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## Ask Johnnie

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## Ask Johnnie

June 01, 2009 | Johnnie Moore, LU Campus Pastor

*“Johnnie, I’m sick and tired of the church. Jesus seems OK to me, but his followers are something else. How can I trust their God when I can’t trust those telling me to trust him?” — Amberlee*

Amberlee, it sounds like you’ve had quite a bad experience with Christians. If Jesus were in your shoes, he would probably be as frustrated as you are. In fact, Jesus was toughest on the “hypocrites.” His language directed at them was very strong. In fact, at one point in Scripture Jesus addressed the Pharisees, the quintessential hypocrites of the New Testament, and he said in John 8:55, “If I said I did not [know God], I would be a liar like you, but I do know Him and keep His word.”

Jesus drew a clear delineation between those who professed faith and those whose actions actually correspond with their confession.

Basically, I’m saying that you and Jesus agree with one another more than you think! What’s most important isn’t the testimony of Jesus’ followers, but the claims of Jesus. You must begin there ... with Him.

We know that Jesus said that he came to “give life and to give it to its fullest.” We know about his love, the grace he demonstrated by his death and resurrection, and his compassion toward those who were poor or imprisoned by sin. Begin with Jesus, and remember that most of his followers are about as imperfect as you and I are.

We all need grace because, honestly, most of us are recovering hypocrites.

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*“Pastor, my boss is terrible and cruel. I hate going to work, but I have to take care of my family. I just seem stuck. Help.” — Caleb*

Our culture pressures us to make decisions based upon our feelings rather than our priorities. Everyone wants their piece of the American dream and to live in peace and satisfaction. In actuality, we must sometimes endure certain phases of life for a good greater than our own comfort.

Sometimes, discomfort must be endured in order to maintain those priorities and, in your case, to provide for your family.

For now, I would suggest doing everything in your power to find a little joy in your current situation. Caleb, the Bible says a great deal about this.

In 1 Peter 2:18, Peter is speaking to Christians who are forced by society into servitude. He says, “Slaves, submit yourselves to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and considerate, but also to those who are harsh. For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God.”

Of course, you might consider prayerfully looking for other employment, but in the meantime, you must realize how to “bear up under” the injustice of your boss and be an example of the grace of Christ.

Hebrews 11:3 says, “Consider Him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.”