

# My Example

*By Ryne Gay*

Who are you that your example even matters? For whom are we to be an example? The example we set is so very important in our Christian walk, for it sets up our reputation, which as we know is very important. “A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, loving favor rather than silver and gold.” (Proverbs 22:1) You might think to yourself, my example doesn’t even matter for no one cares what I say or do. In that you would be wrong. We all have people who look to us, young and old. The Bible speaks about the older women teaching the younger women in (Titus 2). About not despising our youth but being an example to believers (young and old alike) in word (1 Timothy 4). About elders being an example to the flock (1 Peter 5). About being the light to the world (Matthew 5:14).

Our example is exceptionally vital for the spiritual growth of our children. They need to see that we put God first in all that we do. What a sad day it would be if we raised children who did not know God (Judges 2:10). It did not turn out so well for the Israelites.

As you can see, no matter what phase of life we are in as Christians and followers of Christ we are an example to someone somewhere. What kind of an example do we need to set?

In Matthew 5: 13-14 we are told that we are the salt of the earth and light of the world. This tells us that whatever it is we are to be different, to be set apart from everyone else around us. Salt preserves and flavors food and light gives us the ability to see what is around us. Both of these are beneficial so our example needs to be different from everyone else and it needs to be beneficial to everyone around us. Matthew 5:16 says, “Let your light so shine before men that they should see your good works and glorify your father in heaven.” The purpose of our example to those around is so that God will be glorified. Are you living in a way that will cause those around you to focus on God, glorify His name, say that you are different?

What can we do or change to set the type of example that we should? Matthew 5:3-10 gives us many traits to model ourselves after including being meek, merciful, and peacemakers to name a few. John 15:8-10 says that God will be glorified and we will be His disciples if we bear fruit (grow in spirit and truth, teach others, spread the word) and keep His commandments. John 13:36 says that if we have love for one another all will know we are his disciples. If people know we are his disciples they will be thinking about God, which could give us opportunity to teach them about God, and this can lead to them glorifying God. Colossians 3 also talks about putting on the new man and lists many traits that we should try to possess as we work to be a good example. There are many verses in the Bible that list characteristics and traits that we are supposed to try to possess. The most important thing though is living in a way that we can lead others to God.

Our example is so important for it is what builds our reputation whether good or bad. Our example can open doors for us to teach, it can also shut doors. It can hinder our relationships with family, friends, as well as brothers and sisters in Christ if not properly taken care of. Let us all make sure we are setting the best example we can for the sake of the church, for the sake of our children, and for ourselves.

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# Politics and Our Example

*By John R. Gibson*

In conjunction with Ryne's article about the importance of setting a good example, I want to make a special plea to all God's saints to recognize that the kingdom above is of far greater importance than any political allegiances or positions we may hold dear. If we allow ourselves to become publicly identified with polarizing positions on taxes, guns, climate change, immigration, etc. we run the risk of hurting our influence with others and closing doors to the gospel. While some political issues are clearly moral in nature, abortion being a good example, should Christians allow their views on tax rates, Medicaid, carbon emissions, etc. to alienate them from their neighbors? I'm not arguing that God's people can't ever express their opinions on issues facing our communities and nation, but I am strongly affirming that the commands to love my neighbor as myself and shine my light in this dark world are more important than tax rates and term limits.

I'm not asking anyone to forsake what they believe to be their civic duty, but those who are genuinely concerned for the welfare of this nation, should think back to what would have saved Sodom—ten righteous souls. We all have political preferences, but this country needs salt and light more than it needs good legislation. You and I can do far more for this country with righteous lives, fervent prayers, and loving evangelism than we can ever hope to accomplish with political posts and our presence at the polling place.

“Jesus answered, ‘My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.’

Pilate therefore said to Him, ‘Are You a king then?’

Jesus answered, ‘You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.’”

John 18:36-37