



Carefully Following Paul

2Timothy 3:10-11

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- “But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, 11 persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra-what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me.”
- “Preach the Gospel at all times. When necessary, use words.” (Francis of Assisi)

Paul's Message About Examples

- Spiritual faithfulness is not automatic, but is helped by recognizing and following godly, scriptural examples.
 - 1Cor. 11:1 - "Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ"
 - James 5:10 - "My brethren, take the prophets, who spoke in the name of the Lord, as an example of suffering and patience."

Paul's Message About Examples

- Spiritual faithfulness in the past is not an automatic guarantee of faithfulness in the future
 - 1Tim. 1:18-20 - “This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, 19 having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck, 20 of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.”

Paul's Message About Examples

- Spiritual faithfulness in the future demands a recognition and reproduction of godly, scriptural examples
 - Phil 3:16-18 - “Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. 17 Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. 18 For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ”

Paul's Message About Examples

- Learn how to discern a godly example
 - 2Tim. 3:14 - “But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them”

Paul's Message About Examples

- Learn the importance of being exposed to godly examples.
 - Phil. 2:29 - “Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem”
 - 2Thes. 3:7, 9 - “For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you... 9 not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us.”

Paul's Message About Examples

- Learn the vital need to imitate godly examples
 - Heb. 13:7 - “Remember those who rule over you, who have spoken the word of God to you, whose faith follow, considering the outcome of their conduct.”

Paul's Message About Examples

- Spiritual faithfulness depends on godly, scriptural teaching
- Paul put a premium on sound doctrine, a frequent theme in his letters to preachers
 - 1Tim. 1:3-5, 10; 3:3, 15; 4:6, 13, 16; 5:17; 6:1, 3, 20-21
 - 2Tim. 1:13; 2:2, 15; 4:3
 - Titus 1:9; 2:1, 10

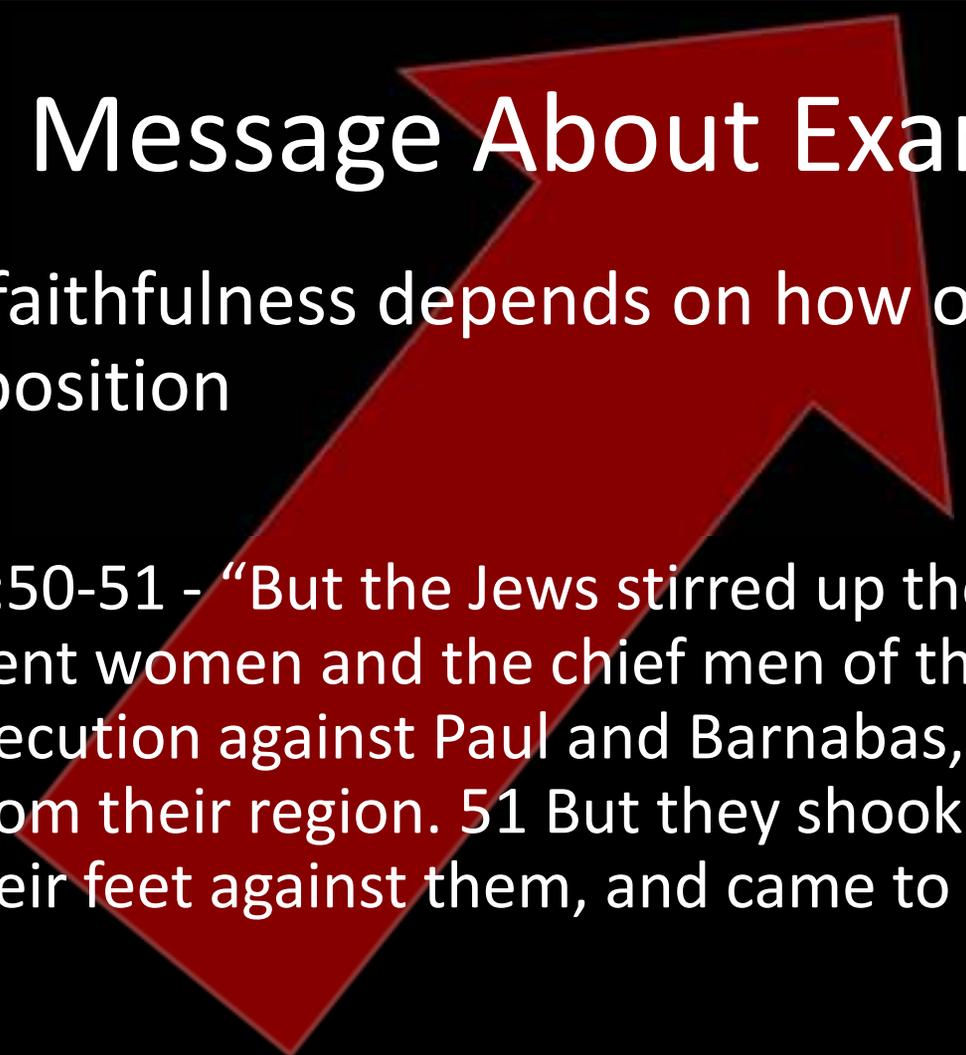
Paul's Message About Examples

- A godly teacher will use scripture to teach and direct others
 - 2Tim. 3:15 - “From childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus”

Paul's Message About Examples

- Spiritual faithfulness demands character.
 - “Conduct” or manner of life
 - “Purpose” or rationale for living
 - “Faith” or conviction for life
 - “Patience” or steadiness in life
 - “Love” or God’s nature in our lives
 - “Perseverance” or persistence throughout life

Paul's Message About Examples



- Spiritual faithfulness depends on how one reacts to overt opposition
- Paul
 - Acts 13:50-51 - “But the Jews stirred up the devout and prominent women and the chief men of the city, raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them from their region. 51 But they shook off the dust from their feet against them, and came to Iconium.”

Paul's Message About Examples

- Acts 14:5-6, 19-22 - "And when a violent attempt was made by both the Gentiles and Jews, with their rulers, to abuse and stone them, 6 they became aware of it and fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding region... 19 Then Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him to be dead. 20 However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with Barnabas to Derbe. 21 And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."

Paul's Message About Examples

- Jesus
 - 1Peter 2:19-23 - “For this is commendable, if because of conscience toward God one endures grief, suffering wrongfully. 20 For what credit is it if, when you are beaten for your faults, you take it patiently? But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. 21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: 22 Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth; 23 who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously”

Paul's Message About Examples

- 1Peter 4:12-14 - “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; 13 but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy. 14 If you are reproached for the name of Christ, blessed are you, for the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you. On their part He is blasphemed, but on your part He is glorified.”

Paul's Limits On Examples

- Just as important as what one teaches is how he lives
 - “‘What would Jesus do’ is a good thing but it would be better if we did not leave it so open and asked ‘What did Jesus Do?’” (Chuck Bridges)

Paul's Limits On Examples

- Rom. 2:17-24 - “Indeed you are called a Jew, and rest on the law, and make your boast in God, 18 and know His will, and approve the things that are excellent, being instructed out of the law, 19 and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, 20 an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. 21 You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal? 22 You who say, Do not commit adultery, do you commit adultery? You who abhor idols, do you rob temples? 23 You who make your boast in the law, do you dishonor God through breaking the law? 24 For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you, as it is written.”

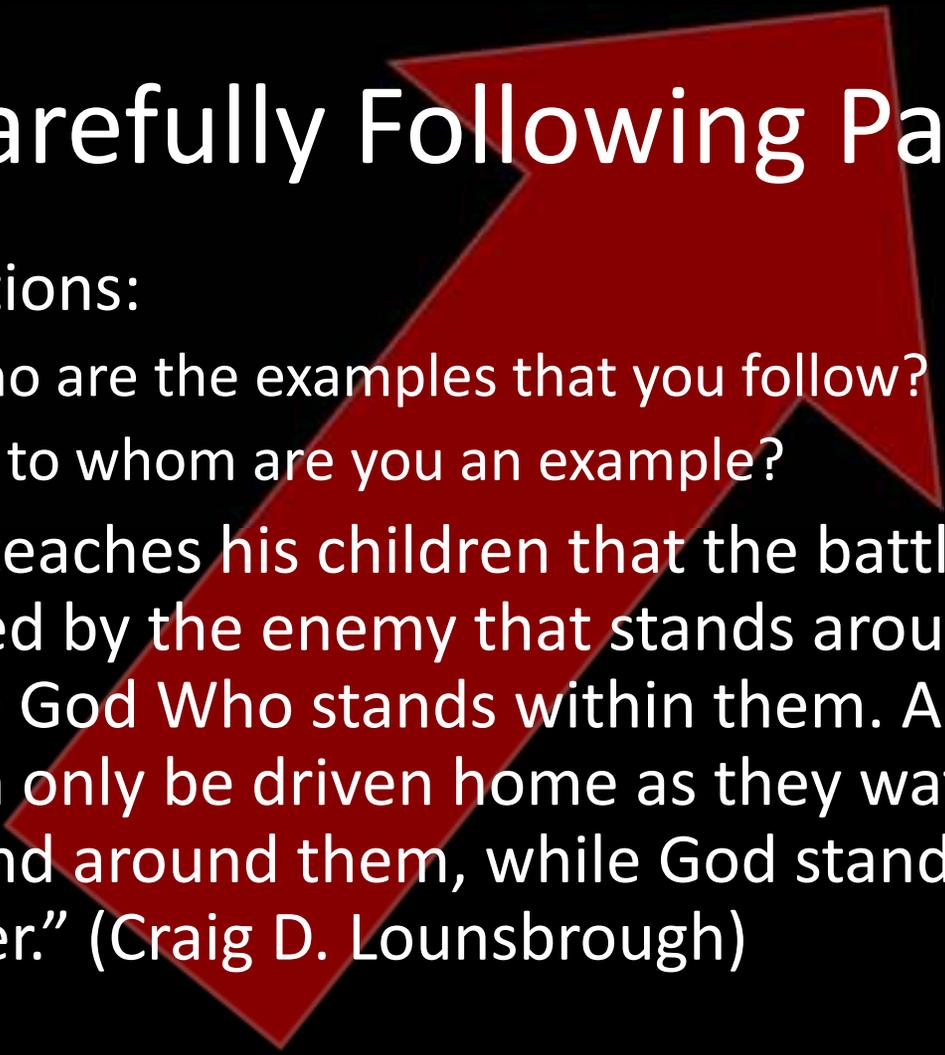
Paul's Limits On Examples

- Equally important as teaching truth to others is proving it to be the truth
 - John 8:31-32 - “Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. 32 And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”

Paul's Limits On Examples

- 1Thes. 2:3-4 - “For our exhortation did not come from error or uncleanness, nor was it in deceit. 4 But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but God who tests our hearts.”
- 2Tim. 3:16-17 - “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”
- 2Peter 1:21 - “For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

Carefully Following Paul



- Two questions:
 - First, who are the examples that you follow?
 - Second, to whom are you an example?
- “A father teaches his children that the battle is not determined by the enemy that stands around them, but by the God Who stands within them. And that lesson can only be driven home as they watch their father stand around them, while God stands within their father.” (Craig D. Lounsbrough)