

Living As A Good Pattern

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Oluwatobi S. Adewuyi
Coordinator

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Topic:

LIVING AS A GOOD PATTERN

Bible Text: Philippians 3:17, Titus 2:7-8

Prayer

Our Father and our God, we thank You for tonight for Your word which You will reveal to us through Your vessel, we pray that You will unravel mysteries to us and speak Your mind to us individually and as a Body, Fill Your vessel, in Jesus mighty name we pray.

This evening, we'd be looking into a sensitive topic which concerns us so much in the body of Christ.

Bible Text

Phil.3.17 [KJV]

Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.

Titus.2.7-8 [KJV]

In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.

Study

In Philippians 3:17 (KJV), the Apostle Paul encourages fellow believers with these words: "**Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample.**" Paul

consistently emphasized the need for those who are preaching and leading to imitate him, as he was confident in his walk with Christ. He urged others to follow his example because he himself followed Christ closely, as he states in **1 Corinthians 11:1 (KJV)**, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."

Paul was deeply immersed in Christ, bearing the nature of God within him. He carefully observed the ways of Christ and adopted them as a way of life. Every minister of God should strive to become more like Christ daily. Because Paul managed to emulate Christ's behavior, he could, in turn, encourage others to imitate him, as doing so would lead them to live Christ-like lives. Since Christ is not physically visible, leaders and ministers need to model their lives after Christ to provide a tangible example for others to follow. It can be perilous for followers to look up to those who do not mirror Christ's qualities, as it might lead them astray. This is why Paul emphasized "join in following," which implies that there were some who had already been following his example and witnessed positive changes in their lives, therefore others are encouraged to do so. It's crucial for Christians to understand that they are, in a sense, leaders because others are observing and imitating their lifestyles, consciously or unconsciously. Therefore, Christians should be careful in their conduct and strive to lead by example, aligning their lives with Christ's teachings and avoiding behaviors that could lead others astray.

Paul urged believers to follow his examples and to observe those who walk in the same Christ-like way. It has nothing to do with their backgrounds, families, or cultural differences but rather how they conduct themselves in alignment with the ways of Christ. These individuals serve as role models for those seeking a genuine life in

Christ Jesus. As preachers and ministers of God, it is incumbent upon us to set an example for others to follow, not merely as a pattern but as a good pattern that reflects Christ. We should continually measure our lives against the standard of God's Word to ensure that when others emulate our behavior, they will not go astray. In his letter to Titus, Paul emphasized the importance of being a pattern of good works and sound doctrine, illustrating integrity, seriousness, and sincerity in all aspects of life. **Titus 2:7 KJV** *In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity,*

From this, Paul makes it clear that the proof that a man is truly of Christ is the exhibition of his good works. This is why the Lord Jesus Christ Himself said, *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven"* **(Matthew 5:16, KJV)**. When others see these good works, they will give God all the glory, and this is when others will be able to pattern their own lives in that way, all to the glory of God.

Apostle Peter also made it clear that leaders should be examples to the flock and not lord over them. **(1 Peter 5:3, KJV)** *"Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock."*

The responsibility of a leader is so significant that the most important thing for him is to learn Christ's ways, so as not to miss it or fail in his responsibilities, this is vital. It is, therefore, the duty of every Christian to mark those who work in the ways of Christ by themselves and begin to follow their examples, you should not wait for anyone to do that for you. In our generation, to be able to mark them, you need to marry your Bible. When you get so familiar with the Word, you will

easily recognize those who are working in Christ and be able to follow them.

The Apostle also makes it clear that there are those who walk in ways contrary to the ways of Christ, and these people are many. He says in **Philippians 3:18 (KJV)**, "For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ." The issue here is not that they do not walk; of course, they are walking. It's just that the way and the direction of their walk is questionable and calls for caution. One can choose to walk in the good way or the other way. **Jeremiah 6:16 (KJV)** says, "Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein." From this verse, the Lord spoke through Jeremiah, suggesting that the children of Israel should walk in the ways of righteousness, which is the old way, but they chose not to. This was the case with those Paul was talking about; they walked, but not according to the truth. They rather perverted the truth. These people are enemies of the cross of Christ. Christ suffered and died on the cross so that we might be saved, but these people act contrary to His ways, which should be a guiding light to the Kingdom. By perverting His Gospel" (**Galatians 1:7, KJV**), which means they trouble those who should be working in the ways of the Lord by preventing His true message and holding the truth in unrighteousness.

Say this to Yourself **May I not hold the truth in unrighteousness.**

As a result, Paul made himself a weeping preacher, much like Jeremiah, who was known as "The Weeping Prophet." It is fitting for a preacher to weep for the souls of men when he sees that they are in

danger if they do not take caution. If weeping is what will make them see the truth and follow it, why should he hide his tears? Paul sent his warnings to the church so that they would not be deceived. It is the responsibility of every true believer and preacher to warn others about false teachers and seducers in the body of Christ. Those who claim they are not supposed to do so are working hand-in-hand with the devil and are enemies of the cross of Christ because they want souls to perish in deception.

Those who lead are to be examples to be followed by those they lead. Paul told Titus and Timothy how this should be done.

How to model your life as a good pattern for others to follow

Looking into Titus 2:7-8 (KJV), "In all things showing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, [8] Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you." We can see that Paul mentioned that we must show our patterns of good works in all things and not a few things. Then he goes further to mention some.

1. **In teaching:** this is the area many preachers miss today, and from their teachings, you can easily recognize that they walk in their own ways and not in the ways of Christ. They are enemies of the cross of Christ. One of the ways Paul told Titus to set an example is through his instructions. He commanded that in his teaching, he should show purity. This means that in his teaching, he should maintain a high regard for:

(a) **Uncorruptness:** Those whose lives should be examples for others should have their messages without corruption. This is why they must

study always to show themselves approved unto God, and rightly dividing the words of truth. Their teachings must be rooted in purity, that is, modesty. It must not be immoral or go against the moral laws of God. This is why morality must be upheld in any pure teaching of God's Word because God's moral laws still stand to this day. The message must be characterized by proper conduct and must not be adulterated or debased by a change from the original or correct condition as stated in the scriptures.

(b) **Gravity:** This implies seriousness. Every message that must be preached must be presented in a serious tone because of what is at stake. What makes a teaching serious is its strict adherence to the highest principles and ideas of God's Word. This showcases uprightness and righteousness. It also implies the honesty in it, which is rooted in God's Word. Care must be placed on the message preached and the instructions given for it to show the need for strict adherence to it because it is in strict adherence to God's commandments that souls are saved.

(c) **Sincerity:** Those who teach must teach from a sincere heart. This means a mind free from hypocrisy, not a life that preaches something and does otherwise. The heart must be free from those things which are preached against with passion. Passion must be put in place during preaching for people to see how sincere you are. This sincerity should not be lost in demeanor and should be expressed with dignity. In our teaching, we must have formal reserves for the truths and show seriousness in our manner, appearance, and language. Our language must be sincere because we deal with matters concerning the souls of men.

(d) **Sound speech:** When talking about sound speech, it can be in two forms, because communication is in different ways.

(i) **Conversation (behavior):** As in **1 Timothy 4:12 (KJV)**, "**Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.**" This means that in every behavior towards one another as brethren and also with those who are not brethren, there should be something different in it. We must aim at edifying others and not speak words that are corrupt or unsound.

Ungodly gestures, touches, idle words, such as slang, foul languages, sensual words, and immoral talks should be totally avoided. The scripture says, "**Let your words be seasoned with salt**" (**Colossians 4:6, KJV**), meaning that our words should be seasoned and sound. Those who are Christians should not join others who do not know Christ in ungodly trends.

(ii) **In exhortation:** This talks about soundness in preaching and teaching of the word of God. It emphasizes accuracy. Paul told Timothy to "**show yourself approved unto God.**" When you study well, there will be accuracy in your teachings. Therefore, it is important for those who want to be a good example to others to seek for accuracy in their messages so that those who are opponents will not be able to have anything evil to say about them.

2. In Charity: This implies love. If you want to model your life for others to follow, you must show love to everyone, no matter who they are. To believers and unbelievers' care and concern must be shown, maybe they are known or not. In fact, this is what the Old commandment of God rests upon — love. When people see how much

you prefer others, they will love to follow your example, not fake love or lust that men should do themselves today. Love that has a reason attached to it is not love. Any display of love that gives room for sexual immorality is no love at all. We are commanded to be an example through our show of love. This means that affection shown to one another must not be lustful, not partial but must be true. It must be one that comes from an open heart, not one with any ulterior motive.

The attributes of love according to 1 Corinthians 13:4-8:

1. Love is long-suffering.
2. Love is kind.
3. Love does not envy.
4. Love does not boast of itself.
5. Love is not proud.
6. Love does not behave rudely.
7. Love is not selfish.
8. Love is not provoked.
9. Love thinks no evil.
10. Love does not rejoice in iniquity but in the truth.
11. Love bears all things.
12. Love believes all things.
13. Love hopes all things.

14. Love endures all things.

15. Love never fails.

Looking at all these attributes of love, it's clear that anyone who would be an example that is a good model to be followed has a lot of work to do on himself. Love must be without dissimulation. **Romans 12:9 KJV:** "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good."

3. **In Spirit:** This implies that the leader must be filled with the Holy Spirit and not another spirit that is of the world. There are different kinds of spirits today; some have witchcraft, marine spirits, and the likes. **1 John 4:1 KJV:** "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God because many false prophets are gone out into the world." There are many who are leaders but operate under the influence of other spirits. These are not those with good examples; they should not be emulated. Those who would pattern their lives for others to follow must be careful to always check their lives if any other spirits other than the Holy Spirit have penetrated. The spirit of man should always be closed because pollution is everywhere. **2 Corinthians 7:1 KJV:** "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." This is when holiness can be perfected in the life of a man.

4. **In Faith:** In the display of faith, we should be examples. We should not allow fear to rule and control us. When others see your display of faith, they will be encouraged and will get closer to the Lord Jesus Christ. Our faith should strengthen the faith of others. The level of your trust in the Lord should be second to none, firm belief and stand

in Him should be rooted in you, and people around you should have your faith as one to be envied and modeled after.

5. In Purity: We should be examples in purity. This is all about pure conduct and relationships with the opposite gender. This talks about shunning immoralities; the behavioral pattern and relationship between brothers and sisters must be pure and without any form of impurity. **1 Timothy 5:2 KJV** states: "**The elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, with all purity.**" We must exhibit purity in all relationships, and being in courtship does not give you the go-ahead to live impure lives.

Satan has made many believe that, since they are in courtship and everyone knows about it, they can then begin to engage in inappropriate activities like kissing, romancing, smooching, or even having sex. This does not make one a good example to be followed by others. We must stand aloof from these things. As a man of God, have you not slept with almost all the ladies in your church? Oh! You said it's "just" two; that is enough to make you a firewood in hellfire if you do not repent and confess your sins quickly before death.

What about the impure words you tell brothers and sisters that have made them lust after you? These things do not please the Lord, and they are leading many to hellfire already. Paul told Timothy to be an example in Purity, which implies that he must not take advantage of any other sisters as a leader. Just because you were made an ordinary exco in your school fellowship, you have seized the opportunity to start defiling innocent ladies because they call you Papa, Papa, Papa. You are not a good example to be followed! You think nobody knows, right? God knows!

Paul says, mark those who work as living examples, as it has been explained above, and take after them. **Philippians 3:17 KJV:** "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample." But looking into this, one would see that it does not refer to leaders or ministers of the gospel alone, for all Christians are the epistles read by all men. **2 Corinthians 3:2 KJV:** "Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men." If we are already known by all men, then we must be examples to others.

With the way you are living your life currently, can you say that you are a good person to be followed? Can you put, "Follow me as I follow Christ"? Have you been marked by others as someone who can be followed as people begin to see you as someone who, if they follow, will look like Christ and make it to heaven because you are an ardent follower of Christ? You have been marked as a "no-go" area for many because of your lifestyle. Going to work, Paul, the apostle, wrote to the church; we can say that the major things that characterize those who are for Christ and those who are not for Christ is the pattern of their living, and an example is a model, a figure that is being looked upon to be imitated.

It is unfortunate today that many who should be good examples have been marked as fornicators by those living around them, therefore they can no longer preach for these people to accept. The truth remains that the fact that a person is sinful does not mean that they do not know what is right from what is wrong. It is just that they lack the power to do what is right. All sinners know that it is wrong to fornicate, but they keep doing it. They know that stealing is bad, yet they do it. Even drinking and smoking, womanizing, prostituting,

indecent dressing, and the likes, they all know, but they keep doing it. Since they know what is right from wrong, they can easily distinguish those who do the right things from those who live like them. They know that those who live like them cannot help them, so there is nothing these ones can say that will have meaning to them because they do not walk fully according to the truth.

You join them to give and take bribes; they are seeing you, and would not listen to you when you tell them about Christ. You lie about the time you got to work too? They will not listen to you because you are like them, they have marked you for the opposite. This is why, as Christians, we must be careful. You cannot be keeping malice with some people in the church and at work and expect to be an example to be followed. There are those whom you have refused to greet in your neighborhood for years and months now, yet you carry your big Bible around, saying you are going to church, and people around you keep making fun of you because they see you as hypocritical.

You are a street fighter; there's nobody you have not had conflicts with in your neighborhood. Yet, when you are praying and speaking in tongues, it will be as if you swallowed a loudspeaker, and they keep wondering if this is how Christianity is being practiced. You have been marked for the opposite! Your conduct is what matters the most, not what you say with your mouth. Your way of life speaks volumes. As a single brother, different kinds of sisters keep visiting you in your single apartment, and some even stay overnight, claiming you are doing assignments or doing vigils together. Yet you don't realize that you have been marked for the opposite.

All believers have been watching and reading your way of life, and they will not think the way you are thinking because of the way they

are living their own lives. Even if you do not do anything immoral with these ladies, how do you justify yourself? Yet, you keep saying, "God sees me, God sees me." Why not allow people to see you too, why only God? When ladies keep hovering around you like this, it is an appearance of evil from which you must stay away.

How can you, as a true child of God, go and sit in a football center, wasting time and shouting "goal!", and arguing about sports? It is shameful, very shameful. You have been marked as a bad example because in sitting there to argue with unbelievers, you have made yourself look like them, and how do you want to win their souls after so much contention and strife? You have gone there to have pleasure, the way others have, not knowing you are dead already and should not be followed in your dead state. **1 Timothy 5:6 KJV: "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth."**

As a parent, have you not been marked as a bad example by your children? You gave birth to children, and you do not set a good example for them nor cater for them. They are watching you, and they may never follow your path, yet you call yourself a Christian. They have observed the way you talk, relate, and even treat your own parents, and they have scored you poorly because you think they are young and do not know anything. You should know that you are far away from making heaven.

As a wife, your unbelieving husband has marked you as being disobedient, proud, arrogant, and unsubmitive. **1 Peter 3:1 KJV: "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives."** The Scripture says you should win your husband to Christ by the way you live your life.

As a husband, you may not realize that you have been marked by your wife for the way you are treating her. She knows you are not being nice, although she may pretend not to. You might think you are fooling her by womanizing around, even going out with her close friends, but in reality, you are only fooling yourself. She may have chosen to keep quiet because she doesn't want her actions to affect your children, but you should be aware that you are far from setting a good example, even for your own kids. And making heaven is not even in your agenda with such a lifestyle. You need to reflect on your behavior and make amends.

"Mr. Pastor", have you not been involved in inappropriate relationships with various women in your church? Women leaders, choirmasters, chief ushers, and prayer warriors, have you all not been marked negatively because you did not fully follow the truth?

You are setting a bad example with your immoral lifestyle, and you are leading others down the path to hellfire. It's time to wake up and change your ways.

It's crucial for everyone to examine where they may have been marked negatively and start making amends.

Change the way you live and set a positive example for those who have marked you for evil. Paul encourages us to follow his example, not only in what we have learned or received from him but also in what we have seen in his life. (**Philippians 4:9 KJV: "Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you."**) Let's strive to be good patterns to be followed. May the Lord help us in Jesus Christ's name.

Invitation

If you know that you are still living in sin and you are ready to repent and begin to live your life in strict obedience to God so that you can overcome every sin in your life to make heaven, please place your right hand on your chest and say this prayer with your mouth.

Say,

"Lord Jesus, I accept You as my personal Lord and Savior. I believe that You died for me and took away my sins so that I will not face the penalty of them. I surrender my life to You today, and I make a decision to obey and follow You. Come into my life now and accept me as Your child. Thank You for saving me, in Jesus Christ's name I pray, Amen."

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