

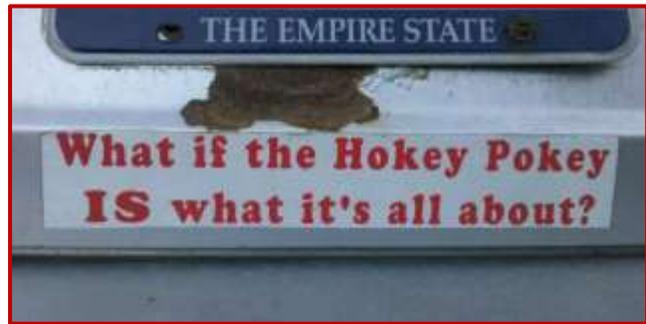
Those Crazy Bumper Stickers

I get a kick out of bumper stickers. Whenever I see an interesting one, I always take a glance at the person who is driving the car. I want to get a glimpse of the man or woman who would drive around with a crazy bumper sticker.

My guess is that I'm not the only one who has ever done that!

Here are a few bumper stickers that I have seen or heard about across the years – ones that make me laugh:

- What If the Hokey Pokey Is What It's All About?
- Driver Carries No Cash – He's Married!
- I'm Retired – Go Around Me!
- Normal People Scare Me!
- Save Our Planet – It's the Only One with Chocolate!
- I Get Along with God Just Fine; It's His Fan Clubs I Can't Stand!
- Do You Follow Jesus This Close? (For you English teachers, it should read *closely*).



That last one is a good one. It's funny that like all good humor, there is an element of truth to it.



From time to time, we need to examine how closely we are following Jesus. We may talk a big game about Jesus. We ask, as some bumper stickers do, "What Would Jesus Do?"

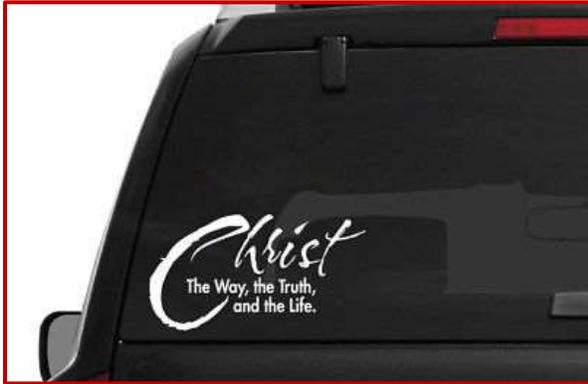
We want to be like Christ. We claim to be followers of Christ, but how closely are we following Him, and what does it mean to follow Him?

Following Jesus is the greatest thing in the world, but it is also the hardest to do. Following Jesus is more than ...

- Showing up to worship one hour a week.
- Throwing money in the offering plate every once in a while.
- Reading the Bible occasionally.
- Letting someone in front of you in traffic.
- Joining a church committee.
- Ringing a bell for the Salvation Army at Christmastime.

(more)

One day, Jesus looked over a huge crowd that was following Him, and He wondered if they really knew what it meant to follow Him. Then, with no regard for what is taught in a Dale Carnegie course on *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, Jesus spoke some of the hardest words we find anywhere in the gospels. He said, “Do you really want to follow Me? Consider what it is going to cost you. You must give up everything that is dearest to you, take up a cross, and follow Me. Unless you do that, you cannot be My disciples.”



Most often, we follow Jesus from a distance. We seek Jesus for the perks and benefits. We want to be on the hopeful side of things. We want to have good morals and values. We want to have someone we can pray to when we need help or a miracle. For sure, there is nothing wrong with any of these things, but we are not always prepared to follow Jesus closely because we know it will cost us.

Our associates in Life Care and Century Park understand this truth. They have decided to follow Jesus – loving Him and loving others – knowing that it will cost them sacrifices of their time, their God-given talents, their energy, their love spilled out in service. Their work is not easy; quite the opposite, it is hard. But they continue to follow.

And in doing so, they find real joy in this life and the knowledge that they will have eternal fellowship with Him in heaven.

Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (John 8:12 ESV).

– Beecher Hunter