

11 Things Jesus Didn't Say

One of my favorite characters in the Bible is Peter. Yes, he's the disciple who is often remembered for sinking (after walking on water) because he took his eyes off of Jesus; for being rebuked by Jesus ("Get behind me, Satan!"); and for denying Christ (not once, but three times in the same night) immediately after telling Jesus—to His face—that he wouldn't.

Had Peter been on social media back in the day I'm sure his most-used emoji would have been the face-palm one.

I can relate.

What I really love about Peter is the transformation that took place in his life following his encounter with the Holy Spirit in the upper room. He went from following Jesus at a distance to standing up boldly to deliver a message that resulted in 3,000 people believing in Jesus, thus launching the church.

Here's what he said: "For God called you to do good, even if it means suffering, just as Christ suffered for you. He is your example, and you must follow in his steps (1 Pet. 2:21, NLT).

Peter didn't just pen these words; he lived them. He did good, he suffered martyrdom and followed in the steps of Christ.

We, too, are called to live like Jesus. And if we're going to live like Jesus, we should love like Jesus loved, do what Jesus did, and say what Jesus said. But what about things He didn't say?

11 Things Jesus Didn't Say

1. Church isn't really that important.

The author of Hebrews confirms that gathering for worship with other believers is so vital that it should be habitual.

“Let us not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but let us exhort one another, especially as you see the Day approaching” (Heb. 10:25, MEV).

Here are 5 reasons why church is important:

1. Jesus died for it.
2. Jesus is the head of it.
3. Jesus said He would build it.
4. Jesus said the gates of hell will not prevail against it.
5. Jesus chose it as the vehicle to advance His kingdom.

Be the church.

Got to church.

Grow the church.

- 2. Blessed are those who are more passionate about politics than their faith.**

Christians who find themselves defending their political posture more than sharing their faith have bought into a different gospel.

When the apostle Paul spoke to political leaders, he preached Jesus. He also reminded believers to submit to the government and its officers. See Titus 3:1-2.

The next time you feel the urge to blast political leaders on your social media platform, stop and pray for them.

- 3. Winning an argument is more important than winning the person.**

You can win an argument and lose the person. Is it worth it? No.

I'm not saying that there aren't times to take a bold stance like Jesus did. But the requirement for this is not to be a

jerk. In Robbie Dawkins' book *Do What Jesus Did*, he shares a story of praying with an atheist. Robbie could have debated God's existence and won his argument, but he would have lost the opportunity to pray with the young man. By simply sharing the love of Jesus, Robbie earned the right to pray with him.

According to 1 Corinthians 13, if we don't communicate our message in love, our message is worthless.

In fact, even Paul said foolish arguments are foolish: "But avoid foolish debates, genealogies, contentions, and arguments about the law, for they are unprofitable and useless" (Titus 3:9).

4. Embracing all faiths is Christlike.

Although it is true that we are commanded to love everyone, there is absolutely no place in Scripture that affirms or condones that we embrace any belief system other than Jesus.

Not only did Jesus proclaim that He is the only way (John 14:6), but Paul condemned anyone who preaches anything other than Jesus: "Although if we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel to you than the one we have preached to you, let him be accursed" (Gal. 1:8).

5. Everyone is going to heaven.

What did Jesus say?

"Enter at the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who are going through it, because small is the gate and narrow is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Matt. 7:13-14).

6. I will let you into heaven as long as you're a good person.

Jesus loves sinners like me, but He is intolerant toward

sin—and the only way to heaven is to repent of sin and accept the free gift of salvation (by confessing and putting your faith in Christ).

Getting into heaven has nothing to do with us being good or even the good deeds we do—but has everything to do with what Jesus already did on the cross (see John 6:44).

And for the record, no one is good (see Luke 18:19).

7. It's your body. Do what you want with it.

While our culture encourages this, God's word says the opposite: "What? Do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God, and that you are not your own? You were bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

The good news is that whatever bad choices you already made with your body, the blood of Jesus is good enough to make you clean. He'll even remove any guilt and shame that weighs you down.

8. I love Christians more than unbelievers.

God loves all of us the same, so be careful not to forget where you used to be before He rescued you.

"We also were once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various desires and pleasures, living in evil and envy, filled with hatred and hating each other. But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward mankind appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of rebirth and the renewal of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:3-5).

9. The world will know we are Christians by our knowledge of Scripture.

Though memorizing Scripture is important, Jesus said that it's our love for one another that will prove to the world that we are His disciples. See John 13:35 and 1 Corinthians 13.

10. Homosexuality is worse than all other sins combined.

Sin is sin. Yes, there are specific sins that have greater consequences, but any disobedience is sin. Here's what James 2:10 says: "For whoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point is guilty of breaking the whole law."

I also want to point out that Jesus blasted the religious leaders of His day for their spiritual arrogance more often than He did the sexually immoral. See Matthew 23.

11. You have to behave before you belong.

One of my favorite stories in the Gospels is found in Luke 5. Jesus asked Matthew—a despised and hated tax collector—to follow Him. Matthew didn't have to first pass a test; he didn't have to jump through spiritual hoops; and he didn't have pay back everyone he ripped off before he could follow. Jesus just invited him to belong, period.

Matthew was so excited that he threw a party (with other notorious sinners) and made Jesus the guest of honor! It's ironic that the only ones who had a problem with this were the Pharisees. Jesus confronted their disdain by declaring that He came for those who know they are sinners—not for those who think they are righteous. Ouch.

Behavior follows belonging.

Jesus will take you just as you are, but He won't leave you that way.

Chuck Tate is the author of *41 Will Come: Holding on When Life Gets Tough*. He is also the founder and lead pastor of *RockChurch*, a growing and thriving congregation in the heart of Illinois. Before planting *RockChurch* in 1998, Chuck worked

for a national youth ministry in Tulsa, Oklahoma.