

***“Let’s Walk the Talk” by Brother
Richard Lam, May 2016***

Matt 15:8-9

*These people honor me with their lips, but
their hearts are far from me.*

They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.



1 Thess 4:1-2

As for other matters, brothers and sisters, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more. ² For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus.

Appearance can be deceiving. A person can look to be in the prime of health yet he or she could be carrying a disease or has a physical disorder. You probably heard the story of Wes Leonard. He was a 16-year old basketball player in the Fennville High School in Michigan. The team was playing in the last game of an undefeated season. The game was in overtime and the game was tied. Wes came charging through the lane and in the last moment hit the winning layup. The players hoisted their star on their shoulders and the crowd was cheering. Suddenly there was silence as Wes went limp. He was not breathing. This young man died from an enlarged heart.

In Matt 15:8-10, Jesus said appearance can deceived people into thinking that they are spiritually healthy. After the Pharisees accused Him and his followers of breaking religious traditions by not washing their hands before they ate, Jesus said that the Pharisees had set aside the commands of God for man-made, religious traditions. The Pharisees looked impressive spiritually, but their hearts were distant from God - “They honor me with their lips but their hearts are far from me.” Their talk never matched their walk. They were hypocrites!

When God sent His Son to live on earth, He sent Him with a specific purpose. Jesus came to set a great example for each of us. He not only talked about the way in which we should live, He also showed us how to live. In other words, He didn’t just talk the talk; He walked the walk.

As Christians, you may be the only example of Jesus that people see. When they look at you, do they see someone who is living out the words that you speak? Does everything you do reflect the kind of character and person that Jesus has called you to be?

Do you ever wonder why some people don't want to do business with Christians? We have all heard horror stories of people who hired a Christian contractor to do repairs or remodeling in their homes and who were left holding the bag when the contractor disappeared with the down payment without completing the work. And what about the tales of Christians who break their promises, caught stealing, don't pay their bills and cheat on their taxes?

We can become resentful when we see other Christians failed to "walk their talk." One situation I remember concerned a Samoan Christian who approached the church to build the rolling fence in the parking lot. The church paid for the materials and he left with the down payment. We had to hire another contractor to complete the job. This man's lack of character cost the church about \$2,000. We came away from the experience much more cautious about engaging in business transactions with Christians!



We want to win the lost souls for the Lord, but people may not listen to us because they see the glaring inconsistency between our message and our lifestyle. I remember once I was in Oakland and saw a man passing out religious tracts. A woman who was handed one threw it into a nearby trashcan. The man became angry and swear at the woman using a "f" word.

Our walk must match our talk. To be a Christian means to be like Christ, and that means to be truly Spirit-filled - this is the way of true Christian living. To be filled with the Spirit requires us to be Christ-like, meaning that our attitudes, motives, words and deeds must be pure. True spirituality is not shown by our ability to quote from the Bible, pray eloquently, lay hands on the sick or even cast out demons. Rather, it is evidenced by the way we treat one another.

Most of us have lots of growing up to do. We are Christians under construction and making a mistake or acting foolishly in a particular instance does not mean we lack character. We have to keep in mind that character does not develop overnight but is a lifelong process of becoming more and more like Jesus. It is developed in the crucible of life, formed through trials and conflicts through our Spirit-led path. As we honestly evaluate ourselves, let us recognize our own flaws and take the necessary steps to overcome them. By doing so, we are more certain to walk the talk.