

“BRETHREN, JOIN IN FOLLOWING MY EXAMPLE”

By Keith Greer

“Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. 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: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame--who set their mind on earthly things. For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 3:17-20) Paul said that Christians are to follow Christ and imitate the examples set by faithful men. (1 Corinthians 11:1) This means we are to follow:

In Christ’s Steps. *“For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously.” (1 Peter 2:21-23)* Does this mean we live perfectly? Absolutely not! But each of us should strive to mold our character to be more like the Master’s. Jesus told us how to do this. *“Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.’” (Matthew 16:24)*

The Elders’ Faith. *“Nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.” (1 Peter 5:3)* *“Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.” (Hebrews 13:7)* Godly elders set good examples for Christians to follow and after which they can pattern their lives. We ought not to place these men on pedestals, but we can learn to follow the godly traits they exhibit as they watch for the welfare of our souls.

That Which Is Good. *“See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.” (1 Thessalonians 5:15)* *“Test all things; hold fast what is good. Abstain from every form of evil.” (1 Thessalonians 5:21,22)* We determine what is good. We must consider good only those things about which the Scriptures give us divine directions. If God failed to call a thing good, we cannot label it as good, no matter what we think it may accomplish.

After Righteousness. *“Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” (2 Timothy 2:22)* *“But you, O man of God, flee these things and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, gentleness.” (1 Timothy 6:11)* God’s word is the only place we can go to find righteousness. (2 Timothy 3:16,17) He determines whether or not a particular action can be called righteous. Only when we pattern our lives after His teaching can we correctly say we are pursuing righteousness.

That Which Makes for Peace. *“Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.” (Romans 14:19)* *“Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord.” (Hebrews 12:14)* Only the things that originated in God’s mind can help us find the road to true peace. If we do not have peace, we will not see God!

Same Mind Same Judgment. *“Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.” {Philippians 3:16}* God’s rules and

instructions are the best way to pattern one's life if we want to make it a happy one and prepare us for an eternal home after life ends here on earth. Whose pattern are you following?

The Faith of the Apostle Paul. *“The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.” (Philippians 4:9)* We can rightly follow Paul's example because he followed the Lord! Paul walked by faith—not sight. We can mirror such an example. Are you a faithful follower? ***