**God’s Workmen: Lights In The Darkness**

Prepared By Nathan L Morrison for Sunday January 26th, 2020

Text: I Timothy 4:12

# Intro

1. We are creatures of imitation.
2. The old saying, “Like father like son” is normally true.
3. Important then who we choose to imitate!
	1. I Cor. 11:1; Eph. 5:1: Must imitate God!
4. Our examples are like our reputations – not to be taken lightly.
5. I Tim. 4:12: Timothy was charged with being “an example of those who believe.”
6. A bad example can ruin a reputation, along with one’s credibility for teaching.
	1. *I Cor. 9:24-27:* Paul was concerned about losing credibility – so he exercised self-control in all that he did.
	2. *I Thess. 5:22:* “Abstain from every form of evil.” (KJV: “all appearance of evil”)
	3. We need to lead by example – live by what we teach and preach!
7. As God’s workmen (approved by God – II Tim. 2:15), we are to be the lights in the darkness!

# Faith at Work in Example

* 1. The power of example is very great – Faith of saints seen at work in one’s example!

Example is one of the greatest powers known to man.

It is a power that all possess, a force that all must handle.

* 1. The Bible recognizes the great power of example for both good and evil:
		+ 1. **Good examples in Scripture:**
1. Godliness: Noah *(Gen. 6-7)* – Led his whole family into the ark.
2. Faith: Abraham *(Heb. 11:8-10)* – A godly example to his descendants.
3. Endurance: Moses *(Heb. 11:23-27)* – Chose God over his upbringing.
4. Patience: Job *(Job 1-2)* – Blessed God despite personal loss.
5. Leadership: Joshua *(Josh. 24:31)* – Israel served God all his days.
6. Courage: Daniel *(Dan. 6)* – Worshipped God under penalty of death.
	* + 1. **Bad examples in Scripture:**
7. Unbelief: The ten spies *(Num. 13-14) –* They influenced a whole nation by their lack of faith and doubt.
8. Rebellion: Korah *(Num. 16) –* Because of Korah’s evil influence, God destroyed Korah, Dathan, Abiram, their families, 250 men, and 14,700 others.
9. Hypocrisy: The Pharisees *(Mt. 6:2-8; 23:1-3) –* They were hypocrites – did not lead by example!
10. *Mt. 23:3:* “All that they tell you, do and observe, but do not do according to their deeds; for they say things and do not do them.”
11. Scriptures give us many examples that illustrate the great principles of truth by which we are to live letting us know that we can live godly
	1. Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:6: One of the main reasons we possess the Old Testament is so that we can learn from the examples it contains.
	2. I Pet. 2:21-25: Jesus set before us the perfect example for us to follow.
12. The apostle Paul understood the importance of example:
	* + 1. I Cor. 11:1; I Thess. 2:10-12: He was aware of his own example.
			2. Phil. 1:27; 2:14-16; Tit. 2:7-8: He commanded others to set a proper example.
			3. I Cor. 9:26-27: Paul knew his example could also discredit his preaching.
13. Our example is important: Our faith is seen at work in our example – others see us!

# Saints Are to Be Lights in the Darkness

* 1. Mt. 5:14-16: Christians are to be the “light of the world.” Lights are lit to be seen.
		+ 1. Those who claim to be Christians are influencing people in one way or another.
			2. As Christians, we must realize the world is judging Christianity by us.
			3. Thomas Jefferson, writing to John Adams said, “I always judge a man’s religion by his life…, for it is from our lives and not our words, that our religion must be read.”
	2. Phil. 2:14-16: The saints at Philippi were obeying the command of Jesus! *(Mt. 5:16)*
		1. The example we set is important, not only for our souls but for those souls around us who observe what we say and do – Let your light shine!
	3. I Tim. 4:12: Reveals those areas in which Christians are to be examples (lights in the darkness):
		+ 1. **Word (Speech):** Be careful what you say and how you say it.
			2. **Manner of life (Conduct):** Never forget that people are observing your life.
			3. **Love:** For God, Christ, and your fellow man.
			4. **Faith:** Is it weak or strong? Is it little or great?
			5. **Purity:** Can people see in you a desire to remain unspotted from the world or do they see a longing to engage in worldly things?
	4. Saints are to be examples of light to the world of darkness!

# Power in Example

* 1. The power of example can have negative effects:
		+ 1. Peter – Gal. 2:11-13: Hypocrisy – associating with the Gentiles only till the Jews came along.
				1. His influence caused several Jews and even Barnabas to join in his sin!
	2. The power of example can have positive effects:
		+ 1. Tabitha (Dorcas) – Acts 9:36-42: Her example of kindness & love reached those in her community in a profound way.
				1. Upon her sickness and dying, they were so grieved they sent for Peter to raise her from the dead.
				2. They showed him the things she had made for them as an example of her kindness.
				3. Her influence touched them & moved Peter to pray and for God to answer in raising her from the dead!
	3. We often don’t know who will be affected by what we do!
	4. There is power in our examples and we must be sure it is for the positive!

# Conclusion

1. What is your example worth?
	1. “A picture is worth a thousand words.”
	2. Our example is a picture into our life. We may never know who exactly is observing and the impact we have on that individual!
		1. Will they see a wolf in sheep’s clothing? (Matthew 7:15)
		2. Will they see a child of God clothed with the character of Jesus? (Col. 3:12-14)
2. The working of our faith should be seen by a godly example in all that we say and do!
	1. Col. 3:17: If all that we do is in accordance with Christ’s authority, we will set a good, godly example to those about us; friends, family, brothers & sisters in Christ.
	2. *I Cor. 11:1; Eph. 5:1; Rom. 8:14-17:* “Like father, like son” should also apply in our spiritual lives: Christ exemplified the Father, we as adopted sons need to also exemplify the Father!
	3. I Thess. 1:6-8: The Thessalonian saints were examples to “all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia,” and from their faith the gospel was preached everywhere they went!
3. As workmen of God, our light must shine in the darkness around us!
4. Have you been the example you should be?
5. If not a Christian, need to be to claim the reward reserved for the faithful. Repent and be baptized and perhaps your example will save someone you love!
6. If a Christian, think about your example, and the effect it has on others. If you haven’t been exemplifying Christ in your life, repent and perhaps your example will save another.
7. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!