THE **LIVE LIKE JESUS MANIFESTO**

10 PRINCIPLES FOR LIVING LIKE JESUS IN EVERYDAY LIFE

NEAL SAMUDRE
#JESUSHACKS

Cover photography by Mikaela Hamilton
WE BELIEVE...

1. It’s not enough to be Christian.
2. Society wants us to be passive consumers. Jesus wants us to be active contributors.
3. You can’t make a difference without being different.
5. Our character matters more than our career.
6. When your life begins to looks different, remember: you are not wasting your life in the service of others.
7. We are not about Bible-beating and Christian outrage. Grace & love are better convincers.
8. Love is what’s communicated when our words and actions work together.
9. Community is essential; isolation isn’t.
10. The best way to live out our faith every day is to honor the roles we’ve been given.
INTRODUCTION

For years, we’ve settled that living like Jesus is impossible. We’ve abandoned the possibility of it to questions of “what would Jesus do?” followed by a shrug of the shoulders or a joke about how He would flip a table. We’ve let this crucial idea fall back into the recesses of our minds, all while trying to reconcile the idea that our faith should be more and do more in this world.

But I’m here to engage a new thought. What would it look like if we took this idea seriously? What if we treated it as a command for our life rather than an option?

Then, I believe, we would arrive on the brink of something meaningful.

I’ve discovered that people don’t have an adequate vocabulary as to what it looks like to live like Jesus. It’s purely an ideal we smile at, but if we had to describe how
living like Jesus differs from the typical way of doing life, many of us would not be able to.

This is the purpose of this manifesto: to clarify how our lives should be different by living like Jesus. The truth is, living like Jesus isn’t what we’ve previously thought it was. It’s much more than better behavior or keeping the peace. Living like Jesus is the recipe to living our lives the way they should be lived. My hope is that the words in this book would strip away the empty pursuits in your life and give you tangible, practical goals to help you daily live like Jesus in everything you do.

Here’s the truth of what it looks like to live like Jesus today:
1. IT'S NOT ENOUGH TO BE CHRISTIAN.

A police officer I met in a coffee shop once told me that he wished God would snap His fingers and instantly make him more like Jesus. This officer surprised me because he recognized the difference between being a Christian and being like Jesus. He understood there was a process of change that occurs after you begin taking your faith seriously. He understood that God loves us too much to not leave us where we are. God intends to make us more like His Son.
But if we’re honest, not many people feel like this difficult process is necessary. Becoming a Christian is about tradition and family, and less about what God is doing in their hearts. These people feel it is enough to stay where they are, to simply wear their beliefs on their skin instead of allowing them to change who they are.

As a result, these people choose everything that’s easy with their faith. They don’t go out of their way to serve a hurting person. They don’t love their neighbor or hold people in a higher esteem. They simply continue their lives with their faith being something they do on the side.

But this path is how we develop mediocrity with our faith. Mediocrity is the sum of all the times we choose to take the easy path with our faith. And so, if you continually choose the easy road, you might be a Christian, but you certainly won’t live like Jesus.
What’s the difference between living as a Christian and aiming to live like Jesus? Well, the latter actually uses their faith, lets it shape them to be the person they were created to be—meaning they live a meaningful life. Meanwhile, the former lives the life that’s easy to them, but doesn’t amount to much in the long run.

Which path would you choose?
2. SOCIETY WANTS US TO BE PASSIVE CONSUMERS. JESUS WANTS US TO BE ACTIVE CONTRIBUTORS.

It’s our responsibility to add value to the world. We cannot accept the life that sits down and passively accepts what’s given to us. Society wants us to become this kind of people because it means we keep buying and spending our money. But this is not the recipe for a meaningful life.

We change the world when we give ourselves to the world, not when we give our money. Jesus wants us to find the life
where we leave the world in a better condition than when we found it, just like He did. But if we simply let ourselves be swayed by the passivity our society presses upon us, then we’ll be paralyzed to inaction.

Understand that your life is meant to contribute to the world, not take up space.
3. YOU CAN’T MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITHOUT BEING DIFFERENT.

Society is not our enemy, but sometimes it speaks messages that aren’t helpful to us. It tells us to accumulate wealth, to gather excess, and to experience the world through a self-centered lens. People everyday are following these messages without knowing that this will not give them the life they desire, the life begging to be discovered in their souls.
The life of Jesus teaches us to be discerning. We know where truth is found, and most often, it is found in being different from what society endorses. We understand that the best course of action is to exhibit grace over revenge, practice generosity over hoarding, and to go without before we go for everything.

The life of Jesus is different, but it’s because of this that we have the ability to make a difference. No person ever changed the world by conforming to it. Every great difference-maker defied some societal norm, and in doing so, shook the world.

We too have this ability to shake the world. It’s lying dormant within us. We foster this ability with a discerning eye and the exercise of choosing the different course of action, even when it hurts us.
Individuals today are in the business of using people. We use people when we see them as tools to help us build a better life for ourselves. We use people when we scope out what relationships are advantageous for us to have. We use people when our relationship with people never extends beyond “what can you do for me?”

We are conditioned to ask this question every time we meet certain people because we’ve grown up in a world that values profit. The American Dream is about social mobility, and typically, the only way to rise to the top is by stepping on people along the way.
Jesus, however, envisions a new way to go about our relationships. During His ministry, He was a healer—or in other words, a man of value. People sought Him out because He could do something for them. But when these people approached Jesus, He never asked Himself, “what can this person do for me?” before He served them. He simply served them.

Generosity is a foreign concept to our society. We rarely give for the sake of giving. We often seek money or a networking opportunity for our actions. But what would society look like if people gave freely and didn’t seek a profit from their relationships? What would it look like if service was more treasured than profit?

I believe society would then be restructured on the principles of Jesus—selflessly giving without expecting much in return. Maybe then our society would change for the better.
5. OUR CHARACTER MATTERS MORE THAN OUR CAREER.

If we’re honest, the greatest pursuit in life many of us have is finding the career that makes us happy. From a young age, we are groomed to find a job that is successful and makes a profitable income, and we spend years trying to define what that job is. When we enter into the marketplace, we read books and get training on the skills that’ll help us succeed in finding a better job. And then, we work our way through connections and other job opportunities to find that dream job.

This search for a fulfilling career consumes much of our life. Many of us make this pursuit all there is to life. If we’re not
careful, work can become all we do while the rest of our life shrivels up around us.

This is not the balanced life Jesus endorses. Jesus wants us to do work that adds value to the world and helps us feel a sense of dignity. He doesn’t want us to do work that keeps us idle all day. But Jesus also wants us to treasure pursuits other than our career. In His ministry, He consistently reminded people of the importance of character-growth.

Today, we ignore matters of character in exchange for matters of external success. In fact, many of us have trouble placing an adequate vocabulary to what character is and how it looks like in our lives. So it can be difficult to favor character over our career. Our career is a tangible pursuit of strategy and results while our character development is a pursuit enshrouded in ambiguity and self-reflection.
Yet Jesus reminds us that the greatest success is a man who overcomes his selfish desires for the benefit of others, not a man who makes the most money.

We need a shift in our priorities. If you looked at the ratio of your life and considered how many times you pursued career success over character-growth, would you be happy with what you find? Would your career be the greatest pursuit of your life or would your character be the thing that matters?

Our character provides shock-resistance to hardships, integrity to morally ambiguous times, and a legacy that lasts far longer than any career success. When people pass away, it is their character that is remembered and eulogized, not their income. Jesus understands this. He knows that what makes a meaningful life is how your inner life spills out and affects the world around you. The world might try to convince us that all people really care about is how much money we make, but the truth is, people care more about
our impact—which is often the result of our character, not our income.
6. WHEN YOUR LIFE BEGINS TO LOOK DIFFERENT, REMEMBER: YOU ARE NOT WASTING YOUR LIFE IN THE SERVICE OF OTHERS.

Society has a formula for success: get an education, get a job, get a family, retire. We welcome lives that fit this formula. But sometimes we have little footnotes in this formula that people don’t fit with all too well. When people don’t make enough money or don’t settle down, we tend to think they are wasting their life. Yet the reality is, these people are just different.

Following the path of Jesus will make your life look different from others. You will value different things, like your
character and your impact. You will see that there are
greater treasures than money and possessions. And your
priorities will shift to serve people whom others might
consider unwelcomed strangers.

The more you look like Jesus, the more unrecognizable you
will become to the world.

In these times you might feel alienated, like living a life of
ministry is the wrong thing to do. People might push you to
find a better job, or settle down in the suburbs somewhere.
But in these low points, remember: you are not wasting your
life by living more like Jesus.

Of course, you don’t have to entirely stray from society’s
formula to live like Jesus. Living like Jesus is more ordinary
than we think. The greatest change that comes from living
like Jesus is what occurs inside of you, so sometimes, you
might not deviate from society’s formula at all—and that’s
O.K. Plenty of people followed the American Dream and
successfully changed society for God’s purposes. It’s not wrong to get an education, family, career, and then retire, but it is wrong if that’s all you live for. The weight of the Gospel imbues this process with meaning and significance. If we are not living for God’s purposes in the midst of following this pattern, then we are not living up to our full potential.

When you live to your fullest potential, people will take notice, but not necessarily in a good way. They might make you feel alien for living more like Jesus. When this happens, just know that being different does not make you a wrongdoer. Like I said before, you can’t make a difference without being different.

Let go of society’s expectations for you, and maybe then you’ll feel as if life stands for something greater than the formula of the American Dream.
7. WE ARE NOT ABOUT BIBLE-BEATING AND CHRISTIAN OUTRAGE. GRACE & LOVE ARE BETTER CONVINCERS.

Living like Jesus is not about all truth and no grace. We combine both for an effective ministry.

Today, it sometimes seems as if we have forgotten this truth. With the explosion of social media, Christians can sometimes ban together in a flurry of moral outrage on certain topics, all conveyed in the form of statuses, link sharing, and tweets. On one hand, this appears a good thing, a way for the masses to be exposed to the Christian truth. But what happens so often is, in our communication of the truth, we forget to convey grace. We take to the blogosphere or our social media accounts, and we simplify
Christian conviction to 140-characters or less, consequently leaving out a loving message.

I’m not saying all bad comes from social media, but there is no doubt social media has increased our mob mentality.

In an age where information is a commodity and constant stream, it can be easy to respond to this fast information by the seat of our pants. But Jesus was intentional in His communication of the Gospel. Jesus understood that for communication to happen, the receiver and sender must understand the same message. Yet what typically happens today is the receiver filters the message of the sender as being Bible-beating and devoid of love.

The way of Jesus recognizes that the Gospel is both truth and love at work. We can’t take to social media and only convey truth. Love has to be coupled with our message; otherwise we would sound like nothing more than a resounding gong.
8. LOVE IS WHAT’S COMMUNICATED WHEN OUR WORDS AND ACTIONS WORK TOGETHER.

Another temptation with the age of social media is that we would let our words do all the talking, and not couple the Gospel message with loving actions in real life. On the other hand, we can also give priority to only doing loving actions without even saying a word about Jesus. We can hope that one or the other can be enough to communicate our conviction, but Jesus never saw it that way.

Jesus consistently communicated His love for people with both actions and words. For instance, the moment after He stops teaching the Sermon of the Mount in Matthew 5, He
starts healing people. The loving actions add legitimacy to His words. And the words answer the why behind His actions. This is how love is communicated. This is how both the sender and the receiver comprehend love in a message.

In our culture today, we can be afraid of offending or stepping on people’s toes with our words. We can also be afraid of invading a person’s space with our actions. But I repeat: you can’t make a difference without being different. Sometimes, it is necessary to offend in a holy way—meaning to challenge a person’s way of thinking with both truth and love. And sometimes, it is necessary to serve a person even when it is invading their space. Just don’t fall into the trap of believing that both words and actions can be divorced from each other.

If you are a teenager in school, talk about and show the love in the Gospel to your peers. If you are a parent, talk about and show the love in the Gospel to your children. If you are an employee, talk about and show the love in the Gospel to
your coworkers. Follow the example of Jesus and live a life that both speaks about and displays the love of God. That’s how Christians should love today.
9. COMMUNITY IS ESSENTIAL; ISOLATION ISN’T.

Living like Jesus is not simply about better behavior. It is because of this understanding, many people perceive living like Jesus as becoming an ascetic, sealing their self up somewhere to focus on spiritual betterment. But the truth is, Jesus didn’t do this for a majority of His ministry. The story of His ministry was about surrounding Himself with community. And after He left, the disciples gathered around more community so they could grow with people.

This does not mean you have to be an extrovert and always be around people. This just means you can’t deny the role other people play in your faith.
The idea that we can achieve great things all by ourself is a great temptation today. The individualism that exists in stories of success provides us with an illusion that we don’t need others.

However, Jesus tramples this idea in His very ministry. Jesus was easily the most powerful person on the Earth. He was the person who truly didn’t need anyone to do something big. Yet, He still chose to involve people in His work. He acknowledged that people belong in the work of God, and as a result, the movement of Christianity is still strong and active today.

You cannot spark movements with isolation and better behavior. Living like Jesus is about immersing yourself in community—meaning a church, a small group, friends, and family. Truly, the only way to grow up is to grow with people.
10. The best way to live out our faith every day is to honor the roles we’ve been given.

Finally, living like Jesus is a reality that affects every day and every sphere of our life. It is not something we relegate our focus to only on Sundays. Living like Jesus filters into everything we do.

This is a hard truth to grasp because most of our days are ordinary, and it’s difficult to reconcile ordinary with our extraordinary perspective of faith. Faith seems like a radical and bold action, like something straight out of an action movie. Yet the reality is, living like Jesus is more ordinary than we think.
Most of our days are lived out in roles we fulfill. We wake up and snap into our role of being an employee, worker, or student. Then we come home and snap into our role of being a spouse, parent, brother, sister, or child. We live out our roles every day. It is also through our roles that we have the ability to live like Jesus.

Living like Jesus means we acknowledge our roles and faithfully serve God in them. It means we pursue the excellence that comes with living for God’s glory in these roles.

Near the end of His life, Jesus prays to God saying, “I glorified you on Earth, having accomplished the work you gave me to do” (John 17:4). Jesus recognized that He was given a role to play, and He glorified God by serving in that role.

We too have roles to play. Our view of faith might make it seem as if we have to go be a recluse somewhere or live our
entire lives preaching the Gospel in other countries, but you can stay right where you are and live like Jesus too. You just have to commit your roles to the service of God. This means you pray for your children if you are a parent. This means you add value to the world around you as a worker. This means you love with both words and actions as a student.

With your roles, you are given a unique opportunity to practice the life of Jesus in specific communities. Don’t remain blind to these opportunities. Use them as a way to impact others. That’s how you live an extraordinary life amidst ordinary days.

Recognize the significance of the small, ordinary moments, and these moments will snowball into eternity.
CONCLUSION

These ten statements tangibly define what it looks like to live like Jesus. You may have noticed themes in this way of life, such as: being different, valuing character, loving people, and living out truth. These themes are difficult to sustain in our day today, which is part of the reason why I believe living like Jesus is so scarce currently.

The good news is, you can change things. Your life can signal to others that there are better things to treasure than material pursuits of money and possessions. Your life can convey that there are better things to serve than your career or your image. Your life can convey that there are better ways to live than to live for yourself. By being different, you can make a difference. You just have to commit to following the template of Jesus’ life.

So bury yourself in a loving, God-honoring community, push each other to be different, and live out the ways of Jesus in
everything you do. For help on this matter, refer to my website, JesusHacks.com, to receive tips on how to live like Jesus in every sphere of life.

Let this simple dedication—to live like Jesus in everything—wash you with purpose, commitment, and the power to shake the world.
VERSES TO REMEMBER

(ESV Translation)

Psalm 34:5 – “Those who look to Him are radiant, and their faces shall never be ashamed.”

Psalm 101:2b – “I will walk with integrity of heart within my house.”

Proverbs 3:9 – “Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce.

Isaiah 7:9b – “If you are not firm in faith, you will not be firm at all.

Matthew 5:16 – “In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”

Luke 6:35a – “But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great . . .”

Luke 16:10a – “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much . . .”
**Acts 20:35** – “In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way, we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He Himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

**Romans 12:2** – “Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

**Romans 15:1** – “We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves.”

**1 Corinthians 4:20-21** – “For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power. What do you wish? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love in a spirit of gentleness?”

**1 Corinthians 10:24** – “Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor.”

**Hebrews 10:24** – “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”
SHARE THIS MANIFESTO

This manifesto is full of 10 distinguishing marks for living the life of Jesus in our daily lives. Many people can benefit from these 10 principles. If a person comes to your mind, I challenge you to send this to them, via social media, email, or even printing out a copy and handing it to them.

This is how we spark a movement. We share with our friends something comprehensible and actionable. My hope is that in sharing this, you can encourage others to live more like Jesus today.

Share by clicking the links below:

FACEBOOK | TWITTER | EMAIL
JOIN THE MOVEMENT

There are two ways you can join the movement of people striving to live like Jesus in everything they do. First you can join our Facebook group. I treat this Facebook group as my inside VIP people who I consult with on a regular basis about JesusHacks. You can also become a JesusHacks Contributor. If you are a writer who feels compelled by this message, click this link, follow the instructions, and send your best JesusHacks to me. If I approve, your JesusHacks will be featured to thousands of people.

Jesus reminds us that we cannot sustain movements on our own, so please join me in this effort!

FACEBOOK GROUP  |  BECOME A CONTRIBUTOR
Neal Samudre is the creator of JesusHacks, a personal-development website helping thousands live like Jesus in their daily lives. He is also the founder of Start Creating Stuff, a business helping people build successful online brands. The passion of his heart is to spread the message of living like Jesus in a culture that desperately needs it. When he’s not writing about this, he loves staying inside, reading a good book, and watching Netflix on stormy nights. He lives with his wife just north of Boston, MA.

To book him for a speaking event, give him encouragement, or just chat about the weather, contact him by clicking here.
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