

22 Things Christ Followers Should Quit

Before you read the following, I just want you to know that these are things I am guilty of, too. Like I tell my church all the time: "I'm preaching to myself!" When it comes to following Christ, we are all a work in progress.

For those who know me, you are familiar with my personality, so you will be able to decipher my tone and picture me smiling as you read this. For those of you who don't know me, try to picture me smiling as you read on. So, go ahead and laugh, love, and perhaps even whisper, "Ouch."

And just so there's no confusion, the word Christian is defined as someone who professes Christ and embraces His teachings. Not only are the four gospels about Him, the entire Bible is Him because He is the Living Word.

Here is a list of the 22 things I believe Christ followers should cease and desist in their lives:

1. Quit expecting the world to like you. Jesus said it would hate you (John 15:18-27, Matthew 10:22).

2. Quit throwing your own teammates under the bus. We're called to build each other up, not tear each other down. In fact, Jesus said that our love for each other proves to the world that we are really His true disciples (John 13:35, 1 Thessalonians 5:11).

3. Quit gossiping. This includes sharing "juicy prayer requests" with no intention of actually praying (Psalms 34:13, Psalms 101:5, Ephesians 4:29).

4. Quit replacing prayer with "good vibes" and "positive thoughts." No. Just no. Prayer moves the hand of God and the

hand of God moves the world. Prayer is much more effective than making someone feel warm and fuzzy inside. By the way, I'm not saying positive thoughts and good vibes are wrong (and they do make you feel good), I'm just saying prayer trumps them both (2 Corinthians 1:11, Philippians 1:19, Ephesians 6:18, James 5:16).

5. Quit saying repentance isn't necessary. It is. Jesus said so. And just so you know, there are 53 references to repentance in the New Testament. Now go repent (Matthew 5:17, Acts 3:19, Romans 2:5, 2 Peter 3:9, 1 John 1:9).

6. Quit saying that the "portions of the Bible that make you feel uncomfortable" are irrelevant and nothing more than dated writings. All 66 books, 1,189 chapters, and 31,102 verse are the inspired Word of God. So the next time you think about throwing out the Old Testament, just remember that Jesus quoted it numerous times in all four gospels (John 1:1-4, John 1:14, 2 Timothy 3:16).

7. Quit expecting unbelievers/non-Christians to understand the Bible and/or to live like Christ. It's hard enough for Christians to live like Christ and it's impossible to do so without Him (until the blinders are removed) (2 Corinthians 4:4, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 5:24-25).

8. Quit acting like the Great Commission (Go into all the world to preach the gospel) is the Great Suggestion. It's a command. Go already (Matthew 28:19, Mark 16:15).

9. Quit thinking that it's OK to be silent about your faith. Yes, it's just as important to represent Jesus by how we live, but someone can't respond to the Good News without hearing it ... and they can't hear it if no one opens their mouth (Matthew 10:27, Romans 10:14-15).

10. Quit being more passionate about your political affiliation than your relationship with Jesus. If 99 percent of what you post on social media consists of bashing

government officials and presidential candidates—you're doing more damage than good (Romans 13:1-7, 2 Chronicles 7:14).

11. Quit using the Bible to beat the "hell" out of people. That doesn't work. Ever. I don't care if you're right—if you're a jerk, nobody is listening. Love wins! (No, I don't mean the book by Rob Bell.) (1 Corinthians 13).

12. Quit your legalistic rants, knee-jerk reactions, and judgmentalism. You're turning people off. You're making good news bad news. Jesus befriended sinners. Try it and great things will happen (Mark 2:17, Luke 5:27-32, 1 Timothy 1:15-16).

13. Quit calling yourself a Christian if you believe there are multiple paths that lead to salvation. Jesus said that He's the only way to heaven. If you don't believe Him, you're not a Christ follower (John 14:6, 1 John 2:4).

14. Quit living like everybody's going to heaven and nobody's going to hell. Jesus died so the whole world could be saved, but He said the path to heaven is narrow and few find it. And for the record, He preached more about hell than heaven ... but He did it without using a bullhorn and manipulative scare tactics. #LeadLikeJesus (Matthew 7:13-14).

15. Quit acting like you're better than those who don't know Jesus. You're not (Luke 18:19, Acts 10:34, Romans 2:11-13).

16. Quit criticizing loving believers who take a biblical stand for godly morals and Christian values (that are crystal clear in Scripture) just because you're too much of a wimp to take a stand yourself. Jesus didn't call us to be politically correct. Develop some backbone. And yes, I said wimp. And yes, I will repent for calling you a wimp (Acts 4-6).

17. Quit pointing out the speck in your neighbor's eye while ignoring the plank in your own eye. By the way, I can hardly see my computer as I type this because of the log in my own

eye (Matthew 7:3-5).

18. Quit being a jerk, period. Whatever your position is (on anything), if you can't communicate it in love, you're a clanging cymbal and your message is worthless. So yeah, I probably shouldn't have called you a wimp in No. 16 (1 Corinthians 13).

19. Quit defending sin. Quit hating sinners. These are equally important. Oh yeah, and lose your critical lens (Psalm 97:10, Matthew 22:37-39).

20. Quit using the phrase "he who's without sin cast the first stone" out of context. The next thing Jesus said was, "Go and sin no more" (John 8:1-11).

21. Quit using grace as a license to live however you want. Jesus is grace, so don't trample Him under your feet (Romans 6:1-2, 1 John 2:4, Hebrews 10:26-31).

22. Quit using the phrase (when inviting people to church) "come as you are" if you're going to complain when they start showing up (Mark 2:17, Luke 5:27-32). {eoa}

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