

Life Link

Video Illustration:
Slide Background:

Title: Following the Examples of Jesus

Big Idea: Text Illustration: I recently posted on Social Media web page about what it means to be a Christian. If I could identify what I believe as the number one problem in Christianity today it would be the lack of understanding of living the Christian life.

In a recipient survey over 90% of those surveyed said they were a Christian. Many today don't understand what it really means to be a follower of Jesus. As a disciple of Christ it calls us to be a follower of the teachings of the Jesus. A life committed to Jesus starts with a commitment to Him, ("Who so ever calls on the name of the Lord, shall be saved." Rom. 10:13)

But it seems as if many believe that the Christian walk and life begins and ends there. But in reality it is only the beginning

Text Illustration: A Call to Discipleship [taken from "Jesus in Blue Jeans" by Laurie Beth Jones.]

["In this country, it is not only improper—it is technically illegal to be served with a dirty plate. Salad bars post signs indicating that the health department requires that each time you step up to the buffet, you must do so with a clean plate.

Yet every day many of us step up to God's banquet with a dirty plate, and then wonder why we aren't served. Jesus, too, insists on a clean plate for everyone.

Jesus could not have motivated his team if he had not given each of them a clean plate. Former prostitute? No problem! You will become my example of precious, holy love. Former coward? No problem! You will become a legendary leader. Former skeptic? No problem! You, Paul, will go on to declare the Gospel in new and exciting ways. No more lingering germs or stains. Clean plate. Clean plate. Clean plate. The danger in having the grunge of resentment on your plate is the poison that can come from it. Are there some unwashed portions---even on the underside? Are we harboring grunge-filled resentments or clumps of baked-on anger as we continually ask for second helpings? Have we forgiven ourselves?

It finally occurred to me that the only one hurt by the grunge on my plate is the person who eats from my plate...myself. If I hold on to it, thinking that the other person is being punished, thinking that I'm being noble, thinking that I have the right too, thinking that I cannot live without, I am wrong.

That's why Jesus said we had to get rid of it—not only so the object of our anger could be set free, but more importantly, so we can.

Every one of the people Jesus worked with—those who walked forward—was given a new,

bright, robe of righteousness to wear and very clean feet. No left over sins, unwashed resentment, or half-baked disappointments, lingered on the plates that Jesus handed out.

Jesus said, "If I do not wash you, you have no part in me." (John 13:8). Jesus gives cleans plates.]

Jesus' life exemplified many things and from our text He states that if we are to love and follow Him we too are to be like Him. He stated in John 13:15 that He has given us an example and that example was for us to follow and live. In our text He speaks of an "Example Given", "Example Lived" and a "Example Rewarded". He reminds us that if the Master lives an "Exemplary" life we should no we must live an "Exemplary Live".

{Read Text and Prayer}

Read Sermon Text: **John 13:14-17** If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. NKJV

1. Example Given (vs. 14-15)

John 13:14-15 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. NKJV

- a. Jesus is preparing his disciples for coming of the time when He will not be there in the flesh to guide and teach them . He and the twelve are in the Upper Room and are preparing to celebrate the most solemn and Holy celebrations in Jewish faith, the Passover. A day to commemorate the Children of Israel from the bondage of Egypt. This event though terrible as it may seem was what it took to deliver God's people from the bondage of Egypt.
- b. Yet it was also a preparation for the final hours of the time when Jesus was to be slain as a Passover Lamb for the sins of the world. As the custom of that time slaves were to wash the feet of the guest as they arrived for the feast.
- c. Jesus assumes the role of slave as He washes the feet of the 12 disciples. He states " your Lord and Teacher" (vs.14). This example of a servant or slave is not just for the 12 disciples but also for all disciples of Christ. The 12 disciples represent all who follow Jesus as Savior and Lord. He points out the 12 should wash the feet each other's feet. Though this may be a literal action it carries with it also a spiritual application of the humility required to become a servant to others.

Acts 20:35 I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" NKJV

Romans 12:10 Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; NKJV

Romans 12:16 Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. NKJV

Romans 15:1-3 We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. 3 For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me." NKJV

1 Corinthians 8:13 Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble. NKJV

1 Corinthians 9:19-22 For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; 20 and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law; 21 to those who are without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those who are without law; 22 to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. NKJV

2 Corinthians 10:1 Now I, Paul, myself am pleading with you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ — who in presence am lowly among you, but being absent am bold toward you. NKJV

Galatians 5:13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. NKJV

Galatians 6:1-2 Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. NKJV

Philippians 2:2-5 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, NKJV

1 Peter 4:1 Therefore, since Christ suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same mind, for he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, NKJV

1 Peter 5:5 Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for

"God resists the proud,
But gives grace to the humble." NKJV

2. Example Lived (vs. 15)

John 13:15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.
NKJV

- a.** Jesus gives us an example and we are to take this example and live it. The Greek text defines this word as an exhibit for imitation. While some may contend that only applies to the disciples in some ways they are correct. It applies to all disciples of Jesus and in the waning hours of His earthly ministry He felt it a necessity to give us this example for our lives. To many Christians today use their cloak of Christianity as a license to live, say, and do whatever they wish and hide their non-exemplary lives under the cloak of Christianity. Peter said in 2 Pet 2:16 that our freedom in Christ is not to be used to do wrong but it is to be used to the glory of God.

1 Peter 2:16-17 as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. 17 Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king.
NKJV

Eph 6:6 not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, NKJV

Col 3:24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. NKJV

NT:5262

<START GREEK>u(po/deigma

<END GREEK> hupodeigma (hoop-od'-igue-mah); from NT:5263; an exhibit for imitation or warning (figuratively, specimen, adumbration):

KJV - en- ex-) ample, pattern. (Biblesoft's New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Copyright © 1994, 2003, 2006 Biblesoft, Inc. and International Bible Translators, Inc.)

Text Illustration: WHY DO YOU DO THAT?

I'm thinking of a small-town church in upstate New York. They'd had a rector in that church for over thirty-five years. He was loved by the church and the community. After he retired, he was replaced by a young priest. It was his first church; he had a great desire to do well. He had been at the church several weeks when he began to perceive that the people were upset at him. He was troubled.

Eventually he called aside one of the lay leaders of the church and said, "I don't know what's wrong, but I have a feeling that there's something wrong."

The man said, "Well, Father, that's true. I hate to say it, but it's the way you do the Communion service."

"The way I do the Communion service? What do you mean?"

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"Oh yes, I did. Always before I administered the chalice to the people, I touched the radiator to discharge the static electricity so I wouldn't shock them."

For over thirty-five years, the untutored people of his congregation had thought that was a part of the holy tradition.

I have to tell you that church has now gained the name, "The Church of the Holy Radiator."

That's a ludicrous example, but often it's nothing more profound than that.

Traditions get started, and people endure traditions for a long time.

They mix it up with practical obedience to the living God.

SOURCE: [Communion Misunderstood, Citation: Terry Fullam, "Worship: What We're Doing, and Why," Preaching Today, Tape No. 102

3. Example Rewarded (vs. 17)

John 13:17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. NKJV

- a. Jesus makes two statements (1) know these things and (2) doing them. Knowing how to live a Christian life is very important. Many who identify with Christ know what they should do but they are not willing to humble themselves as Jesus did. It is hard to imagine the Creator of the Universe, King of Kings, the Lord of Lords Jesus Christ on His knees washing the feet of sinners.

- b.** While it is important to know because without knowing it is impossible to live the example of Jesus. Now we have the example left to us by Jesus and there is a blessing promised to those who live like Jesus.

Text Illustration:

Gene A. Getz, in his book, *The Measure of a Church*, asks the question, "What is the measure of maturity in the church?" And he lists what others believe are the measure of maturity:

1. An active church (involving people in meetings and programs)
2. A giving church (supporting the church and efforts financially)
3. A growing church (new people coming and staying)
4. A soul-winning church (leading unbelievers to faith and baptism)
5. A smooth-running church (efficient and orderly)
6. A missionary-minded church (supports missionaries around the world)
7. A Spirit-filled church (enthusiastic, emotional)
8. A big church (large attendance, with many programs)

God used Paul to give us a different measure for maturity of the church. Paul says that the church is mature when it functions like one body, where Jesus Christ is the Head.

When Mackenzie was a newborn, we could see her eyes wanting to reach for a toy, but her hands and arms were not yet able to cooperate. As she became more mature, her body parts began to do what her "head" wanted her to do. Likewise, when we mature as the church, we individually obey what our "head," Jesus Christ, wants us to do.

The Church is not obedient to a set of rules. We are obedient to the Person of Jesus Christ through a trusting relationship and to the truths He has spoken. And our obedience is not just in our head, but in the way we live and serve one another.