



Truth for Today

July 26, 2020

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Published for the members and guests of the Woodlands church of Christ

Virtue Signaling

by Don Hooton

British journalist James Bartholomew has been credited with originating the term "virtue signaling" in an article in *The Spectator* in 2015 which has been defined as "the action or practice of publicly expressing opinions or sentiments intended to demonstrate one's good character or the moral correctness of one's position on a particular issue."

For example, if someone tells everyone, especially on social media, that they strongly support a certain cause *just because they want to show others how caring they are*, that person is virtue signaling. Another example would be observing how someone has changed his profile picture to show his support for _____ insert any social cause and people might ask, "Has he donated money or time? Is he giving English lessons? Is he making a room available?" Does our actions match our words? But this is more than that – what is it really that motivates them both.

Vivid evidence of it could be found on social media where people *want to be seen* as a good or charitable person by the causes they support or donate. Even companies do this when they'll change an issue in their terms of service following a public controversy, because *they want to improve their public image*.

A recent example used (that I have participated in) was the ALS Ice Bucket Challenge, in which participants were expected to dump a bucket of freezing cold water on their head and/or donate money to charities dealing with ALS (a neurodegenerative disease). The virtue signaling in this case was not donating – but the many people who participated in the challenge who did so without making a donation, suggesting that they cared more about participating in the event and the attention it gather rather than the virtue of the cause.

While it has now become a pejorative term, it has descended into a meaningless political buzzword into day's society where someone accuses someone of virtue signaling as an act of virtue signaling in itself and the result is mayhem in many parts.

Jesus is pretty clear:

"Beware of practicing your righteousness before other people *in order to be seen by them*, for then you will have no reward from your Father who is in heav-

en" (Matthew 6:1).

"And when you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces that their fasting *may be seen by others*" (Matthew 6:16–18).

Now, what does that mean? It means if you gave money to a good cause, don't brag about it. It means if you've been crying alone as you pray and skipped a meal, you wash your face before you walk out of that room and then. *don't put it on Twitter*. While Paul shared what was in his heart, he wasn't trying to get praise (c.f. 2Corinthians 2:5); He told them how much he loved them and how much he wanted them to be that kind of tenderhearted person.

So, be discerning and beware of performances; People can tell when you are planning them.

Yet, Jesus in the same sermon said, "*You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven*" (5:14–16).

So here is the point: Virtue-signaling is about you. You want people to know you and how wonderful you think you are. Jesus censures that. Light Sharing is about God. You want to live in a way that glorifies God and you want the subject of your sentences to begin with Him and not you. We can't pick and choose what we do in obedience to Him – we are willing to do it all. And there will rarely be anytime to tell anyone, "Did you see how I....."

God knows what is in our hearts. It would do us all good to know what is in our own hearts, as well.

Think on these:

People are more important than personal rights (Phil 2:3-5; Rom 14:15).

Liberties are to be used to glorify God, not self (1 Pet 2:16).

Heavenly citizenship is greater than earthly citizenship (Phil 3:20-21).

Grumbling and complaining are sinful, opposite of being lights in a dark world (Phil 2:14-16).

Christ died for all "that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised" (2 Cor 5:15).

– Doy Moyer

NEWS & NOTES

UPDATED PRAYER LIST

- **Kaymesia Barkoh** is expecting this December. Rejoice with them!
- **Kenny & Linda Faughn** will be quarantined for 14 days after their daughter Wendi tested positive for COVID.
- **Keith Arrants'** niece, Michelle, is better after an extended sickness was feared to be a COVID-19 diagnosis
- **Isaac Crawford's** dad, Michael Crawford, who had a mini-stroke, has now been admitted to St. Luke's the Woodlands.
- **Craig Preuss'** dad, Arthur, has scheduled cancer surgery for early August.
- **Dehbrenda Preuss'** dad, Bill Harrison .
- Connor Foster, boyfriend of **Preuss' daughter Lindsay**, had a tracheostomy on Tuesday and is doing better.
- **Cindy Via's** brother, Ron Morse, had eye surgery last Monday. Surgery went well. Some sight has returned but must wait longer to see if sight gets better.
- **ECONOMIC CHALLENGES.** There are still some of our church family who have had pay-cuts, furloughs and job loss. Please let the Elders know. There are many who are ready to help.
- We have added another good worker in Lira, Uganda, **Okello Ambrose Bob**, who is preaching the gospel over radio there and his work has come recommended to us by men we trust. Already he has made and distributed song books in their language as well as dried grape juice for Communion with many churches. Keep him and the others with whom we have fellowship in the gospel of Jesus.

—See *Enews for Ongoing Prayer List*

MEETINGS, EVENTS, SINGINGS & STUDIES

- Sunday Worship Assemblies
 - Reserved seating for members and those

who regularly attend with us. Please contact an elder if there is any change planned in upcoming weeks: if you 1) will be out of town, 2) are changing your time slot (from last Sunday) or, 3) if you will have more than your family.

- KIDzONLY Summer BIBLE CLASSES | LiveStream Sundays, 8:00 a.m.
 - **BIBLE CLASS MATERIAL is available for parent pickup for graded classes from preschool through junior high in the hallway outside of classroom 1.**
- TEEN Summer BIBLE CLASS | Zoom Sundays, TBA.
- Summer ADULT CLASSES
 - *Songs Outside The Psalter* | LiveStream Sundays, 1:30 p.m.
 - *Psalm 119 | The Psalm of the Word* | LiveStream Wednesdays, 6:00 p.m.
- BUILDING STRONG FAMILIES | will be postponed and resumed at a later date.
- 2:52 Kids Class [2-12] | (TBA)
- TEENS STUDY [13-18] | (TBA)
- YOUNG ADULTS | (TBA)
- TEEN DEVO [12-18] | (TBA)
- ADULT STUDY [30/40] | (TBA)
- BARNABAS GROUP | See Leo Betancourt
- WORKDAY | 8/1, 8-10 am
- YOUTH LECTURES | will be only a virtual event on Sat, Aug 8.
- MEETING with *Ben Hall* | 9/13-16
- WOMEN'S DAY with *TBA* | 10/10
- MEN'S DAY with *David McClistler* | 11/7

DIRECTORY UPDATES

- **We would like all families** to update their information and ALL worship leaders to do the same. If you have any questions about the DIRECTORY application of our website, **be sure to see Brian Clark.** he most recent printed directory is in the foyer for members.

OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

- **WOULD YOU TEACH?** Contact John Beighle for info on teaching in September.
- **VOLUNTEER SIGN UPS.** See the Monthly Assignments and let Barrett Blankenship know if you cannot fulfill an assignment.
- **WOULD YOU ENCOURAGE?** See Leo Betancourt about getting involved in Barnabus Group.
- **HOSPITALITY?** Marissa Suarez will coordinate food for members who need assistance during an extended recovery period after surgery or for the family at a funeral. **We need a new volunteer to begin July through December.**

WEEKLY BIBLE READING

- **Week Thirty-One** (beginning 8/2)
 - Read Psalm 30, 80, 130
 - Memorize Psalm 30:4-5
- **Signup for weekly reminders at <https://www.remind.com/join/weeklymemo>**

Attendance	InPerson Average Last-Month	Virtual Average Last-Month	InPerson Last Week	Virtual Views Last Week
<i>KidzOnly Bible Class</i>	n/a	4	n/a	1
<i>High School ZOOM</i>	n/a		n/a	n/a
<i>Sunday Adult Class</i>	n/a	29	n/a	12
<i>Sunday Worship AM</i>	135	48	92	0
<i>Sunday Worship PM</i>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Wednesday PM</i>	n/a	12	n/a	32

NEXT WEEK'S SERVICE & WORSHIP ASSIGNMENTS	8:30 AM Aug 2	10:00 AM Aug 2	Contact Information
<i>Communion Preparation</i>	G/L Chapman	G/L Chapman	Elders
<i>Sound Booth</i>	C. Latson	C. Latson	Keith Arrants 936.582.1244
<i>Foyer 1/Greeting</i>	C. Preuss	D. Haas	George Chapman 281.298.1303
<i>Foyer 2/Usher</i>	J. Beighle	A. Suarez	Norman Davis 832.326.2966
<i>SongLeading</i>	S. Dargan	D. Osteen	Don Hooton 936.443.6230
<i>1st Prayer</i>	A. Bohanan	B. Clark	Deacons
<i>Scripture Reading</i>	C. Chapman — John 1:1-14	J. Crump — Luke 4:13-22	John Beighle 806.367.3389
<i>Communion</i>	J. Dunlin	M. Chandler	Adam Bohanan 281.798.1093
<i>Bread</i>	n/a	n/a	Brian Clark 281.513.0706
<i>Fruit of Vine</i>	n/a	n/a	Gary LeBlanc 281.292.0262
<i>Contribution</i>	n/a	n/a	Craig Preuss 832.477.0578
<i>Assist</i>	n/a	n/a	Evangelists
<i>Assist</i>	n/a	n/a	Don Hooton 936.443.6230
<i>Preaching</i>	D. Hooton	D. Hooton	Website
<i>2nd Prayer</i>	Mitch Harvey	G. LeBlanc	www.woodlandschurchofchrist.org
<i>Announcements</i>	C. Preuss	H. Clark	Office Phone
<i>InterService Clean—Foyer/Bath</i>	J/J Beighle	M/C Chandler	281.367.2099
<i>InterService Clean—Auditorium</i>	J. Fancher	J/M Chegin	Church Email
<i>Doors Open @8 Lockup @11:30</i>	C. Latson	D. Hooton	woodlandschurchofchrist@gmail.com