

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

We Can't Overcome Your Bad Example

By Greg Gwin

As God's people in this local community we have the duty to *“let (our) light so shine before men, that they may see (our) good works, and glorify (our) Father which is in heaven”* (Matt. 5:16). The awesomeness of this responsibility is realized when we recognize that the thousands of lost folks all around us will likely go to hell if we are not effective in getting God's message out to them.

YOU play an important role in this process of evangelizing our immediate community. Day by day you are in contact with others: at school, at work, in the neighborhood, etc. Your conduct, your speech, how you dress, what you do, where you go, are all being observed by those around you. If your example is good, they will be favorably impressed with God's way, and they may choose to pursue it themselves. Many people have been converted because of Christians who displayed good examples in their presence.

On the other hand, if your manner of life is not what it ought to be, the Lord's cause **WILL** suffer. If others can see that you are not serious about your service to Him, then why would they give even a moment's thought to such things? In this matter, actions clearly speak louder than words. No matter how hard other Christians may be working to teach and influence people, they will not be able to overcome the bad example you have set before your acquaintances and peers. All the best Bible classes, sermons, bulletins, meetings, advertisements, and programs, will not offset the damage you have done by your negative influence.

And, we should remind you that you will be held accountable by God for the harm you do by your flawed example. Jesus said: *“It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him, through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea...”* (Luke 17:1-2). Your good example is essential to the success of the gospel right here in our community. Think! – *Collegvue church of Christ Bulletin*, November 24, 2019. ■

A GREAT EVANGELISTIC TOOL

By Scott Smelser

I think it works better than radio, better than auto-dialers, better than showings of Jule Miller videos, better than mailing out a bulletin, better than Dial-a-Bible-Reading, better than debates, better than cable TV.

What is it? It's brethren not being conformed to the world.

If a church is made up of people who understand 184 current and past issues correctly, but their lives do not show superior conduct, servitude, and holiness, don't expect an auto dialer, computer, printer, broadcast antenna, or cable outlet to compensate for the failure.

When church members think like the world, dress like the world, talk like the world, and chase money and status symbols like the world, it is the world that is winning them, not the other way around.

When church members are selfish, egotistical, arrogant, and shallow, then they are not in a position to help the world to a higher plane.

If our families are splitting up, our children are dropping out, and our homes are little different from our neigh-

bors then our *“light”* gets rather difficult to notice.

But if people learn self-denial (Lk. 9:23), learn submission to God and care for our neighbor (Matt. 22), learn to be servants (Jn. 13), learn to be content (1 Tim. 6:8), learn to invest in family (Titus 2:5; Eph. 6:4; Prov. 22:6), and learn to clean out the inside of the cup, not just the outside (Matt. 23), then bright lights will shine.

“Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a people for God’s own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light...having your behavior seemly among the Gentiles; that...they may glorify God” (1 Pet. 2:9-12).

“Present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God...and be not fashioned according to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Rom. 12:1-2).

We are not called simply to know some things different from the world – we are called to rise above the world, and to *“be holy”* (1 Pet. 1:15). And when people become that kind of light in the world, they become great evangelistic tools in God’s service.

And it will far exceed the effect of debates, radio, TV, and mail outs. — *Selected* ■



Follow The Apostles’ Examples

By Joe R. Price

“Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1, NKJV)

In the Roman Catholic Church, an imprimatur is “a license granted by a bishop certifying the Church’s approval of a book to be published” (thefreedictionary.com). The word is more generally used to denote “a mark of approval or distinction” (Merriam-Webster.com). No such ecclesiastical certification is issued by the church of Christ in the New Testament. Today’s verse affirms our conduct must imitate the apostles of Christ to the extent they also imitate (mimic) Christ. Some scoff at binding apostolic approved examples today. “Where is your apostle badge?” is sarcastically asked when an appeal is made to apostolic examples to authorize practices. The apostles not only left us their inspired words, they also left us examples to follow. Jesus said, *“He who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me”* (Jn. 13:20). Their examples help us pattern our conduct after the will of Christ. By following their examples we are assured of the Lord’s favor (Phil. 3:17). How can one possibly think the Lord is pleased by refusing to follow the apostles’ examples (that imitate Christ)? *“The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you”* (Phil. 4:9). The “imprimatur” of heaven is the apostolic doctrine, taught by their words and their examples. We ought to follow their examples because they have heaven’s approval (2 Thess. 2:15; 3:4, 9). — *Sword Tips*, July 26, 2019. ■



Something Learned From Mules

By W. R. Jones

A mule can’t pull while he’s kicking, and when he is pulling he won’t be kicking. It is the same in the church. When saints have their feet in the sand pulling hard to do the will of God, there is no time for kicking, nit-picking and complaining. To the contrary, when we are given to kicking, gossip, and idleness we never move the gospel chariot forward. Also, when one has two or more mules hitched together they have to pull at the same time to move the load. This is also true in the Lord’s church. Pulling “together” accomplishes great things. — *Collegevue church of Christ Bulletin*, November 24, 2019. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Tommy Glendol McClure, Editor and Evangelist - 925-759-4357

Web Site: www.lodiCAchurchofchrist.com - Email: lodicachurchofchrist@gmail.com - Phone: 209-365-9250