



F.Y.C.

For Your Consideration

My Name Is Not 'Jack'

A small boy lived across the street who had a father named Jack. He had a grandfather named Jack. And he had an uncle named Jack. So whenever he saw me he would say, "Hi Jack." In his childlike innocence he presumed all men were named Jack. While we may smile with amusement at his conclusion, it is no laughing matter when as adults we classify all (*FILL IN THE BLANK*)* are the same. To lump into one category all the people who share some similarities is not fair or right.

'All Nazarenes'

Nathanael, who later became an Apostle, believed all the people from Nazareth to be the same—not very good.

Now Philip was from Bethsaida, of the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?"

Philip said to him, "Come and see."

John 1:44-46

Come and See!

Philip's reply speaks a profound truth. See for yourself! Investigate! Don't blindly accept common perceptions and prejudices! This is a lesson that needs to be heeded. Especially by the followers of Jesus. We would do well to remember this lesson, "*Not all men are named Jack.*"

"... and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him – a renewal in which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all."

Colossians 3:10-11

CONSIDER THIS

Even if most are, that does not mean all are.

If there is a majority then of necessity there is a minority.

*Fill in the blank: all (from a country); (from a neighborhood); (social status), (skin color), etc.

Brief and to the Point

In Acts 20:7-11 Paul had much to say and he talked well into the night. Yet, one can say a lot in just a few words. Actually brief, concise, and succinct teachings are very effective. 1 Thessalonians 5:14-22 takes about one-minute to read (verse 16 contains two words; verse 17 contains three words; verse 22 contains only 6 words).

:14 OBLIGATIONS TOWARDS BRETHREN

Live in peace (as far as it depends on you). (:13b)
Admonish the unruly.
Encourage the fainthearted (discouraged).
Help the weak.
Be patient towards all.

:15 RESPONSE TO THE ACTIONS OF OTHERS

Don't pay back evil with evil. Revenge is not sweet, it's bittersweet.
Two wrongs don't make one right. Retaliation only invites tit-for-tat.
Seek to do good to others.

:16 REJOICE ALWAYS

Because we are children of God.
Because we are disciples of Christ.
Because we are heirs according to the promise.
Because we have a hope that does not disappoint.

:17 PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

Regularly, as well as in special or trying circumstances.
Persevere with a devoted heart and mind. Not doubting.

:18 GIVE THANKS

Prayer requests are to be coupled with thanksgiving.
Such demonstrates a "grateful heart."

:19 QUENCH NOT THE SPIRIT

Today, we must let His Spirit rule in our hearts.
One "throws cold water" on the Spirit by being lukewarm, by formality only, by being hypocritical, and by being materialistic.

:20 DO NOT DESPISE PROPHETIC UTTERANCES (teachings from God)

"Hear ye Him" is a must.

:21 EXAMINE EVERYTHING CAREFULLY

Gain knowledge, exercise judgment.
Test, try the teachers and their teachings.
Keep the genuine, reject the counterfeit.

:22 HOLD FAST TO THE GOOD, ABSTAIN FROM EVERY FORM OF EVIL

Don't stop doing good; refrain from doing whatever is evil.

Powerful lessons in just a few words



Fork in the Road

Which way to go? The decision one makes is based, not on which way is easier or well traveled, but where it will take you.

Likewise, we often come to forks on Life's Road where we must make a decision. Some choices may only have a minimal or temporary impact on our journey. Other choices may have major and long-lasting consequences.

Major 'Forks' on Life's Road Choices with Eternal Consequences

God: Fear or ignore.

Jesus: Believe or disbelieve.

Disciple: Follow or go your own way.

Wisdom: Rely on heavenly or worldly.

Friends: Godly or worldly.

Lifestyle: Popular or righteous.

We make our own decisions. And we must live with where they take us.

"Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it."

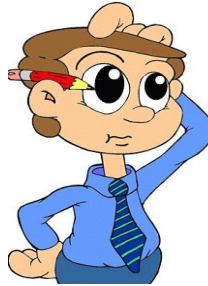
Matthew 7:13



A Sobering Thought

For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God?

1 Peter 4:17



Ponder This

Lies

A lie can only be covered up with more lies.

Truthful lips will be established forever, but a lying tongue is only for a moment.

Proverbs 12:19

The getting of treasures by a lying tongue is a fleeting vapor, the pursuit of death.

Proverbs 21:6

* * *

Deceit can only be concealed by more deceit.

Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and put devious lips far from you.

Proverbs 4:24

The wisdom of the prudent is to understand his way, but the folly of fools is deceit.

Proverbs 14:8

* * *

Truth, on the other hand, needs no cover.

Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another.

Ephesians 4:25

* * *

Truth is not the best policy, it's the only policy.

Do not let kindness and truth leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.

Proverbs 3:3

Buy truth, and do not sell it, get wisdom and instruction and understanding.

Proverbs 23:23

Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who deal faithfully are His delight.

Proverbs 12:22



WORD STUDY

enhance your
Bible knowledge

JUBILEE

A time or season of rejoicing.

The roots of “Jubilee” can be traced to Leviticus chapter 25. Because of poverty, bad management, or circumstances one may have been forced to sell his property. But no sale of property or enslavement was permanent. The law was based on the premise that the land belongs to the Lord and people are only tenants; and the people belong to God, and can only be temporary slaves. The Year of Jubilee brought about a fresh start every 50 years.

A NEW YEAR

A new year is symbolic of new beginnings. With a new year, there is a sense of a new beginning, a chance to start fresh. There is the rash of resolutions, however, most are soon broken. Two months have passed since the first day of 2014.

***Despite my resolutions,
made with bold authority,
My good intentions yield to
habits with seniority.***

(Selected)

Resolutions are of none effect unless there is a resolute heart. New beginnings require change. Don't be afraid of change, It is the only way “new beginnings” come about.

***May the remainder of this year be a
year of rejoicing for you.***

Singing with the Understanding . . .



1 Corinthians 14:15

What's important are the words, not the melody of our hymns. And the hymns are to be sung with understanding. Sometimes there are poetic words or phrases that are not fully understood. While thinking about this matter, a children's song came to mind, and I couldn't let go of it. It contains an expression fit for all ages:

Jesus wants me for a sunbeam,
To shine for Him each day;
In every way try to please Him,
At home, at school, at play.

Jesus wants me to be loving,
And kind to all I see;
Showing how pleasant and happy,
His little one can be.

I will ask Jesus to help me
To keep my heart from sin;
Ever reflecting His goodness,
And always shine for Him.
I'll be a sunbeam for Jesus,
I can if I but try;
Serving Him moment by moment,
Then live for Him on high.

Refrain:

A sunbeam, a sunbeam,
Jesus wants me for a sunbeam;
A sunbeam, a sunbeam,
I'll be a sunbeam for Him.

*“Let your light shine before men in such a way
that they may see your good works, and glorify
your Father who is in heaven.”*

Matthew 5:16

That's one song we all can sing with the spirit and the understanding (just change the word “school” to “work”).

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Bible references are from the NASB except where another translation is referenced.

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Be thoughtful and kind.

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