

The Brown Street Beacon

"...Shine out among them like beacon lights,

holding out to them the Word of Life" (Phil 2:15-16)



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Be Thou an Example

In 1 Tim. 4:12, Paul gave Timothy the instruction to be a good example to others. That is sound advice for all Christians. We should all try our best to be a good example to those around us, whether they be people of the world or other members of the body of Christ. Let's look at the specific areas in which Paul told Timothy to be an example.

1. In Word. We demonstrate that we are true Christians, not only by what we do, but also by what we say and how we say it. Christians are those who control the tongue (James 1:26). There are many ways to abuse the use of the tongue. Gossip is one way (1 Timothy 5:13). Speaking unkindly is another (Ephesians 4:15). Using filthy speech is an improper use of the tongue as well (Ephesians 4:29), and so is simply talking too much (James 1:19). Sinning in word is easy to do because the tongue can never really be tamed (James 3:8). Being a good example in word, then, takes constant effort. It is something we must *determine* to do.

2. In manner of life. Our daily life should shine forth as a beacon of light (Matthew 5:16). Let's do more than just talk right, let's live right as well. Paul implored the brethren in Ephesus to walk worthy of the vocation by which they had been called (Ephesians 4:1). Our walk with God must be a constant adherence to His Word. Jesus said, "...man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). Only when we determine to live by all of the Word of God will we be successful in being an example in our manner of life. If we fail to keep any of the commandments of God, someone will take notice, and our example will be ruined.

3. In love. Being a Christian and loving others goes hand in hand. In fact, one who doesn't love his fellowman is not a Christian. Jesus said to His disciples, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another" (John 13:34). The commandment to love was not new, but to love the way Jesus loved was. His love was real. He acted, unconditionally, in the best interest of both His enemies and His friends. That is the kind of love in which we should excel. This degree of love is more than just mere words; it is a love of action (1 John 3:18). Any other kind of love is really not true love at all, and it falls short of the example that Christ set for us. Remember, Paul once said, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). Would you follow Paul as he follows Christ? Would you be a good example of what a true Christian should be by loving the way Jesus loved?

4. In spirit. The word *spirit* as used by Paul in 1 Timothy 4:12 denotes the attitude or disposition of a person. A bad attitude stops one from being a real Christian. We are an example in spirit when our disposition or attitude is good. How is your attitude when you don't get your way? How is your attitude when you are justly rebuked for a shortcoming? What is your attitude toward those who fall away? What is your attitude toward the work of the local church, or about the local church in general? Having a proper attitude is going to go a long way in determining whether or not we are good examples to those around us. If our disposition is always bad, it will probably be demonstrated by how we act and what we say. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" was the admonition of apostle Paul in Philippians 2:5. Determine to have the kind of spirit that will remind others of Jesus.

5. In faith. True faith is demonstrative (Hebrews 11). Show others that you really believe in God by doing His will no matter what the circumstances of your life may be. Show that you trust God with your burdens by casting your cares upon Him (1 Peter 5:7). Demonstrate you believe in the Word of God by being a doer of it (James 1:22). Proper faith is probably demonstrated the most when difficult times are upon us. Don't quit when things get tough. Prove to God and to yourself that you have the kind of faith that saves and help others have that same kind of faith by setting a good example.

6. In purity. To be pure is to live a clean, wholesome life, apart from the sinful things of the world. This is made possible by one's obedience to the gospel. When a person obeys the gospel, his sins are washed away and he escapes the corruption of the world (2 Peter 1:4). Then, after a person is cleansed from the filth of the world, he must determine within his own heart to live a holy life by walking in the light (1 John 1:7; 1 Thessalonians 5:22). Every Christian should do his best to live an upright life, letting his light shine so that God will be glorified (Matthew 5:16).

Have you thought about what kind of example you are setting for others? We all influence the lives of those with whom we have regular contact (our children, co-workers, family, etc.). Let's do our best to be a good examples.

Don

The Devil's Beatitudes

- ♦ Blessed are they who are too tired or busy for worship, for they are my best workers.
- ♦ Blessed are they who are bored with the preacher's mannerisms and mistakes, for they get nothing out of hearing God's word.
- ♦ Blessed is the Christian who expects to be *invited* to his own assembly, for he is part of the problem rather than the solution.
- ♦ Blessed are they who gossip, for they cause strife and divisions which please me.
- ♦ Blessed are they who are easily offended, for they soon shall get angry and quit the Lord.
- ♦ Blessed is he who professes to love God yet hates his brother and sister, for he shall be with me forever.

- ♦ Blessed are they who do not give their offering to carry on the Lord's work, for they are helping to support my cause.
- ♦ Blessed are the troublemakers, for they shall be called children of the devil.
- ♦ Blessed is he who has no time to pray, for he will be easily preyed upon.

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