

## Truth and Conduct Exemplified

### Introduction

- A. The key to success in any area of life may be summarized in a simple formula: "Practice the Truth".
- B. It is particularly important for the Christian to understand the meaning of this Biblical principle. To the degree that we practice the truth, in faith and love, to that **degree** we will have the experience of the grace of God.
- C. The Bible presents truth to us in many ways. One way, which is often overlooked, is that of example. We all realize the significance of a good or a bad example.

#### I. Examples are Presented to Us as Warnings.

- A. The sins of Israel are written out as a warning example, I Cor. 10:6-11.

Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things as they also lusted. . . Idolaters (Ex. 32:1-8) . . . Fornication (Num. 14:1-9) . . . Tempting Christ (Num. 21:4-6) . . . Murmuring (Num. 14:1-37) . . . Now all these things happened unto them for examples and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Observation: Here we not only have the truth presented to us, we have a series of events described which indicates what happens in the life of a person or nation when the truth is not obeyed. We must accept this warning.

- B. Failure to enter into God's rest is presented as a warning example, Heb. 4:10,11.

For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from Us. Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief (disobedience).

Observation: The word "rest" in these verses refers to the realization of the will of God with all the accompanying benefits. The nation of Israel failed to enter the Land of Canaan because of the disobedience of unbelief. This is held up as a serious warning for all believers.

- C. Examples of immorality are given to us as a warning, II Peter 2:6; Jude 7.

And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an example unto those that after should live ungodly. . . Even as Sodom and Gomorrha and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.

Observation: One cannot read these verses and then say God approves of immorality and homosexuality. Such sins are condemned in the boldest manner possible in the Bible. The person who continues in such sins is not only ignoring the statements of the Scripture they are also rejecting the examples of history.

## II. Church Leaders are to be Examples

Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example. (Phil 3:17) Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us. (II Thess. 3:9) 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. (I Timothy 4:12) See also Titus 2:7 and I Peter 5:3.

Observation: One of the ways whereby God has determined the truth is to be proclaimed is by the believer's example. This is particularly true of the leaders in the church. They, of all people, should know and practice the truth and manifest the fruit of the daily successful life. It also appears that one bad example can undo a dozen good examples.

## III. A Church can be a Good Example, I Thessalonians 1:7.

So that ye were examples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.

Observation: In this chapter the Apostle Paul described why they were such good examples and the effect their testimony had on others. It is always a question as to what is more effective - the Word preached or the Word lived.

## IV. Examples Presented to Us as Exhortations.

### A. We are exhorted to lovingly serve one another, John 13:14,15.

If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.

Observation: Humble service, done in love, is of great importance to God. When we fail here, we not only place ourselves outside the will of God, we deprive ourselves of profound blessing and reward.

### B. We are exhorted to patiently suffer as the prophets, James 5:10.

Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the Name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience.

Observation: Our murmuring, complaining, coveting and failures in praise and thanksgiving indicates that we need this exhortation. More often than not we are murmuring, not because of suffering, but because we cannot have our own way.

### C. We are exhorted to endure suffering as exemplified in Jesus Christ, I Peter 2:20,21.

For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps.

Observation: We cannot claim better treatment from the world or sinners than that received by our Master! His life is an example to us.

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