

The Power of EXAMPLES in Pursuing Christ

Philippians 3:17-19

Introduction

Galatians 4:19 *until Christ was formed in the Galatians*

Colossians 1:28 *to be complete in Christ*

1 John 2:6 *to walk in the same manner Christ walked*

LEGALISTS

LIBERTINES

REVIEW CHAPTER 3

17 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us. 18 For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping, that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things.

#1 PURSUING THE PATTERN OF _____ EXAMPLES¹⁷

Verse 17 Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us.

IMITATING

1 Corinthians 4:16 *be imitators of me* Ephesians 5:1 *be imitators of God, as beloved children* 1 Thessalonians 1:6 *...became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit* 1 Thessalonians 2:14 *For you, brethren, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus...* 2 Thessalonians 3:7 *For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example...* 2 Thessalonians 3:9 *...in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, so that you would follow our example* Hebrews 6:12 *be ... imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*

Hebrews 13:7 *Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.*

1 Corinthians 11:1 *Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ*

Acts 23:3

1 Corinthians 15:9 *For I am the least of the apostles...*

Ephesians 3:8 *the very least of all saints*

1 Timothy 1:15 *to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all*

JOHN MACARTHUR Had [PAUL] been perfect, [he] would not have been an example believers could follow. We need to follow someone who is not perfect so we can see how to overcome our imperfections; someone who can show us how to handle the struggles of life, its disappointments, and its trials; someone who can show us how to handle pride, resist temptation, and put sin to death. Christ is the perfect standard, model, and pattern for believers to emulate. But Christ never *pursued* perfection; *He has always been perfect*. Paul was a fellow traveler on the path toward the unattainable spiritual perfection, and thus **a model for believers to follow**. He modeled virtue, morality, overcoming the flesh, victory over temptation, worship, service to God, patient endurance of suffering, handling possessions, and handling relationships.

INVESTIGATING

Ephesians 4+5

3 John 4 *I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth.*

ILLUSTRATING

Ephesians 4:16 *from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.*

#2 AVOIDING THE PRESSURE OF _____ EXAMPLES 18-19

THE CRYING OF PAUL

18 *For many walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even weeping,*

Matthew 7:15 Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves.

Acts 20:28 Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, ...29 ... after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE BAD EXAMPLES

18 *that they are enemies of the cross of Christ, 19 whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame, who set their minds on earthly things*

Bad examples are DEDICATED to their opposition of Christ **18** *they are enemies of the cross of Christ*

Bad examples are DESTINED for eternal hopelessness **19a** *whose end is destruction,*

Matthew 25:46 eternal punishment

2 Thessalonians 1:9 the penalty of eternal destruction

Bad examples are DRIVEN by sensual appetites **19b** *whose god is their appetite,*

Jude 4 For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ

Bad examples are DISHONORED by valuing the lesser and error **19c** *whose glory is in their shame,*

Bad examples are DEDICATED to material things **19d** *who set their minds on earthly things.*

James 4:4 You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

1 John 2:15 Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is NOT in him.

1-WHO are your _____?

2-Are you intimately _____ to FBC?

3-Do you treasure _____ Christ above all?

QUESTIONS TO PROMOTE GROWTH IN CHRISTLIKENESS - BECOME A DOER OF THE WORD...

- 1-How can spiritual examples be a great means of growth, and how can examples be wrongly used by believers?
- 2-Make a list of the practical and most important qualities of a spiritual example.
- 3-How can one determine whether a model/leader is a good example or a poor example to pattern after?
- 4-List at least five people who are spiritual examples to you right now; explain how each is a pattern for you to follow.
- 5-What kind of steps must be taken in order for you to be a spiritual example to others in your family and church?
- 6-What part of this sermon was the most important truth you heard and why?

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