

“BE AN EXAMPLE”

1 Timothy 4:12;

“...be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith in purity.”

Whether you realize it or not, you are an example to non-believers as to what Christianity is all about. As children grow up, they learn from their parents. They learn from you what it means to be a father or mother as they prepare for adulthood. Your life is an open bible to those around you. People in general have problems, there looking for someone who claims to have answers to their problems. You are a Christian. Christians claim that Christ is the answer to their problems.

Many people will never go to church or read a bible, but they will read your life like a book, your life is an open bible. People are watching you, – co-workers, service station attendant - store clerk - your friends - your family - sons and daughters; they all have problems, they are asking: “does Christianity really have an answer?”

The answer to that question will be what they have observed in you. Are people being drawn to Christ by your life or are they walking away in discussion saying, ***“I thought Christianity had an answer but I guess I was wrong, It sure doesn’t work for him.”***

In 1 Timothy 4:12; the apostle Paul mentions six areas that, as Christian, we should be striving to be positive examples. Six areas of our life that can have a direct effect upon those around us.

#1. BE AN EXAMPLE IN WORDS

Matthew 12:34; “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”

Those around you pick up very quickly what is really important in your life. If your life is saturated with God’s presence, - His grace and mercy and love - it will be manifested in everything that you say and do.

They know you are going through difficult time and, rather than grumbling and complaining, you say ***“God is so good in my life, He is going to see me through this difficult time and I am just going to praise Him in advance for what He is going to do in my life.”*** It is real and genuine because you have this treasure on the inside.

Matthew 6:21; “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” What is it that you love the most, that you treasure the most? - Sports, fishing, hunting, grandchildren, etc. You have no problem talking about those things! The same thing becomes true when Christ becomes your treasure, you then have no problem talking about Him.

#2. BE AN EXAMPLE IN CONVERSATION

Our manner of life - How we conduct ourselves - How we react to negative things especially in public and in our home:

In public. --Do we fly off the handle at a drop of a verb, or when things go wrong? When they see us react this way, they are not impressed with how great we say God is..... Or even more important, how we conduct ourselves:

In our home.

Some feel that the home is our castle and we can let down our guard. ***“It doesn’t really matter the only ones who sees and hears is our family. No big deal”*** ..It is a BIG DEAL. Our every action will be a teaching tool to our children.

#3. BE AN EXAMPLE OF LOVE.

The unsaved will come to understand God’s Love only as they see it demonstrated in your life. We say, ***“well, I love my friends and family.”*** That is all well and good. But the greatest example of true Agapa love is HOW WE TREAT OUR ENEMIES!

When we condemn, criticize, ridicule, lash back, while at the same time we claim to have the love of God in our heart; then the world gets a totally distorted picture of God's love. Paul declared that while we were yet enemies, God demonstrated His love for us on the cross...

It is to our enemies - those who treat us wrong - that we need to SHOW UNCONDITIONAL LOVE. This is the Love that God showed to us when we were not very lovely. The world needs to see this kind of love - God's love.. The only way they are going to see it is through you.

#4. BE AN EXAMPLE IN SPIRIT

What kind of spirit is the world witnessing in your life? Is it a SPIRIT OF HEAVINESS? Do people see in you the spirit of fear, suspicion, murmuring, despairing, - going around with a defeated attitude? Then you try to witness to these people, - "You need to be saved, brother, you need to get what I got." They would probably respond by saying, "I don't want what you got man, you got the plague!"

Are you demonstrating the spirit of heaviness or, are you demonstrating the SPIRIT OF JOY of love confidence and trust. Be an example of the spirit of joy because people are watching you as to what kind of spirit you possess.

#5. BE AN EXAMPLE IN FAITH

How much faith do you possess? How, long does it take to wear out your faith? How much does it take to destroy your confidence in God? How much does it take till you are convinced that God has forgotten you and doesn't care about you anymore, and you go back into the slough of despondency and despair?

You went out and you tried to start your car this morning. The battery is dead. *"I don't think God loves me anymore! God doesn't care about me. I'm not going to serve Him anymore."* It's amazing how little it take to get us off track, and quit trusting in God.

Is your life demonstrating that the only time you can trust God is when everything is going Okay? It is very easy to trust God when everything is going your way. But your greatest opportunity to teach the world what it means to have "faith in God" is in times of adversity. When everything is going bad in your life but you are still able to say, "Thank you Lord for this terrible adversity that you have allow to come into my life. Even thou I don't understand what is going on, I am going to trust you to work everything out for my God and your glory.

#6. "BE AN EXAMPLE IN PURITY"

What does "purity" mean? It means, committing yourself to live a that is pleasing to God. If your life is reeked with sin, your testimony will be worthless. The secret of being an example in purity is to pay attention to and be diligent in reading the Word. Through the reading of the scriptures you become strong, and not by any other way.

One of our problems in Christianity today is looking for strength in areas outside the Word of God. You can never be strong, you can never begin to live a life of purity apart from the Word of God. John said in

1 John 2:14; "I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one."

Your life is strengthened through the Word of God. You will not find strength apart from the Word, for it is the food that feeds the spiritual man. Spiritual anemia or weakness can always be traced back to the lack of knowledge and study of God's Word. Too many people are trying to Grow on experience. You can't grow on experience. You can only grow on the Word of God. It provides the solid, substantial growth that you need.

And you will find that your life will begin to reflect an example **in Words, in Conversation, in Love, in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity.**