

How to Lift Up Jesus Everywhere You Go

One look at the society around us will tell you that the devil has made great advances in our day. Abortion has become so commonplace we're almost anesthetized to the fact that the procedure involves the destruction of human life. Gay couples, who 30 years ago would have been reluctant to admit they were living together, now openly—and legally—marry and adopt children in 12 states and the District of Columbia. Teenagers no longer learn moral absolutes from parents and teachers but are taught a new brand of relativism promoted by popular television programs, which allows for liberal drinking, drug use, sex with a variety of partners and no relational commitment whatsoever.

Even in the church moral lines have become blurred. Divorce is as common among Christians as it is in the secular population, and according to professional Christian counselor Douglas Weiss, sexual addiction is the leading addiction in the church today. Countless numbers of believers are secretly enslaved to pornography or are involved in overt sexual sin.

And it isn't only average church members who make up the statistics. Month after month the Christian media reports on the latest rash of divorce, misappropriation or misuse of funds and sexual aberrations among leaders. The scandals regarding pedophilia in the Roman Catholic Church that continue to make headlines on the secular news prove that a clerical collar is not a mark of holiness.

What's more, the church is suffering from a severe lack of humility. Pastors and other leaders unabashedly assume lofty titles, market themselves and their ministries through self-promotional advertising, and surround themselves with support personnel whose primary purpose is to keep them on a pedestal

and wait on them hand and foot. It seems the term “servant-leader” has become an anachronism.

I am not judging anyone. I am simply acknowledging the true state of affairs in society and the church—and I do so not as a reporter, but as a Christian who sincerely desires to make a difference. Considering this state has caused me to ask the Lord over and over again: “What can we do about it?”

One morning when I was pondering this question during my prayer time, the Lord spoke a word to me from Scripture. He said, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (John 12:32, KJV). It seemed like a simple word at first, but as I reflected on it, I realized it had tremendous significance.

The Lord was reminding me that we must stop focusing on and promoting the wrong things! We’ve got to lift *Him* up—not ourselves, not other people, not our gifts, not our ministries, not our churches, not our programs, not our agendas (which usually have more to do with personal gain than with God’s purposes), not our jobs, not our material possessions—but Him. When we do that, *He* will draw all men unto Himself.

Sounds easy, doesn’t it? In everything we do and everywhere we go, lift up Jesus. At work, lift up Jesus. At home, lift up Jesus. At church, lift up Jesus. In the grocery store, on a plane, at a ball game or a conference or someone’s bedside, lift up Jesus. Nothing and no one else—just Jesus.

Pretty soon, everywhere we went, people would be hearing about Jesus and seeing Him reflected in our words and behavior. Their eyes would be turned toward Him and away from the temptations of the world. And He would draw *all* men—if we can be bold enough to believe His Word—unto Him.

But are we ready to stop glorifying the things we currently “lift up”? Are we willing to start showing our children that

there is nothing (not even a career, home, car, ministry, recognition, money or looking good) that is more important to us than our relationship with God? Are we able to cease pursuing the pleasures the world seeks after to make a statement about what—or who—is really important in our lives?

Let's be honest with ourselves. Some of us are more concerned about missing a nail appointment than about missing church!

But we're at a crossroads, my friends. And it's time to make a decision: God's way or the world's way. If we don't start lifting up Jesus, we'll be forced to watch those around us go the world's way whether we want them to or not. And it's not easy to drive against the traffic on a busy street.

PRAYER POWER FOR THE WEEK OF 5/27/2013

Focus this week on lifting Jesus up in your life and prayers. Turn away from any idols in your life that keep Him at arm's length rather than as the center of your life. Dedicate yourself anew to Him as you continue to pray for wisdom and protection for Israel, the Middle East, Europe, our country and its political, military and spiritual leaders. Remember those affected by devastating tornadoes and floods in Texas, Oklahoma and other midwestern states. Ask God what you can do to help and be a blessing to them. Pray that revival would ignite the earth and for His glory to be seen in this generation. I John 5:14-15; I John 5:21