

What Would Jesus Say to Kim Kardashian?

Kim Kardashian has made \$45 million simply by allowing cameras to follow her around on the set of her reality TV show, *Keeping Up With the Kardashians*. But that wasn't enough money or fame for the 33-year-old socialite.

Last week, she tried to "break the Internet" by posing nude on the front of *Paper* magazine and then sending the images to her 25 million Twitter followers.

The Internet didn't break, but I'm pretty sure it groaned—along with the millions of people around the world who didn't want to see Kardashian's derriere or hear the resulting discussion about why this woman is so desperate for attention.

This is not the first time a famous actress or model has taken her clothes off to pose for a magazine cover. But even secular critics viewed Kardashian's stunt as shameless and self-serving. It wasn't about art or political protest. It was just an expensive selfie designed to keep Kardashian's brand alive and her income flowing in.

What's really strange about this incident is that Kim Kardashian claims a form of Christian faith. Many months ago Kim and her now-husband, rap singer Kanye West, began visiting Trinity Church, an Assemblies of God congregation in Miami pastored by Rich Wilkerson Sr. The celebrity couple asked Wilkerson's son, Rich Jr., who serves as associate pastor, to perform their lavish wedding ceremony in Italy.

The younger Wilkerson, who is 30, got a place in the media spotlight because of the wedding, and as a result, he and his wife, DawnChéré, have agreed to do a reality show on the Oxygen network. The program, to be called *The Wilkersons*, will take a lighthearted look at the young couple and their

ministry to young adults.

Kardashian has told reporters she believes her typical fan is a 15- or 16-year-old girl who loves fashion. She even runs a store in Los Angeles that sells merchandise aimed at teenage girls. Yet Kardashian doesn't see anything inconsistent with the idea of mentoring young teens while she's posing nude on social media.

I'm tempted to lash out in self-righteous indignation at Kim's behavior, but I've experienced God's mercy for my own sins—and I know Jesus has a lot more patience than I do when people mess up. I'm glad Kardashian and her husband have reached out to Trinity Church, and I pray they will be exposed to the message of Christ there. I also pray that Rich Wilkerson and his wife will have the right words to say to Kim and Kanye.

What would Jesus say to Kim Kardashian? I think He'd say the same thing He says to all of us, regardless of how famous (or infamous) we are or how ridiculous we act in public. Jesus died for everybody—rich or poor, nude or clothed, self-absorbed or humble. The ground at the foot of His cross is level, and He offers the same free gift of salvation to those who are willing to accept His terms:

Repent. Jesus said: “Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:5). He didn't have a soft message. He called sinners to repentance because sin is what separates us from God. And He didn't just say this to prostitutes and drunkards and reality TV stars; He required smug religious people to repent too.

Believe. Jesus' love is amazing! He offers to wipe out all record of our sins and give us eternal life in heaven, no matter how awful we behaved—or how many vulgar photos there are to prove it. All we have to do is put our trust in Him, and He changes us on the inside. Jesus promised: “He who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and

does not come into judgment" (John 5:24).

Deny yourself. Jesus told His followers: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me" (Luke 9:23). You can never be a disciple of Jesus if you are focused on self. This is one reason Jesus said rich people have a harder time getting into His kingdom. The same can be said for people who are famous. Selfishness can keep you out of heaven because it makes you think you are God.

I have compassion for Kim Kardashian because I know she's addicted to fame. She grew up in the media spotlight (her dad was O.J. Simpson's lawyer) and her mother pushed her to use publicity to make money. People who get too much attention end up feeding off of it—and it makes them desperate. So desperate that they would strip for the cameras to stay in the public eye.

Rather than judging Kardashian, I'm praying she will discover true faith and allow Jesus to clothe her with His salvation.

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