower of Jesus? Are you imitating His example?

The follower of Jesus will *"live unto righteousness"* (1 Peter 2:24). It isn't enough to say "I have been baptized into Christ." Surely, no one can be a follower of Christ without being baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), but we must then *"walk in newness of life"* (Romans 6:4). There are many today who claim to be followers of Jesus but their lives say otherwise. They follow the deeds of the world rather than the example of Jesus. You can tell no difference between them and those of the world but they still will tell you they are followers of Jesus.

The follower of Jesus will follow the teaching of Jesus. How can

one be a follower of Jesus and be a member of some religious organization unknown to the teaching of Jesus. There are those who are members of churches not found in the word of God and call themselves by names not found in the teaching of Jesus who still have the audacity to claim to be followers of Jesus. Jesus said, "If ye abide in my word, then are ye truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John 8:31,32). Many want the freedom promised by Jesus but they don't want to meet the conditions He set forth. If we would be free; if we would be followers of Jesus; we must be willing to abide in His word.

✍ James Hahn



## "HE'S MY BROTHER"

I am sure most of us have seen the picture of the young boy carrying another smaller boy and he is saying, "He's not heavy, he's my brother." This scene has always had an emotional appeal since everyone recognizes that there is something special (or should be) about being brothers. However, I saw another cartoon which (I am sorry to say) seems to reflect the attitude that brethren in Christ sometimes have toward one another. The cartoon opens with a picture of one little boy on top of another beating him unmercifully. Another child approaches and says, "Love your enemy." The boy doing the beating replies, "He isn't my enemy, he's my brother."

The moment I read that cartoon I thought about the attitude some brethren show toward one another. They, like the little boy in the cartoon, often treat their enemies with more love and compassion than they do their own brethren. Nearly any wrong or problem is quickly resolved if it involves someone in the world, but let it involve a brother in Christ and instead of trying to resolve the matter we try to destroy the brother. This ought not to be.

I am not for one moment suggesting that we should ever compromise truth and right in order to maintain a "peaceful" relationship with our brother or anyone else, however I am saying that there

should be an attitude of love and compassion manifested among brethren. I know of churches where the members seem to delight in attacking one another. A kind word about another member is seldom heard. This is indeed sad. Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35).

Paul said, "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another" (Galatians 5:15). What thoughts come to your mind when you say, "He's my brother?"

✍ James Hahn



## Gospel Meeting

The time for our gospel meeting is rapidly approaching. Steve Niemeier will be doing the preaching April 8 - 13. This meeting presents each of us with a twofold blessing and opportunity; to do good and to receive good. Each of us can do good by inviting and encouraging our friends and neighbors to come and hear God's word proclaimed. We also receive a blessing by hearing and applying God's word to our own lives. Be busy during the next few days inviting friends, family, co-workers and anyone you may know to attend this meeting. I am sure Steve will do his job well; let's make sure we do the same. (JH)

### Belleville church of Christ

5635 S County Rd 200E - Belleville, IN - (317) 539-5258

[www.bellevillechurch.net](http://www.bellevillechurch.net)

#### Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	5:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

#### Evangelist

James Hahn ..... (317) 745-1507