

WWJD?

By Kerry W. Grubb

Two minutes ago I Google-searched the expression “WWJD.” 3.6 seconds later: 805,000 hits!

WWJD, the acronym for “What would Jesus do?” is such a popular saying that it’s become big business. The same search on eBay yields a merchandise mountain consisting of “WWJD” charms, neon lights, wristbands, T-shirts, crocheted bookmarks, towbar cover-plugs, bracelets, necklaces, pendants, key chains, checkbook covers, pocket diapers (yes, you read it correctly!), rings, swap cards, sew-on patches, fridge-magnet construction kits...

It’s amazing the number of clever trinkets we can buy to remind ourselves to ask what Jesus would do, and it’s ironic that so few people have even the foggiest idea what Jesus *would do*—because they have no idea what the Bible tells us he *actually did*.

In the developed world, it seems, we are awash in “things.” Renowned author Eugene Peterson wrote:

“Our culture has failed precisely because it is a secular culture. A secular culture is a culture reduced to thing and function. Typically at the outset, people are delighted to find themselves living in such a culture. It is wonderful to have all these things coming our way without having to worry about their nature or purpose. And it is wonderful to have this incredible freedom to do so much, without bothering about relationships or meaning. But after a few years of this, our delight diminishes as we find ourselves lonely among the things and bored with our freedom.

“Our first response is to get more of what brought us delight in the first place: acquire more things, generate more activity. Get more. Do more. After a few years of this, we are genuinely puzzled that we are not any better” (*Subversive Spirituality*).

With so many distractions and sensory impressions bombarding us, perhaps we do need reminders at every turn to ask “What would Jesus do?” However, without intending disrespect to WWJD merchandisers, it’s a pity that our culture so readily reduces the profound to the profane: the weighty to the trivial. Even the

question itself has succumbed to the marketing and sales culture of “things” with the letters WWJD neatly emblazoned so as to readily attract Christian coins into hungry cash registers.

Whether you wear the wristband, stick a magnet on the fridge or carry the pocket diaper is not really the point, is it?

Not every situation in our 21st-century culture has a precise biblical precedent. Like it or not, there are countless circumstances in which we have to work out for ourselves “What would Jesus do?” The best way to do that is to get to know him, to become familiar with what Jesus *did* do—to understand what his relationship was, is, and continues to be with our Father in heaven. We need to get to know Jesus better by walking with him, talking with him, and spending time learning about him in the Scriptures as we put into practice what he taught.

If we want to declare our affinity with Jesus with a bracelet or a pendant, no problem!

But the most valid demonstration that Jesus Christ is the center of our lives is not popping a WWJD magnet on the fridge, it’s handing our lives over to Jesus so he can live in us. If we’re serious pilgrims walking with God, Jesus Christ is our functional Lord and Master all day, every day. What he says goes. What he *said* still goes. The serious Christian has a serious commitment to knowing him, learning about him, understanding his teachings, and trusting him to be Savior and Lord in everything.

“Take up your cross and follow me,” Jesus beckons. You know, really, it’s not so much “What Would Jesus Do?” as “Who *is* Jesus?” and “What *did* Jesus do?” He is the Son of God, and he did everything that needed to be done so you could stand blameless before him as a beloved child. A thousand wristbands and closet full of T-shirts can’t compare with even one precious moment with a dear friend, and there is no friend dearer than Jesus.

That’s why we need to get to know him. The better we know him, the more we’ll trust him, and the more we trust him, the more we’ll let him live in us. And that’s what Jesus wanted to do all along.



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