

A Test of Commitment

by Jack Hayford

Jack Hayford's sermon emphasizes the importance of openly carrying one's Bible as a testament to faith and commitment in a world that often pressures believers to conform.

Scripture: Joshua 1:8, Psalm 119:105, Matthew 5:16, 2 Timothy 1:7, 1 Peter 3:15

Topics: "Faith Expression", "Spiritual Maturity"

Description

Jack Hayford reflects on the significance of carrying a Bible as a symbol of faith and identity, tracing back to childhood influences and societal expectations. He shares personal experiences of how carrying a Bible was ingrained as a sign of commitment and courage in various settings, from church to school to public speaking engagements. The sermon delves into the internal struggle between outward appearances and genuine faith, questioning whether maturity or fear drives our actions when it comes to openly displaying our beliefs.

Transcript

Maybe it was a legalistic pressure point imposed upon me by some churchiness to which I was exposed in my upbringing, but carrying one's Bible always was important.

We had Sunday school awards and point systems that scored you higher if you had your own Bible with you.

In church, a Bible in the hymnal rack was the sign of a rather "backslidden" church ... I mean, why didn't the people bring their own, anyway?

At school, the "gutsy Christians" were the ones who carried their Bible along with their books. It was a kind of declaration of where you stood.

Carrying your Bible on the way church, was "good style." Don't be caught without your sword, we were taught. And it stuck. I carry my Bible with me a lot of the time. Just to have it handy. "Never know when you'll need it," you know.

Having your Bible around was kind of like being unafraid to bow your head in a restaurant. You weren't like you "used to be," when you scratched your eyebrows as you prayed over the food. You know, in case someone was watching, you wouldn't look "weird."

Well, years come and go, and sometimes I wonder what progress really is. I've grown a lot in the Lord, and I think I'm unafraid to stand up for Him when the chips are down.

But the other day, I left my Bible in the car when I was going into a restaurant.

Wait a minute. Hear the whole thing. I was going in there to the banquet room to speak to a group of people about Jesus.

Right. I was the speaker ... on a Bible theme ... uhhuh. And I left my Bible in the car.

Now, there's more to it than that. They had printed outlines with the entire text I was going to speak from already in hand. I knew they would. So I didn't really need my Bible.

What bothers me is how comfortable I felt about that. The convenient sense of a somewhat carnal ease which I felt when I got out of the car. The fact is, I was slightly relieved.

Well, anyway, I guess it's a mark of maturity to not want to appear too religious.

Or is it cowardice?

All I know is I'm carrying my Bible a little more openly nowadays. I mean, if you're truly filled with the power of the Dove, you certainly shouldn't grow older and find yourself chicken.

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