



Innocent or Guilty

I once was on a retreat that focused on our commitment to follow Jesus, and was asked the following question: If I were accused of being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict me? At the time, this question seemed to be rather unimportant and somewhat strange to me. However, over the years, I have come to understand just how important it is for people to ask and answer this question on a daily basis. It should really be at the center of our daily examination of conscience.

We might say that we are Christians and that Jesus is most important to us. We might also say that we love Him and that we want to follow Him all our lives. At times, though, our actions may say otherwise. If I happened to be on trial for being a follower of Jesus, would the prosecutor be able to find anything in the way I lived my life that would brand me as a Christian? Would it be proven that I loved all people? Would it be proven that I actually forgave someone who hurt me? Would it be proven that I made a sacrifice to help a poor person? Would it be proven that I spoke kindly to everyone and not just my friends, but even people that I might find difficult to be with?

Being a Christian involves matters of the heart, as well as what we do. Our good intentions are important and necessary, but they must be followed through with some action. This might be a good time for us to ask if we are really living our lives in the spirit of Jesus, both in what we think and do. If we should ever be on trial for being a follower of Jesus, would there be enough evidence to convict us?

Father David