

“Son” Flowers... A Devotional by the members of New Hope Church in Cooper, TX

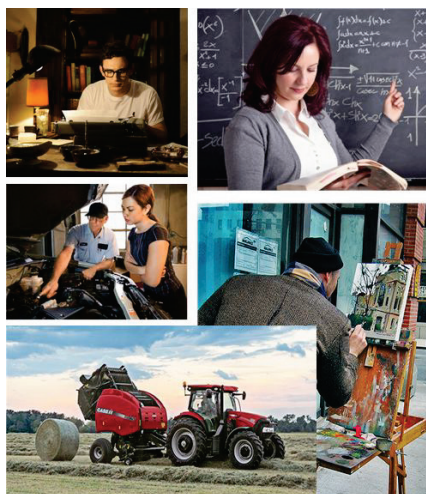
Author: Jim Winger

Scripture Verse Reference: Colossians 3:17 **“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” (NKJV)**

Represent...

Being the ultra-cool, hip, trendy, currently in vogue guy I am ...NOT; I turned down a store aisle and found some young men gathered about talking the other day. While maneuvering around them, one of them made a gesture and ended the conversation with; *“Represent!”* To which the others responded with; *“Word!”* as they nodded their heads in seeming agreement and walked away. Being someone who makes a living with words, I stood there with this dumbfounded look; reveling at the fact that I am apparently very out of touch with today’s world. I chuckled to myself and went on about my shopping, but I thought about the conversation I happened upon, about how my words and actions speak volumes to those around me. As I am prone to do, I sometimes think about things too much; and as usual, this leads me to research, examine, and attempt to understand why something so seemingly harmless to most people impacts me. I looked up the word “represent” in an on-line dictionary, and saw two different definitions; the first, “to serve, to express, designate, stand for, or denote, as a word, symbol, or the like does; symbolize.” The second, used as a slang expression; “to use or display a secret handshake, sign, gesture, etc., for purposes of identification.” Somehow, I sensed, the young men applied both definitions in their previous conversation.

Of course, this led me to think about how and what I “represent” in my life. What I found is my words and actions provide people who interact with me many different personas. To my wife Diane, I prefer to think she sees a kind, gentle, loving, supportive person the majority of the time, but I am also realist enough to know she all too often sees the petty, selfish, demanding, and angrier sides of me I would much prefer no one see. To my friends, I hope they see the easy-going, always willing to help person who would do everything possible to honor their friendship and mutual respect. To those I meet when my guard is up in unknown and potentially harmful environments, I am a quiet, guarded, no nonsense man with a “don’t mess with me” attitude. To my God, I tend to be the meek, fearful, believer who stands in awe of an awesome and mighty God. In reality, I see myself as a combination of all these personality traits, both good and bad, and I realize that God sees all of them in me, whether I like it or not.



What many Christians often forget, including me, is we are **always** representatives of Christ; and we should always endeavor to remember that what we say and do impacts both our testimony and that of our Lord. In our best moments, and sadly in our worst, we represent Christ; and in some instances, we may be the only representative some people may ever see. When I think of that, I am saddened to realize I have probably turned more people off to God than on to God by my words or actions. Yet, I am emboldened by knowing my God is merciful and He is quick to forgive me when I fail Him and ask His forgiveness. He is also, my patient teacher.

What is also important for each of us to remember is that God’s Word gives us the guidance and method to live our Christian lives as God’s representatives here on this earth. We simply must make the effort to search His Word, learn His ways, and apply them to our lives.

In everything we do, be that husband, wife, parent, friend, neighbor, employee, teacher, employer, farmer, mechanic... whatever, we need to remember as Christians we are representatives of Christ and our words and actions represent God. I want to end with two questions, to both you and me.

“Can we live up to that?” Do we?” If, like me, you answered no to at least one of these...