

Week of January 8-14

HOKEY POKEY

Scripture Reading: Read Matthew chapter 10

The “Hokey Pokey,” a favorite childhood song for many, was written by Roland Lawrence LaPrise, (along with Charles Macak and Taffit Baker) and recorded in 1949. You no doubt remember the lyrics of the opening stanza:

You put your right foot in, You put your right foot out;
You put your right foot in, And you shake it all about.
You do the Hokey-Pokey, And you turn yourself around.
That's what it's all about!

The last stanza concludes with the words:

You put your whole self in, You put your whole self out;
You put your whole self in, And you shake it all about.
You do the Hokey-Pokey, And you turn yourself around.
That's what it's all about.

This nonsensical song actually reflects an attitude that Jesus was challenging his followers to reject in Matthew 10. Jesus told his disciples that anyone who loves his father or mother, son or daughter, more than they loved Jesus was not worthy of him. He added that anyone who does not take his cross and follow him was not worthy of him. To take up one's cross was to take up an instrument of death and, therefore, symbolized one's desire to lay it all on the line for Jesus. The commands of Jesus to his disciples earlier in the chapter reveal just how difficult it would be at times to follow his Kingship. His disciples would face ridicule, arrest, punishment, and even death. It is not an easy decision to be a follower of Jesus and it requires all would-be disciples to make sure they are serious before they say yes.

While the Hokey Pokey is a fun song to sing and to act out, there is no room in the Christian life for a Hokey Pokey attitude where we “put your whole self in” AND “put your whole self out.” Jesus wants us to be either all in or all out, but not in the middle.

Action Step: We can often tell by our use of money and by our use of time how devoted we are to Christ. Take a look at your checkbook and your calendar. Do they reflect the centrality of Christ in your life?

Prayer Focus: For a whole-hearted, sold-out attitude to follow Christ.

Take-a-way: *In the Christian life, unlike the Hokey Pokey, you're either all in or all out.*