

We should Imitate Jesus

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

1John 2:6 He that saith he abideth in him ought himself **also so to walk, even as he walked.** God positioned Jesus as our moral example so that all humanity would imitate him. If Jesus is our moral pattern, then **we should have our minds inclined towards this end, What would God want me to do?** Jesus is presented to us in many aspects, and in this tract we will look at this principle.

2Cor 3:18 But we all, **with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory,** even as by the Spirit of the Lord. Our sanctification develops through our meditation on the person and character of "the Lord Jesus Christ". And this focus on Him, the object of our love as much as our faith, he becomes the pattern after which we develop our moral character. **As Jesus is, so should we strive to be.**

Jesus sought the Will of the Father

Luke 22:42 Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless **not my will, but thine, be done.**

Our first observation of the moral character of Jesus is his **dedication and passion** towards the will of God the Father. It is singular in his life. Being very God, He, by his own will, had the same will as the Father. But **as our moral example,** the Bible indicates very clearly that Jesus **gave up his own will in order to totally be submissive to the desires of God the Father.** This is the picture the Bible presents to us. We are to imitate this. Instead of hashing through logical arguments of what if and what benefits me most, we see this "blind" submission as our example Jesus did. We don't need to understand it, just obey it. God put this element in the character of Jesus for us to imitate in our lives, just as He is.

John 4:34 Jesus saith unto them, **My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.**

What is fundamentally different between Jesus and the rest of humanity is that every man has their own faulty will, desires, and their own goals, seeking their own life's priorities. **Few people understand how to live for somebody else's pleasure, and not for themselves.** Parenthood comes close to giving a taste of this if the person is a good Christian parent.

Jesus used his life for the Work of God

The example of Jesus is that **he had no other plan or goal** while he was in the earth, only to do what pleased the Father. Every believer should surrender his/her own self because of Christ.

Matt 16:24 ...If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

You cannot be of use to the Lord while you are pursuing your own plans as the most important thing of your life, or even set them on an equal priority with God's plans. When a person really takes God seriously, **they will totally abandon their life in order to accomplish whatever thing God wants of you,** then, and only then will you be of use to God, and He will direct you into service and ministry for God. Without this condition of surrender and obedience, there is no possibility of being truly called of God or useful to Him.

Jesus evangelized in a great way

Luke 4:18 The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath **anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor;** ... **Luke 4:43** And he said unto them, **I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also: for therefore am I sent.** **Luke 8:1** And it came to pass afterward, that **he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God: and the twelve were with him,**

Even though the ministry of Jesus was different from other ministries in many respects, there is a great central foundation. **Jesus concentrated his life in getting the gospel out.** It was his passion, it was what he constantly sought to accomplish even among other events, priorities, and important issues. "Ministry" for Jesus took many forms, but the souls of men was always foremost in his mind and

practice. Although God may call us to work a secular job, our passion to help sinful man should be foremost in our thoughts, speech, and actions.

Jesus went where he could be a witness to the masses and always spoke to whatever person he met about their need for salvation. Jesus sought for ways to get the gospel and the Savior into every conversation. Nobody was so totally "lost" for Jesus, that he gave up on them. He spoke to Samaritans (which were rejected people groups), to prostitutes, to the wicked of this world, to the crooks (publicans), and he even cast demons out of lost people that tried to block their receiving Christ as Savior. The most important point here is that **the gospel was his "breath of life."**

Jesus was exemplary

Matt 5:16 **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.**

For Jesus, his personal testimony, his way of thinking, his way of living his life was all tied up in a single purpose, his Gospel.

We can simply explain it this way, **Jesus used his life for God,** he used the events and circumstances in such a way that he allowed God to drive them towards the fulfillment of the Father's will. Instead of seeking personal enjoyment of his own life or seeking self pleasure or greatness, he humbled himself to become a tool in the hand of God for the accomplishment of the great will of God in doing the work of God. Many people claim to know that their destiny and path is heaven, but they live as if there is nothing after death. Their preparation and work seem to be to heap up earthly treasures, and nothing for heaven. They live so well in this earth, that if an angel from heaven was to come for them, they would have thousands of earthly chains to keep them back here.

Jesus had compassion

Mark 6:34 And Jesus, when he came out, saw much people, and was moved with compassion toward them, because they were as sheep not having a shepherd: and he began to teach them many things.

Jesus' compassion in his character is very important, because he always had sympathy, mercy, affection and sorrow toward the multitudes, besides a great desire to help them. Jesus lived these profound emotions, because the people had great problems, and they needed salvation and remedy in their own lives. They were hungry, and he gave them bread (something tangible).

The compassion, holiness, and sympathy of Jesus towards the people, was because **he walked in the path of God to help them in their needs.**

Jesus was meek

2Cor 10:1 Now I Paul myself beseech you **by the meekness and gentleness of Christ...**

Even though Jesus is God, and he will return one day in power and boldness to judge, his manner was a soft and tender one except for those who were overly rebellious and arrogant. Likewise as we must respect his force and authority, we need to imitate his loving affection with those who are hurting.

Jesus was Zealous

John 2:17 And his disciples remembered that it was written, **The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.**

"Zeal" speaks of heat with what intensifies something. **Rev 3:16** So then **because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.** Jesus lived his life with a single purpose, to glorify the Father by doing his will. This excludes idols and other priorities that take over your life. **He was consumed in the Father's will.** Jesus didn't waver between following the Father and his own desires and pleasures.

Jesus was Holy and Just

Acts 3:14 But ye denied the **Holy One and the Just,** and desired a murderer to be granted unto you; The character of Jesus is the perfect example of holiness and righteousness. **Righteousness is what one should be doing, the opposite of sin. Even though Jesus was meek, his passion harmonized with his zeal, and he showed a**

great desire that God's righteousness be done. This is what set him apart as holy, different from the world.

Jesus Loved

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, **who loved me, and gave himself for me.**

There is no greater manifestation of love, than in that a person gives up his life in sacrifice so that another person can live. Love is "my sacrifice for your benefit". When the sacrifice is to the extreme, the love is also. The love of Jesus for us is the reason Jesus came to earth, and did what he did. This explains everything.

We really don't serve Christ, neither do we help our Christian brethren, nor even the world, because we have no idea of true love. If we were to have this love, it would show in our great evangelistic efforts, in the zeal of getting people into God's will, and in our prayers.

Jesus used Prayer

Luke 6:12 And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.

Heb 5:7 Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

What distinguishes Jesus' prayer is surprising now that we put it into perspective with what we have already laid out. The intensity, the commitment, the sympathy, and the spiritual power is what marked Jesus as a powerful person, and different from all other religious figures. We are to emulate that great moral character of Jesus in our own lives. We are to be "little Christs" or Christians.



Jesus is our Moral Pattern

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

The Bible is very clear, that the character of God is very different from what we commonly see in humanity (He is holy, He is separate), and it seeks to convert our character from sin (things outside His will) to a character which is like God. Salvation is a matter contending with our sin (which is a form of living which displeases God), and **this salvation is a process whereby God totally changes those sinful elements, and imposes a different moral character.**

The Bible speaks much of this "other moral character" (it is righteousness) that opposes this sinful conduct. Many groups see this as "perfection" or "holiness". But it is only a part of salvation, which should occur after we have understood salvation, and after we have grown a little towards maturity.