

Walkie-Talkie

Ready:

“So I urge you to imitate me.”

-1 Corinthians 4:16 (NLT)

Set

Thirty-three years later there is still evidence that my front tooth took a chunk of wood out of my mom’s furniture. When my two older brothers and I were kids, we invented a game called “Walkie-Talkie.” I know a walkie-talkie is a portable, handheld communication device, but we hijacked the name because it perfectly fit our game. When I think back on it, I’m pretty sure it was really just a game that allowed my brothers to inflict bodily harm on me, but I wasn’t smart enough to figure that out. I was just thankful they wanted to do something with their youngest brother. (Do I hear an “Amen!” from all the youngest kids out there?)

In our game, we would walk side-by-side through the house with our arms over each other’s shoulders. As we walked, we would say out loud, “Walkie-Talkie,” with each step. The way to win the game was by suddenly trying to trip the other person by throwing them to the ground. In this very specific case, my brother won when I went flying face-first into my mom’s showcase furniture. My front tooth had found a new home!

I was recently thinking about this game while reflecting on my spiritual walk. Sometimes it feels like I am playing spiritual “Walkie-Talkie.” Over the years, I have walked shoulder-to-shoulder with many people (friends, teammates, family and others) who have tried to take me out because a competitive spirit developed. Just like in the game, we all have a desire to be victorious. There seems to be a drive to outperform other people or to be one step ahead. Not only do we want to win in life, we sometimes just want to defeat others.

I confess. I quickly get sucked into this game of walkie-talkie. But when someone walks with you side-by-side and begins to see how you live, there should be a deeper trust developed. That person should see that you are the real deal. But it often seems that when people get to know us better, they trust us less and begin to see the gaps in our lives.

When I played lacrosse, my desire was that my teammates who saw me on the field, in the locker room and in the classroom would know that my faith in Christ was real and authentic. That I had nothing to hide. The goal was that the more they got to know me, the more they got to know Jesus.

When someone walks with us, they rub shoulders with us and get to know us. We can’t fool them with words because our lifestyle quickly drowns out what we say. As Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 4:20 that the Kingdom of God is not just a lot of talk; it is living by God’s power. Our lives should be evident of His power. When a teammate or friend walks with us, our lives

should be filled with hope, love, joy, peace and humility—not with a competitive spirit. Our lives should be walking, talking examples of how Jesus is living in and through us. After someone spends time with us, they should say, “That is the closest I have ever come to walking with Christ.”

Now, I don't mean this in a prideful way. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 4:16 (NLT), “So I urge you to imitate me.” Paul basically said that if people wanted to know how to walk like Jesus, they should just copy him. I always thought that was an arrogant statement, but I now realize it was a statement of accountability. Paul was willing to put his walk in the spotlight. His life in Christ screamed authenticity. It would have been easier for him to tell others to imitate Jesus, Himself. Most of our lives don't look anything like the life of Christ, so we would have a hard time uttering those words. Instead, Paul was so close to Jesus, so intimate with and in love with Him, that he was willing to state it because his life backed it up. Paul was saying, “Hey, if you want to walk with me for a couple hours, you will get a full understanding of what the life of Christ was all about.”

After reflecting on this Scripture, I have gained a deep, humble desire for people who are with me for several hours or even several years to say, “That is the closest I ever came to walking with Jesus.” Whether it is playing sports, working with me or just hanging out, I want them to get a full understanding of who Jesus is. That is the game of walkie-talkie I want to play.

I challenge you to become more like Christ every day so that He can be more evident to others through your life. Our world is dying to see what a fully surrendered Christian looks like. Man, count me in. I want people to walk with me and find out I am the real deal.

Go

1. How do you respond to Paul's statement, “So I urge you to imitate me?” Does it scare you? Motivate you? Intimidate you?
2. Do you feel like your walk is stronger than your talk? Why or why not? What would it take for those two to line up?
3. When people walk with you and get to know you, do they have greater appreciation for your love for Jesus? Why or why not?
4. In what specific ways do others see Christ in you?
5. Think of someone who brings you close to Christ when you are around them. What is it about their life that makes them that way?

Workout

1 Corinthians 4:14-17

Ephesians 5:1-2

Hebrews 6:12

Hebrews 13:7

Overtime

“Lord, I want to have my life consumed by Your love so that others see and feel the difference. When people get close to me and know my heart, I pray that it will surprise them in a good way—not because I am living a double life, but because I am the real deal. I pray that my life will draw people to You, Lord. Help me to live in such a way that my everyday actions

and lifestyle attracts others to You. May my walk be worthy of the Gospel. In the name of Jesus Christ I pray. Amen.”

Bible Reference:

Hebrews 13



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