

## SOMETIMES WE ACT AS IF...

I Corinthians 10:1-12

### I. INTRODUCTION: I

1. **2** It bothers me when otherwise intelligent people ignore things I know they know and act stupidly and foolishly. How about you?
2. Such behavior can range from the simple and superfluous to the truly dangerous and life-threatening.
  - A. Simple and superfluous:
    - (1) "I know exactly where I'm going!" (i.e., Getting lost because one doesn't use a map.).
    - (2) "I can drive 30 miles after the 'low on gas light' comes on." (i.e., We run the car out of gas because "I've got enough gas to make it to the next exit.").
  - B. Dangerous and life-threatening:
    - (1) Running a red light because we are late for an "important" appointment.
    - (2) Climb to top step of a ladder because we need just a little extra height to reach that light bulb.
    - (3) Using a cutting torch to cut off the top of a barrel that once held a highly flammable material (Actually knew someone who did this. The barrel exploded and decapitated him.)
3. Unfortunately such foolish thinking and behavior runs rampant in the spiritual realm. People know better, but they act as if they don't!
  - A. Consider the oft repeated warnings of the NT: **2 Pet. 1:12-15**: "*For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. 13 Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, 14 knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. 15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.*"
  - B. Consider the example of Israel (type or shadow of the church and hence Christians)(**Heb. 3:12**: "*Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God;*" ; Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:1-12).
4. **3** This morning let's consider a few ways we act and think that are spiritually faulty. Let's consider how we often act inconsistent with what we know to be true.

### II. DISCUSSION:

#### *Sometimes We Act As If...*

1. **4** God's word were NOT immutable:
  - A. Many treat the Bible as if it were merely a "guide book," a book of "suggestions"; not as it is: the immutable (i.e., unchangeable) word of God!

**Heb. 6:17-18**: "*Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, 18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.*"

**Titus 1:2**: "*in hope of eternal life which God, who cannot lie, promised before time began,*"

**I Pet. 1:23-25**: "*having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever, 24 because 'All flesh is as grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass. The grass withers, and its flower falls away, 25 But the word of the LORD endures forever.'* Now this is the word which by the gospel was preached to you."

- B. How many times did Israel act as if the word of God was **not** immutable! Remember what God, through Moses, said about the blessings of obedience and the cursings of disobedience to His word? Deuteronomy 28 & Leviticus 26
- (1) Blessings: **Deut. 28:1-2**: “Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. 2 And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God:”
  - (2) Cursings: **Deut. 28:15**: “But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:”
- C. **5** Even with all that divine instruction, “confirmed” by miracle after miracle; what did Israel do?!
- (1) Golden calf at the foot of Matt. Sinai: Ex. 32
  - (2) Unfaithful spies led to 40 years in the wilderness: Num. 14
  - (3) Unfaithfulness of Israel led to Assyrian captivity: began with Jeroboam, ended 20 kings later (Hoshea), 209 years; and not one righteous king despite the warnings (incl. the prophets!).
  - (4) Unfaithfulness of Judah led to the Babylonian captivity: began with Rehoboam and ended 20 kings later with Zedekiah, 345 years of history; and only a handful were faithful (only two were truly outstanding: Hezekiah and Josiah) despite the warnings (incl. the prophets!).
- Side note:** even though Moses gave them the blessings to come from obedience, he knew they would not obey!
- Deut. 31:28-29**: “Gather to me all the elders of your tribes, and your officers, that I may speak these words in their hearing and call heaven and earth to witness against them. 29 For I know that after my death you will become utterly corrupt, and turn aside from the way which I have commanded you. And evil will befall you in the latter days, because you will do evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke Him to anger through the work of your hands.”
- D. **6** People haven’t really changed! Many religious people act as if God’s word only provides suggestions, not commands.
- (1) Denominations: Talk with Dawne about Christian Church (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Lev. 10:1-2).
  - (2) Baptism: Most denominations, for example, teach one can be saved without baptism (Mk. 16:16; 2 Tim. 2:10; Gal. 3:26-27; Eph. 5:23; Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 12:13).
  - (3) Obedience to gospel not needed: Many even believe one doesn’t have to obey the gospel to be saved! (Grandma Edna, good morals and sincerity alone)
    - (a) That’s not what the immutable word of God says! Rom. 1:16-17; 2:16; 2 Tim. 2:10; Gal. 3:26-27; **Acts 4:12**: “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”; **2 Thess. 1:8-9**: “in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power,”
    - (b) **7** “Well, I certainly don’t believe that!” But it often appears we do!
      - (i) No sense of urgency to share the gospel with others! Matt. 16:26; **1 Pet. 3:15**: “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;”; 2 Cor. 5:10-11a

- (ii) Many who hear the word and know the truth do not take action. **Acts 26:27-29:**  
“King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you do believe.’ 28 Then Agrippa said to Paul, ‘You almost persuade me to become a Christian.’”

E. Many more applications: e.g., that God does not really mean what He says in **Heb. 10:23-31**.

### **Sometimes We Act As If...**

#### 2. **8** We will NOT reap what we sow:

A. Some live their lives thinking they can do anything they wish and there are no consequences.

**Gal. 6:7-8:** “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”

B. I spent all of my professional life working in agriculture. I became very familiar with the laws of sowing and reaping! I learned two undeniable principles:

(1) You always harvest what you plant.

(2) The amount you harvest is proportional to the amount planted.

C. **9** Application: spiritual sowing and reaping!

(1) Harvest what you plant: Can’t sow soybeans and harvest corn! Can’t live carnally and reap spiritually! Can’t live like the devil and expect to reap eternal life! Rom. 6:23

**Gal. 6:8:** “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. 8 For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life.”

**Job 4:8:** “Even as I have seen, those who plow iniquity and sow trouble reap the same.”

**Prov. 5:22-23:** “His own iniquities entrap the wicked man, and he is caught in the cords of his sin. 23 He shall die for lack of instruction, and in the greatness of his folly he shall go astray.”

(2) Amount harvested is proportional to amount planted: Cannot expect to make it to heaven “by the skin of our teeth”! **Jn. 10:10:** “I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”; **2 Pet. 1:5-11:** “But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge, 6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness, 7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love. 8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins. 10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; 11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

E. Do we honestly think we can mock God with impunity?! **Isa. 3:10-11:** “Say to the righteous that it shall be well with them, for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. 11 Woe to the wicked! It shall be ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall be given him.”

### **Sometimes We Act As If...**

#### 3. **10** Religious error will NOT condemn:

A. “Oh, there are saved people in every denomination!” “As long as one is of good moral character and sincere, they’ll go to heaven!”

- B. We've already established in our previous point that only those "in Christ"; those who are members of His "body" (of which there is but "one"), will be saved.
- C. Furthermore, we've already established that God's word is immutable (i.e., unchangeable) and God's word says:

**Matt. 7:21-23:** "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'"

**and**

**2 Jn. 9-11:** "Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son. 10 If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him into your house nor greet him; 11 for he who greets him shares in his evil deeds."

**and**

**Gal. 1:7-9:** "...there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again, if anyone preaches any other gospel to you than what you have received, let him be accursed ["eternally condemned"]."

- D. Do you think I'm being harsh? Don't blame me! I'm just telling you what God's word says! If we don't really believe that, we should shut the doors, burn our Bibles, and "eat, drink and be merry; for tomorrow we die!"
- E. I'm not saying that sincerity isn't important! God's word says our sincerity is vitally important!
  - (1) For example, 1 Timothy 1:5 speaks of a "sincere faith."
  - (2) So, undoubtedly we must be "sincere" to be saved; but sincerity alone will not save!
  - (3) I know many sincere people who are religious people, but their religion is wrong! It is not based on the truth of God's word! 2 Jn. 9
  - (4) When you press them on that, inevitably, they will make excuses and say it doesn't really matter what we believe or teach.
  - (5) What does God have to say about that? No matter how sincere people appear; if they reject, twist, change, substitute, add, etc. God's word: **Isa. 8:20:** "To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."
  - (6) We cannot make excuses for them and ignore them! Ezek. 3; 33

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#### **4. II God will NOT punish sin:**

- A. "Don't worry, God won't care, it's no big deal."; "Go ahead, God wants you to be happy." "One time can't hurt."; "You deserve it!"

**Rom. 6:23:** "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.."

**Rom 6:1-2a:** "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not!

**Isa. 1:30-31:** "For you shall be as a terebinth whose leaf fades, And as a garden that has no water. 31 The strong shall be as tinder, And the work of it as a spark; Both will burn together, And no one shall quench them."

- B. God has always punished sin!
- (1) Garden of Eden: cursed the serpent (Gen. 3:14-15); cursed the woman (Gen. 3:16); cursed the man (Gen. 3:17-19).
- (2) Israel: **Deut. 30:15-20**
- C. But people become used to sin: “They pull their sin after them, as with a heavy rope with which one might draw a wagon or loaded cart. Their entanglement in sin and iniquity has made them slaves.” Isa. 5:18: “Woe to those who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, And sin as if with a cart rope;” (Hailey Commentary on Isaiah, p. 68)
- D. They rationalize and make excuses: **Isa. 5:20**: “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who put darkness for light, and light for darkness; Who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!”
- E. The world does not realize it, but the Lord is tenderly pleading with everyone to turn, repent and live! 2 Pet. 3:9 But most just won’t listen (**Isa. 6:9-10**: “And He said, ‘Go, and tell this people: ‘Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.’ 10 ‘Make the heart of this people dull, And their ears heavy, And shut their eyes; Lest they see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And return and be healed.’”).
- Isa. 9:21**: “For all this His anger is not turned away, But His hand is stretched out still.”
- F. “Through the experiences of Israel and God’s reaction to the people, we should learn something of the nature and character of God. His anger and judgment are as absolute and as much an expression of Himself as are His love and mercy.” (Hailey Commentary on Isaiah, p. 108)

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#### 4. **12** Life is NOT short:

- A. We often act as if our life will never end! I once knew an 80 year old farmer that was upset when his banker wouldn’t give him 30 year terms on a loan!
- B. This is probably the most common form of self-deception. We all know better!
- Jas. 4:14**: “whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.”
- Job 14:1-2**: “Man who is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. 2 He comes forth like a flower and fades away; he flees like a shadow and does not continue.”
- C. Even though we may say we know life is short; often we don’t behave as if we know it!
- (1) Put off studying, praying, teaching others, obeying gospel. **Jas. 4:17**: “Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.”; 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Pet. 3:15; 1 Thess. 5:22; Acts 26:28 (Henrietta)
- (2) Put more emphasis on job and material possessions. **Job 1:21a**: “Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there.”; **Matt. 6:19-21**: “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”
- D. How should we live in regard to time?
- Jas. 4:15-16**: “Instead you ought to say, ‘If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.’ 16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.”;

**Rom. 13:11-14:** “And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. 12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. 13 Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. 14 But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”; **Lk. 16:27-31**

**Psa. 90:12:** “So teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.” (23,660 years old on 10/11/2015)

- E. How many funerals will we have to attend before we get it through our thick skulls that someday it’s going to be me! Heb. 9:27

### **Sometimes We Act As If...**

5. **13** Jesus will NOT come again:

- A. Peter spoke of such people:

**2 Pet. 3:3-4:** “...scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.’”

- B. We may not be a “scoffer” in the sense of overtly denying the Lord’s return, but we may be a “scoffer” by the way we live our lives! (covert scoffer) How are we spending our time? Who’s servant are we?

**Matt. 24:45-51:** “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? 46 Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. 47 Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. 48 But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ 49 and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, 50 the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, 51 and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

- (1) Are you like the evil servant who “says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ (v. 48).  
(2) Or, are you like the “faithful and wise servant” “whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.” (vv. 45-46)

- C. We need to examine ourselves to make sure we live in a way consistent with the truth of His coming! **1 Thess. 5:1-8**

### **Sometimes We Act As If...**

6. **14** Our faith WILL grow without the study and application of God’s word:

- A. Most often people only learn this when they experience a crisis in their life and they are unable to handle it due to weak faith.

**Heb. 5:12-14:** “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

- B. Only one way faith comes! Rom. 10:17

- C. Lack of knowledge of God’s word is always dangerous! Hos. 4:6; Isa. 5:13



- D. Gaining knowledge of God's word requires diligence! **2 Pet. 1:5:** "But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,"; **2 Pet. 1:10:** "Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;"
- (1) Diligence: persistent personal attention (Webster).
- (2) Earnestness: characterized by or proceeding from an intense and serious state of mind (Webster).
- E. God extends His blessings to us through the vehicle of knowledge! **2 Pet. 1:3:** "His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue,"
- (1) I need to examine myself: do I really "hunger and thirst after righteousness"? **Matt. 5:6; Job 23:12:** "I have treasured the words of His mouth more than my necessary food."
- (2) Do I really apply God's word in my life? **Heb. 5:12-14:** "For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

### Sometimes We Act As If...

#### 7. **15** We can be a friend of God AND a friend of the world:

- A. How would you like to be married to a whore or whoremonger? **Hos. 1:2:** "When the LORD began to speak by Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea: 'Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry and children of harlotry, For the land has committed great harlotry by departing from the LORD.'"
- (1) 2<sup>nd</sup> born daughter ("Call her name Lo-Ruhamah (no mercy), For I will no longer have mercy on the house of Israel, But I will utterly take them away." (Hos. 1:6))
- (2) 2<sup>nd</sup> born son ("Call his name Lo-Ammi (not my people), For you are not My people, And I will not be your God." (Hos. 1:9))
- B. We cannot walk with "one foot in the church and one foot in the world" and please God!
- Rom. 8:6-9:** "For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. 7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. 8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His."
- Jas. 4:4:** "Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God."
- C. What kind of fruit am I bearing?
- Lk. 6:43-45:** "For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. 44 For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush. 45 A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.";
- Gal. 5:19-24** (fruit of the spirit vs. works of the flesh)

### Sometimes We Act As If...

#### 8. **16** We WILL escape judgment:

- A. There is one appointment none of us will ever miss! **Heb. 9:27**

**Eccl. 11:9:** “Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; walk in the ways of your heart, and in the sight of your eyes; but know that for all these God will bring you into judgment.”

- B. At that appointment we will all do the same thing! **Rom. 14:12:** “So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.”
- C. Each of us will be judged in the same manner! **2 Cor. 5:10:** “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”
- D. Each of us will be recompensed on the same basis!

**Rom. 2:5-10:** “But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who ‘will render to each one according to his deeds’: 7 eternal life to those who by patient continuance in doing good seek for glory, honor, and immortality; 8 but to those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness — indignation and wrath, 9 tribulation and anguish, on every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; 10 but glory, honor, and peace to everyone who works what is good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

**Heb. 10:28-31:** “Anyone who has rejected Moses’ law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. And again, ‘The LORD will judge His people.’ 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”

## II. CONCLUSION:

- 1. How do you live your life?
  - ☛ Are your actions consistent with God’s word?
  - ☛ Or, do you know God’s word and sometimes act as if it doesn’t apply to you?
- 2. There are terms to describe each type of person! One is faithful, the other is unfaithful! Which are you?
- 3. Invitation:
  - ✓ **Hear:** Rom. 10:17
  - ✓ **Believe (faith):** Heb. 11:6
  - ✓ **Confess:** Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:10; Acts 8:36-37
  - ✓ **Repent:** Acts 2:38
  - ✓ **Baptism:** Acts 2:38; 8:38; 22:16; 1 Pet. 3:21; Acts 2:47; 1 Cor. 12:13
  - ✓ **Faithfulness:** Col. 1:18-23; 2 Pet. 1:3-11