

Highlighting Our Heritage

Week 11: Our Origin: Examples to Follow

Verse: Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace. — Psalm 37:37

Application: Learning from positive role models in the Gospel

Text: Joshua 24:14-18; 1 Kings 9:1-10; 1 Corinthians 11:1; 2 Corinthians 9:1-2; 1 Timothy 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:14-15; Hebrews 2:1-4; James 5:10-11

Historical context:

Testimonies have always been an integral part of Apostolic Faith services. In nearly every service, real life stories are given by people who have proved God's power to transform lives, give guidance, heal, and strengthen believers. The accounts of Gospel veterans in the faith provide those who follow after with precious examples.

Questions:

- What is the meaning of the word *mark* in Psalm 37:37? How can this be done?
- What character qualities in a person might we want to emulate?
- Name three Biblical characters and identify a positive attribute in their lives that you would like to develop in your own life.
- In 1 Corinthians 11:1, Paul told the Corinthians "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." In what ways did Paul followed Christ? How does Philippians 3:17 amplify this thought?
- Why are good examples important?
- In Hebrews 13:7, who are we instructed to follow? Why do you think this instruction is given?
- While it is important to identify godly examples and pattern after them, Jesus himself is our primary example Find a Scripture that instructs us regarding this.
- What are some hindrances that will come to sidetrack us from following a good spiritual example?
- While it is important for us to look to good spiritual examples, we must also strive to be good spiritual examples. In 1 Timothy 4:12, Paul admonished Timothy to be an example in six specific areas. What are those areas? Give an example of how we can be a good example in our day for each area.

Challenge: Think of three old-timers in the faith who exemplified a particular quality that you would like to develop in your own spiritual life. Then come up with at least action you can take this week that would exemplify that trait, and take that action.

Opener: Before class time, gather up various shoes. Explain that the shoes represent various types of walks with Christ.

DRESS SHOES - I have a nice, shiny faith on the outside, but I only bring it out on Sundays and special occasions.

WORN OUT SHOES - I've come a long ways, but I need some serious healing.

WORK SHOES - I'm working energetically for the Lord and following through on my responsibilities.

SANDALS - When the weather is good and the sun is shining, I'm out there walking with the best of them, but when things get stormy, I get discouraged and quit.

SLIPPERS – I bring comfort and warmth to those around me.

RUNNING SHOES - I feel like God is helping me to finish the race.

BOOTS – I am equipped to face whatever the storms of life might bring.

Ask your class: Which type of shoes would you like to be? Which type should you take as your example? Which of these shoes best represents your own walk with Christ?

Activity Ideas:

Read excerpts from Gospel Pioneer Volumes 1 and 2. Have your class identify what characteristics were evidenced in the people that we should pattern after.

“Name that testimony” game—read portions of testimonies and have class identify the person.

A testimony is built one day at a time. “Build” something with blocks, legos, bricks, etc. to illustrate this point.

This object lesson will take some preparation several days before your class session. Take a stalk of celery and split it up the center about half way up the stalk. Put one side in a glass of red-colored water and the other side in blue-colored water. After a few days the celery stalk will draw up the colored water and the celery will be tinted red or blue. Bring the celery to class and explain what you did to make it colored. Tell them that children are just like that stalk of celery. They take on the characteristics of those around them. If our behavior is colored with anger, yelling, sarcasm, and criticism, that is what children around us will learn to be like. If our lives are colored with patience, cooperation, soft-tones and laughter, children around us will reflect those behaviors. All of us are examples, whether or not we have small children in our families. Our friends will also be influenced. We not only want to follow good examples, but we also want to be good examples!