

Mimic Me!

Ponder: Whose example are you following? Is your example one that others should follow?

Scripture: “Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern” (Philippians 3:17, NKJV).

Some things I did while growing up make me ashamed. I used to drive my sister to distraction by mimicking her. If she sat down, I’d sit down. If she got up, I’d get up. If she said something, I’d parrot her words back to her, usually in a sarcastic, sing-song voice. How childish!

The apostle Paul actually commanded the Christians in Philippi to mimic him. “Join in following my example” is literally “be mimickers together of me.” He wasn’t telling them to be childish, but to imitate his faith and practice. He and others such as Timothy, Silas, and Epaphroditus were a pattern for the Philippians to follow in their walk with Christ.

We can still use these men as a pattern ourselves to the degree that we know of their faith and manner of life. In addition, most of us can look to current examples of strong, faithful Christians who serve as a pattern for us.

Unfortunately, there are plenty of bad examples available too, so we must watch out for them. The Philippians had to deal with the Judaizing legalists on one hand (3:2), and lawless libertines on the other (3:18, 19). Navigating between the two extremes was no small task. Having Paul and others like him to follow as a pattern certainly must have helped immensely!

We, too, must sail the strait between legalism and lawlessness. First and foremost, follow the pattern of Scripture! But take advantage of the good example of dedicated, knowledgeable Christians whom you know.

In addition, ask yourself, “What kind of example am I setting for others to follow?” When people walk in your steps (and they surely will), are they going by a pattern that will make them more like Jesus?