

Marking what is Good

There is a popular concept that goes something like this, “*don’t put your eyes on men, but on God.*” Actually this is not biblical, because God insists that those who minister, preach, teach, or direct activities in the church absolutely have to be exemplary men of God. This means that the “official” requirement for a person to minister is that he “be a man of God,” consciously complying with the requirements that God imposes. We should demand this and uphold this. In other words, many will complain that the standards of God are too hard for them to fulfill. “*Nobody can fulfill these standards*”, they say. But to stop this, God insists that every church have at least one man of God over the church, and these be official ministers, visible, and in front of the work in every aspect so that they personally live the example of what a man of God is to be. It can be done.

1Peter 5:1-4 *(To) the elders which are among you... Feed (pastor) the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but **being ensamples to the flock**... chief Shepherd.*

What Peter is exhorts that there are requirements for the leaders of the church (the elders) who are the ones who pastor (feeding the flock), that they have to be personal examples of Christ in their personal life. Peter refers to this person as one of the “pastors” under the “*Chief Shepherd.*” God is highly interested in there being a good godly example of a man of God who has submitted himself to the standards of God in order to provide a personal example to the people of God. Moreover the flock should consider these people examples in order to imitate their faith (**Heb 13:7** on the front of this tract), and an absolute requirement for leadership.

Marking what is Bad

Satan has deceived many within the church to take an attitude of do nothing towards wickedness. Thinking that they have “no position” towards evil (neither in favor nor against it), they

are “safe.” But the truth is that if one does not seek to oppose wickedness, then there is apathy in your life, and you yourself will lower your defenses and little by little you will accept this wickedness, and after a while, you will do this same wickedness that you thought would not affect you, and perhaps even at one time thought that you would never actually do. This is the process of change, Satan strongly working this process for his purposes.

Mat 7:15-20 *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. 16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? 17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. 18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. 19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. 20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*

The divine defense against doctrinal error and the examples of sin that we are presented with by the false prophets is to examine our leaders’ lives to discern what their own lives have produced spiritually speaking. Then God has commanded us to be fruit inspectors. You deceive the people, but you cannot produce fruit that is of a different nature than you are.

If a minister is not exemplary, and everybody does what he does, then he should resign or be removed forcibly by the church. Being “blameless” (not being able to lay hold on a legitimate thing, error in doctrine or conduct) is a requirement for the ministry (**1Tim 3:2; Tit 1:6-7**). There are ministers whose life is not like what Christ’s life was, and they are hypocrites that pretend to instruct things that they themselves do not practice, and you cannot see them presenting themselves as examples of Christ. This hypocrisy is against the principle and form of what the Bible teaches. Ministers should be the first “living” example of Christ to the brethren. Their administration, authority, and power all hang on

the fact of their complying with the standards of God. It is hypocritical for a pastor to say that all Christians should witness, tithe, sacrifice, and pray many hours, and he himself doesn’t do that. I remember hearing one time of a pastor that called his church to fast one day every week to raise funds for a missionary, and the people put the money they saved from not eating that day into the offering plate. But the same pastor left his kids with a church family on the fasting day, and the pastor and wife took the missionary to a nice restaurant to eat a good meal. Leadership is being first in doing something.

2Thes 3:7-9, 13-14 *For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you; 8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you: 9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an ensample unto you to follow us... 13 But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing. 14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.*

God has the same process today as we see in the words of Paul. Paul himself gave us his personal example of working hard to sustain ourselves. Paul did not work because he understood he had no right to live from his ministry (**1Cor 9:14**) but because he wanted to teach through being an example. Those who do not comply with the norms and standards of God are not saved, or at least are not spiritual and have no right to be in the ministry; they are disqualified.

Imitating Christ

Ephesians 5:1 *Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;*

1John 2:6 *He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked.*

John 13:15 *For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.*

1Peter 2:21 *For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:*

We should realize that we learn by principle when it is demonstrated live to us (**1 Peter 1:15**). This is the only real way to learn and put moral principles in practice. This is God's way; there is no other. God has designed things so that we are strongly impressed morally when we see the correct example of a godly life, and when we hear moral principles taught through the example of this person's life along with the authority of God's Word backing up the example of his life. This is the only way we "learn" morally. Precept must be demonstrated by visible, personal example before our eyes. This is the only way a person is morally changed. Jesus said "*Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart*" (**Mat 11:29**). We see the process in action in somebody's life, and we learn from seeing the binding of the principle of God in a specific individual. This is the reason that a false prophet is so dangerous, because he shows an unbiblical principle in his life, and he drags people to hell through the example of his life.

Marking or Imitating the Man of God

1Corinthians 11:1 *Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.*

Contrary to what many today are promoting, we should examine the lives and the fruit of those who pretend to be men of God, and those who minister to us spiritually. They should be imitators of Christ so that the rest should follow their personal example.

Philippians 4:9 *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.*

God has structured things such that those that direct the work of God should be providing personal examples, being and teaching the example of the standards of God. If they do not

do this personally, then why should we believe what they say when they tell us anything else?

1Corinthians 4:15-16 *For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. 16 Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.*

The leader of a church is a pastor. What distinguishes a pastor of sheep, and a cowboy (keeper of cows and bulls) is that the pastor leads by going before, and a cowboy pushes from behind with a whip. Sheep follow from love. A cowboy pushes from fear and pain, scaring the cows. Even today cowboys use electric shock sticks to move cows.

A good pastor says, "*Look at me, see my life, and follow what I am doing as I follow Christ.*" Many pretend to have the authority and power of a pastor, but they will not pay the price personally to be an example. Don't follow this type of person.

It is very important to see that you should subject yourself to a man of God that with confidence you can say, "*I want to be morally like this man.*" If he doesn't conduct his life morally like Christ, find another church, and dump the fraud.

Philippians 3:17-19 *Brethren, be followers together of me. and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. 18 (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: 19 Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)*

There are many ministers today that pretend to be good examples that are not. They say one thing and personally do another. When you copy their life, they deeds, their bad habits, they will rebuke you that you are wrong. But they themselves set a non-Christlike example. Paul calls these "enemies of the cross". Isn't it logical that you should get away from these types of people? Shouldn't you find a living example of Christ to lead you spiritually?

The Example of the Man of God

Is it correct to mark a Man of God as your spiritual example?

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Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation.

Hebrews 13:7

It is a grave error in Christianity of our day to gloss over as unimportant the idea that each minister should be an example of a man of God 1 Tim 3 and Titus 1, which marks the requirements of a man of God. We should insist that our ministers be good examples of what is a man of God, a copy of Christ, and if they aren't, we should remove them, or leave that church.