

## ***What Will I Leave Behind?***

Acts chapter 9 tells about a Christian named Dorcas who lived in Joppa. "This woman was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did" (v. 36). Dorcas fell sick and died. The disciples washed her body and laid it in an upper room. They then sent for Peter, who was at nearby Lydda. "So

Peter arose and went with them. When he arrived, they brought him into the upper room; and all the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was with them" (v. 39). Peter had plenty of material to preach an impressive funeral sermon, but he did something even greater: he raised her from the dead!

The Bible doesn't reveal any other information about Dorcas. How old was she? What did she look like? Was she married? Did she have children or grandchildren? Was she a woman of considerable means or did she have little? We could guess, but that's all it would be — a guess.

What we do know about this woman is enough to raise a question worth considering. The Bible emphasizes the good she left behind. Now the question is: What will I leave behind?

I will leave behind whatever material thing I have. "For we have brought nothing into the world, so we cannot take anything out of it either" (1 Timothy 6:7). What will those rummaging through my stuff find? Will they find any evidence of a God-centered life, or will everything point to a life focused on self?

What will I leave to others? Will there be anyone who can produce a gift I gave to them? Will anyone have a memory of how I provided for them in a time of need, the way Dorcas did for these widows?

What example will I leave? Will it be one of faithful service to God? Would it be the kind that might encourage a struggling Christian to remain faithful? Would it strengthen others to stand firm for truth?

What words of mine will people remember? Will it be words of encouragement or mostly complaining? Words of kindness or words of bitterness and anger? Will anyone remember me having taught them God's word?

What difference will it make? Will my brethren even miss me? Will it leave any appreciable void in the local congregation?

What will I leave behind?

***- by Frank Himmel***

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## ***When 2 Billion People Are Watching***

Ninety-percent of all people deal with some level of stage fright. How do you feel when all eyes are on you? Do your palms get cold and clammy? Do you become nervous and anxious? Do you blush, tremble, shake, or feel nauseated?

There is at least one stage where the vast majority of people feel no fright at all. This is the social media stage. For instance, Facebook has approximately 2 billion active users worldwide. Potentially, then, depending on your privacy settings, up to 2 billion people are watching what you say and do. Many, who would be very careful in front of a literal audience, may post on Facebook with reckless abandon.

God has called His people to be different (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 2 Timothy 2:21). God has called us to be a light in the darkness (Matthew 5:14-16). The question for us is, do our various social media accounts reflect this? Here are several categories to consider:

- What Do We Say and Post? Could someone look at our posts and see bad language, gossip, slander, or crude and crass speech? (2 Corinthians 12:20; James 3).
- What People and Activities Do We "Like" (support)? Do we "Like" celebrities, athletes, artists, or others with trashy reputations? Do we support movies, music, TV shows, video games, or other things that are not Christlike? (Romans 12:2).

What Pictures Are on Our Profiles? Do any pictures show us engaging in sin or less than godly behaviors? (Romans 13: 13-14). Do any show us hanging with people or in places a Christians should not be? (1 Corinthians 15 :33). Do any pictures on our profiles display immodesty or promote lust? (1 Timothy 2:9-10; Romans 13: 13; Matthew 5:28).

Remember, 2 billion people are watching on earth, and One is watching in heaven.

- by **Brent Petrillo**

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### ***Religion: The New 'Dirty Word'***

A bumper sticker recently viewed said: "I'm not religious, I just love the Lord". What in the world does that mean!?!

This strange expression probably is a reaction against the hypocritical conduct of lots of so-called Christians and many of their pretentious leaders. You don't have to be terribly perceptive to realize that there are a lot of folks out there in the religious world who "say and do not" (Matthew 23:3). These are the sort who received Jesus' strongest condemnations. He called them "hypocrites" , "blind guides", and "whited sepulchers which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones" (Matthew 23:15,16,27).

But shall we delegate the word "religious" to the realm of 'dirty words' simply because there are those who act this way? Absolutely not! James 1:27 speaks of "pure religion and undefiled before God". The verse goes on to describe this type religion: "to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world".

Now, think about the bumper sticker again - "I'm not religious, I just love the Lord". Taken literally, this means that the car owner which displays this logo does not "visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction", and does not "keep himself unspotted from the world". Gets a little crazy doesn't it? The dictionary says that to be religious is to be "pious, devout, godly", and thus it is impossible to truly "love the Lord" without being "religious"! Think!

- by **Greg Gwin**