

# Imitating Good, Not Evil

*By John R. Gibson*

“Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good.” 3 John 1:11

Lord willing, this evening’s lesson will deal with some of the pressures and influences our young people face as they return to school. While we may hope to reduce them, we cannot eliminate all evil influences from our children’s lives, but what we can do is equip them with a good, working knowledge of God’s word. We can imitate Lois and Eunice and train them from the earliest years (2 Tim. 3:14-17), but to do so we must have the commitment to teaching described in Deut. 6:6-9.

“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.”

As you seek to teach your children the entirety of God’s inspired word, be sure they are taught the following stories of inspirational faith and courage, along with the cautionary accounts of failure and the dangers of an evil influence. I hope all parents will give thought to these examples and the importance of teaching them to their children and to make this a little more challenging I’m going to put the lessons in the form of a quiz.

1. What good king succumbed to the wicked influence of the leaders of Judah after his step-father died?
2. Name the young man who refused to eat the king’s food?
3. What two men exhorted the people of Israel to continue trusting the Lord even though their ten companions were overcome with fear?
4. Though criticized by his oldest brother and ridiculed by his opponent, this young man faced the adversary “in the name of the Lord” and declared that “the battle is the Lord’s.”
5. Gaius was told that he was not to imitate the evil of what man?
6. Name both the assailant and the “friend” who counseled the horrible sin against Tamar.
7. Who was credited with stirring up Ahab to do wickedness?
8. Though he later proved himself profitable, this young man turned back and was unwilling to complete the task he had begun with Paul and Barnabas.
9. Though his father was a wicked man, this man started a reform effort in Judah when he was only twenty years old.
10. Though his faith took some time to develop, this judge went to battle with only 300 men on his side.
11. Who listened to his friends and caused a division in the kingdom with his harshness?
12. Though forced to serve the king who had conquered their people, these young men refused to bow to the king’s golden image.
13. He disregarded the admonitions of Deut. 7:1-4 and foreign wives turned his heart from God.

14. He fled the house rather than commit adultery.
15. Left in charge of God's people, he bowed to the pressure and aided them in breaking their newly dedicated covenant with the Lord.
16. In a time when the Lord's prophets were being killed, this man hid 100 prophets from the queen.
17. He doesn't have a book named for him, but this man displayed great courage when he became the four hundred and first prophet to Ahab.
18. To a couple whose multiple marriages had made a mockery of Matt. 19:3-9 he spoke of "righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come."
19. Rather than call for the assistance of the armies of heaven He went to the cross for you and me.

Be sure that you and your children know these great stories of faith and failure, courage and cowardice.

"Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." 1 Cor. 15:58

"But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." Rev. 21:8

"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell....Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven." Matt. 10:28, 32-33

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