

# What would Jesus do? Nothing much like us

On Faith, by Brent Emery

---

Not too many years back, an evangelical fad came (and then, thankfully, went): "What would Jesus do?" I became convinced that many people who wore the WWJD paraphernalia really didn't know what Jesus would do but were content to wear something that seemed like they knew. In order to know what Jesus would actually do, we need to look at His life in the first four books of the New Testament. Yeshua never did the following five things:

1. First, Jesus never read the New Testament. Simple reason - it wasn't written. We who walk around with a whole Bible or – worse yet, an amputated pocket Bible - have more Biblical text available to us than those on the pages of the New Testament. The only Bible available to Jesus was the Hebrew Scripture and a translation of those Scriptures into Greek known as the Septuagint. For that reason, the only Scriptures Jesus studied, quoted and lived on a daily basis was the 79 percent of the Bible known as the Hebrew Scripture. What you and I know as the New Testament wasn't collected into a series of books until sometime after the first century A.D.
2. Second, Jesus never went to church on Sundays. As we read the Apostolic Scripture, we see Yeshua in the synagogue on the Sabbath. Synagogues were community centers where many things took place during a given week. Archaeology has uncovered many ancient synagogues, and our knowledge of them has greatly increased over the years. Yeshua also visited the Temple in Jerusalem on several occasions, as we would expect an observant Jew to do. For Yeshua, the Hebrew Scriptures commanded worship on the Sabbath, so that's the day He set aside for attending synagogues, where the Hebrew Scriptures were read and studied.
3. Third, Jesus never celebrated Christmas or Easter. Since Easter is based on Yeshua's resurrection, we can easily see why He wouldn't celebrate it during His life, but what about Christmas? We have no evidence that the earliest followers of Christ, whether Jew or Gentile, celebrated His birth. In the ancient Near East, birthdays were celebrated by royalty, and in the Bible, we have mention of two birthdays – one for Pharaoh and one for Herod, both of whom were kings. The celebration of Christmas and Easter are additions to Christianity that came from the Gentile side of the equation.

# What would Jesus do? Nothing much like us

On Faith, by Brent Emery

---

4. Fourth, Jesus never left the land of Israel. During His life, Yeshua traveled many times around the area of northern Israel known as Galilee, an area vibrant and green with rolling mountains, unlike the south, which is rocky and often dry and desolate. Yeshua spent many hours on the Sea of Galilee (which is really a lake), fishing and, on occasion, performing a miracle. Yeshua did travel south, but those occasions were prompted by His need to be in the Temple for Biblical Holy Days as commanded in Leviticus 23. Since the mission of Yeshua focused on the lost sheep of Israel, He never traveled outside its borders.
  
  5. Fifth, Jesus never ate pork, shellfish, clams, crab or oysters. The diet Yeshua ate comes from Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14. Within the Gospels, we find Yeshua eating fish and grain, as they were readily available in the north where He spent most of His time. Since the only Bible Yeshua had was the Hebrew Scripture, He maintained a diet in keeping with the commands of Torah. I am quite certain many of my friends who wore the WWJD wristbands and the WWJD bumper stickers would not like these points, but they are the truth. I think many people wish Jesus was just like them, but He was often nothing like us. Our separation from the life of Yeshua is not His fault but ours. We have the ability to change, but will we have the courage?
- end