

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 4TH

DAILY READING ASSIGNMENT: **Matthew 8-11**

"WHO DANCES TO WHOSE TUNE?"

SCRIPTURE Matthew 11:16-19

OBSERVATION

So much for "terminally nice Jesus." There is a myth that Jesus never said or did anything to hurt or offend anyone. The hurt part is true--Jesus never said or did anything with the explicit goal of hurting anyone.

But offend? I don't think that was Jesus' purpose either. However, the truth that sets us free (John 8:32) can sometimes be truth that cuts a bit. Take Jesus assessment of human nature--his Jewish countrymen in particular. While claiming to live in obedience to God, Jesus claims they really wanted a God who would dance to their tunes or mourn on their cue. In essence, Jesus did not fit the bill of the Messiah. He was too ordinary; too human; he hung out with questionable people and went to their parties.

What kind of savior is that???

One capable of identifying with and redeeming us from our sin.

APPLICATION

Sometimes I want to craft a God in my image, rather than worship the God who reveals himself in the Bible. When I do that I have created an idol. It may not be a hand-carved graven image in my house, but it is an idol nonetheless. The simple truth is that Jesus not only draws us to himself but sometimes he offends us.

He bruises our pride, challenges our assumptions, exposes our bigotry and self-righteousness, and continually calls us to a life of repentance and obedience.

We want him to dance for us, but he insists that he is Lord and that we dance to His tunes.

PRAYER

Jesus, forgive me for the times when your love and grace scandalize me. Forgive me for the many subtle ways I try to tame you, or recreate you in my image rather than humbly follow and serve the real you. Help me to courageously, boldly and gratefully listen to the music of your spirit and live my life (i.e. dance) in a way that honors you. Help me to love like you did--up close and personal with hurting people. *Amen.*

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