Glad Tidings

"And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers…" (Acts 13:32)

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Playing Jesus

(Jerry Fite)

Though he played the role of Jesus more than once in smaller venues, actor Jonathan Roumie felt the weight of playing Jesus early on in the popular series of "The Chosen." It was a defining moment in Jonathan's life when the show moved to the sermons Jesus preached. Being interviewed recently by Tucker Carlson, Jonathan realized he was speaking "holy words" of the most "holy" person who ever lived. What was Jesus actually saying to the growing crowds gathered to listen to Him?

The seriousness of the moment caused Jonathan Roumie, the actor, to ask the director to pause production momentarily as he tried to gather himself. He felt he was having a panic attack. Here he was representing Jesus, and speaking the words of sinless Jesus. Having an introspective moment, Jonathan felt "unworthy to be saying them."

As followers of Jesus, we recognize Jesus was sinless, and we are not. How do we as Christians bare the reality of our "deeply flawed" humanity, and raise our "manner of life" to the high standard of "the Gospel of Jesus Christ" *(cf. Romans 3: 23, Philippians 1:27)*? How do we incorporate Jesus into our lives without being overwhelmed or panic stricken?

Actors often try to get into the mind of the person they are portraying. Christians are to *"have the mind of Christ"* as they interact with others. Paul exhorts Christians to *"have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 2:5).* What mind? The mind that is "humble," making room in oneself to consider the needs of others. *"...in lowliness of mind each counting other better than himself; not looking each of you to his own things, but each of you also to the things of others" (Philippians 2:3-4).*

Jesus emptied Himself of the glories surrounding Deity, to take on the *"form of a servant" (Philippians 2:7).* Jesus *"humbled Himself becoming obedient even unto death, yea the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:8).* Manifesting the humble mindset of Christ and selfless love, we are to see to the needs of others.

By example, Jesus taught His disciples to serve one another. What a scene it must have been for Jesus' chosen apostles to witness their Lord rise from supper, take a towel, gird for action, pour water into a basin, and begin washing their feet *(John 13:4-5).* Peter felt the gravity of the moment, when he initially said, *"Thou shalt never wash my feet" (John 13:8).* Such work is for servants. Jesus their Teacher and Lord was teaching by example how they were to humble themselves to serve, yes, even wash the feet of others *(cf. John 13:13-17).*

Jesus is not only our example for humble service toward others, He is also the pattern for us to follow in reacting to persecution. *"...when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, threatened not, but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously" (I Peter 2:23).*

Looking beyond suffering to the *"joy"* of heaven, we can endure the current pain. Such was the mindset of Jesus as he endured the pain and shame of the cross. As we run the race as a Christian, we are to be *"looking unto Jesus"* noting how to be steadfast and strong *(Hebrews 12:1-2).* His *"fullness"* should be our measurement for maturity *(Ephesians 4:13).*

Incorporating Jesus in our lives is not "play acting." He is our example for how to resist the temptations the Devil presents. *"It is written..."* is not a mere script to say, but a spiritual sword to wield in overcoming evil *(cf. Matthew 4:1-11).*