

The Brown Street Beacon

*"...Shine out among them like beacon lights,
holding out to them the Word of Life" (Phil 2:15-16)*



Volume 3

June 12, 2016

Number. 17

Beating Average

By Rennie Frazier



The announcer's voice comes on and says, "It's out there, the voice in your head, making sure that you sleep through your yoga class. Convincing you that one doughnut hole couldn't possibly lead to another. Average blames the camera for those ten extra pounds and says, 'set the treadmill on mossy or roll or loiter.' Need an excuse? Average has em' all. Skip the gym it will probably be too crowded anyway - yeah average. Average has memory issues, "forgot to work out, again." It's crowning achievement, everyone gets a trophy - average is good! No! Average is average! You can beat average!"

I can't help but laugh every time I see this commercial, talk about art imitating life! They hit the nail squarely on the head with this one. Being average is easy - by definition average is, "typical; common; ordinary, nothing special, only average" - dictionary.com.

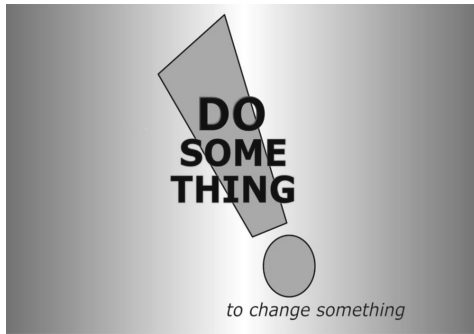
In so many ways, have we settled for being average? But as we consider what the Lord calls His followers to be and do, it is anything but average. Read Luke 9:57-62, Jesus challenged His would be disciples to consider what their faith would entail; all excuses and distractions were no substitute for a full-out commitment on their part, "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."

"What More Are You Doing Than Others...?"

" Evangelism is one of these areas of faith that we must examine and challenge ourselves. Are we average? When we truly consider what it means to take the gospel to a lost and dying world. It really is a question of how much do we love those around us.



There can be no mistake about it, when it comes to loving the people around us Jesus said that av-



erage won't do. Let's ponder the Lord's words in Matthew 5:43-48, "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love neighbor and hate your enemy.' "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you be the sons of your Father in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. "For if your love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? "If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the gentiles do the same? "Therefore you are to be perfect as your heavenly

Father is perfect." (emphasis mine)

Do you see the kind of love that reaches out to others? It is not ordinary, it is extraordinary; it is not on par with others; it is above par with God; it is not a common love, because that is easy to achieve, but rather it is an uncommon love. It is Christ's love.

There are several things that I noticed in the words of Jesus.

The first thing is, being like everyone else is unacceptable, "you have heard it said...but I say to you..." "do not even the tax collectors..?" "what more are you doing than others...?" Being like those around us (average) has never been pleasing to God.

The other thing you'll see is, love seeks to touch everyone not just the "easy" few, "love our enemies... pray for those that persecute you," "if you love those who love you..." "if you greet only your brothers..." To love the lost we must be willing to stretch ourselves well pass comfort zones, prejudices and preferences.

Lastly, there is the expectation of excellence, "be perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." Our calling is our challenge, "that you might be the sons of your Father who is in heaven." This can only be achieved if we are willing to take upon ourselves the obligation to love others in hard circumstances, with the love of Christ.

So when it comes to reaching out to our neighbors with the love of God - "what more are you doing than others?" Being average just won't do. Let's beat average!