

# Looking like Jesus



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I was a teenager during the glorious height of the WWJD wristband craze. My friends and I had every colour of the wristband - purple, green, patterned, tie-dyed- often wearing more than one at once with the more unique colours being a hot trading commodity. **Fashion trends notwithstanding, the purpose of donning the bracelet was to remind ourselves throughout our day that we should ask ourselves, ‘what would Jesus do?’**

It wasn't long before the wristbands were no longer an acceptable fashion choice and the acronym became cliché and parodied.

In fact, it became so trite that in the years since I have worked hard to find different language to convey the same message. And, yet, so often isn't the most appropriate question for disciples of Jesus is just that, ‘what WOULD Jesus do?’

***The Gospels paint us so rich a picture of the heart of Jesus in His everyday encounters with unnamed and otherwise unremarkable people.***

We see Jesus ‘moved with compassion’ as he heals a man from leprosy, we see Him marvel at the faith of a Roman centurion, and we see Him grant forgiveness and healing to a man who was brought to Him on a mat because he could not walk.

We are privileged to witness the moving encounters with the haemorrhaging woman, the widow at Nain, and the Samaritan woman at the well.

***When I read these Gospel narratives, I often imagine what it would have been like to have experienced the gaze of Jesus in those moments.***

To be Jairus' daughter and to wake up to eyes of Jesus looking at you with compassion and warmth. To be the haemorrhaging woman who had been invisible for 12 years and to whom Jesus ‘turned and saw’ (Matthew 9:22). They saw Jesus' heart.

In Matthew 6, Jesus says, ‘the eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light.’ Some biblical scholars suggest that, in the ancient world, the eyes were seen as the channel from which the thoughts and attitudes of the heart flowed. It was in the eyes that the character of the person was best reflected. The eyes demonstrated generosity, sincerity, and goodness (or lack thereof!).

If we are seeking to model the heart of Jesus, it begins with how we see the world. Looking with grace and kindness to those that surround us each day- our friends, family, colleagues and neighbours. Looking with forgiveness to those who have wronged and hurt us.

Looking with ‘eyes that see’ towards those who have long been invisible. Looking with compassion and generosity on a community that is suffering.

**Maybe one day a new trend of ‘HWJL’ wristbands might just catch on. How would Jesus LOOK?**