



KIDS CHURCH

Have you ever played "Dress Up" or "Let's Pretend?" You know, that is when you dress up like your mom and dad and pretend to be a grown-up. We did that when I was a little girl, and when we did, one of my favorite things was when we "played church." One of the children would be the preacher, another would be the song leader, and the others would pretend to play the piano and collect the offering. It was great fun.

I especially liked playing church when it was my turn to be the preacher. Everyone wanted to be the preacher because we thought he was more important than anyone else. When you were the preacher, you could tell everyone else what to do and walk around looking very important.

In the Bible, Jesus had something to say about "playing church." Oh, he wasn't talking about little children dressing up in their parent's clothes and playing "let's pretend." He was talking about the teachers of the law and the Pharisees in the synagogue where people went to worship. Jesus said that everything that they did was done so that others would see them and think how great they were. They loved to have a special seat of honor in the synagogue and they especially liked it when people called them 'Rabbi.' That means 'Master' or 'teacher.'

What did Jesus tell us to do about teachers like these? You might think he would say, "Don't listen to them! You don't have to do what they say!" But he didn't. He said, "Obey them and do everything they say. But do not do what they do, because they do not practice what they preach."

"Practice what you preach!" Has anyone ever said that to you? Well, I must admit I have heard it a few times, and even though it hurts when someone says it to you, it is good advice. When it comes to living the Christian life, we need to make sure that we mean what we say and that we aren't just "playing church."

Here is a little poem that it would be good to remember.

You can know a lot of Scripture
And have the gift to teach,
But what is more important --
Is to practice what you preach!

Dear Father, it is important for us to tell others about Jesus and his love for them, but help us to remember that it is even more important for others to see the love of Jesus in us. Amen.

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