

Greetings to all followers of the Lamb of God,

SCRIPTURE:

Acts 11:25-26 (NIV) – Acts 11:19-30

Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

STORY:

A college student decided to take a course on Birds thinking that it was going to be an easy course, plus the professor was very old. On the second day of class they were going to have their first test on the first 10 chapters of the textbook. The test simply pictured 20 birds from the knees down. The student struggled for a short period of time, but finally had had it. He took the test, tore it up, through it at the professor, and headed for the door. The professor said, “Wait a minute, who are you?” With that the student pulled up his pants legs and said, “You tell me!”

OBSERVATION:

By what are we identified? By our actions and our deeds? By our attitudes and words? What caused those in Antioch to call the disciples Christians, Christ followers, for the first time? Was it simply the words and teachings of Barnabas and Saul, or was their more? After all, words are cheap ... there just had to be more. Yes, Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught large numbers of people, but if we place the hours that they taught over against the hours they simply lived among the people of Antioch, the “simply lived among” hours far out number the “met and taught hours”. The “living among” carries more testimonial weight than the other ... because words are cheap.

The old professor was so in love with birds that he could identify them simply by their legs and probably by their beaks or any other parts of their anatomy as well ... and wanted his students to develop the same love for the subject matter of the course. The student wanted a good grade without any work. It often doesn't work that way. Nor are we identified as Christians without the work of discipleship. By what identifying “markings” will others call us Christians?

There are some evenings, as I review the actions of the day, that I just beat myself up for not being a better Christian, acting more Christ like, speaking with a kinder and gentler voice. The question that haunts me is, “Could those who encountered me identify me as a Christian by my deeds and words?” This kind of spiritual review often causes some sleepless nights. How about with you?

QUOTE:

“We can spend our lives letting the world tell us who we are. Sane or insane. Saints or sex addicts. Heroes or victims. Letting history tell us how good or bad we are. Letting our past decide our future. Or we can decide for ourselves. And maybe it's our job to invent something better.” – Chuck Palahniuk,

PRAYER:

Help us to so order our life that those who encounter us will find a genuine friend and a dedicated Christ follower ... even those who have just a passing encounter with us during today. Amen.

And the faith journey continues, Pastor Jim
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***Time Change is this weekend. In-person worship is at 10:30 on Sunday.
On-line recording will be available by 1:00.***

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