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**Follow the Leader?**

***1 Thessalonians 1:5b-7***

Sometimes we can sound spiritual but be entirely unscriptural. For example, people will say things like:“You’re called to be like Jesus, not like other people.” Actually, we’re called to be like both (1 Corinthians 4:16; 11:1; Hebrews 6:12; 1 Thessalonians 2:14). While only following God, not others, sounds like a very spiritual thing to say, but it’s entirely unscriptural. God wants us to look to others as examples worth following, and he wants us to be examples worth following.

1. **What to look for in an example.**
2. **God wants consistent examples.**

The Thessalonians looked at Paul and his associates and saw that their lives proved they believed what they believed. While Paul was only at the city for a short time, his life before and after, as well as his time there, demonstrated that his life lined up with his teaching.

1. **Follow close examples.**

Paul and his followers were “among you,” that is, they brushed shoulders with and talked to the Thessalonians. Our primary examples should be people in our lives, not authors and pastors whose ministry helps us from afar.

1. **Follow conscientious examples.**

Paul, Timothy, and Titus lived the way they lived for the sake of the Thessalonians. They had in mind, in other words, that their actions, choices, and lifestyle was just as important as the words coming out of their mouths.

1. **Follow Christ-like examples (1 Corinthians 11:1).**

Godly examples look like Jesus Christ. No example is perfect, and so every example should be followed to the extent they follow Christ.

1. **Follow courageous examples.**

Paul endured much suffering, as did his associates. Good examples are those who have been willing to stand for Christ despite an enormous cost.

***What about fallen heroes?***

* Remember the great danger of the enemies we face and the severity of what is at stake (Acts 5:11).
* Realize the truth they stood for remains true, despite their failure.
* Know that everyone we look up to will make mistakes (Hebrews 11:31).
* Turn to the one who will never let you down (1 Corinthians 11:1).

1. **How to become a godly example.**
2. **Saturate yourself in Scripture.**
3. **Remain steadfast in suffering.**
4. **Submit to the Spirit.**

***God uses godly examples.***