

Mimics to Models to Megaphones

1 Thess. 1:5 b-10

NIV (outlining added)

"You know how we lived among you for your sake.
You became imitators of us and of the Lord;
in spite of severe suffering,
you welcomed the message
with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.

And so you became a model to all the believers
in Macedonia and Achaia.

The Lord's message rang out from you
not only in Macedonia and Achaia
--your faith in God has become known everywhere.

Therefore we do not need to say anything about it,
for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us.

They tell how you turned to God from idols
to serve the living and true God,
and to wait for his Son from heaven,
whom he raised from the dead --Jesus,
who rescues us from the coming wrath."

What great joy the believers in Thessalonica gave to "Paul and Company".
They praised God that these new believers had become imitators of the
Lord and of them, standing steadfast in the face of severe trials.
Their perseverance made them models (prototypes) for others to
follow! And, as if that was not a grand enough "praise report", the
gospel was sounding forth from them through out the region in an ongoing
way!

There is much we can learn from these brothers and sisters in
Thessalonica. We too should seek to glorify God by being mimics that grow
into models and become megaphones of the gospel. Use this study as a tool
in your growth.

BEING MIMICS

Imitating Jesus & Other Believers

"You know how we lived among you for your sake.
You became imitators of us and of the Lord." 1 Thess. 1:5b-6a

"Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did." 1 Jn. 2:6
"Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children
and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us." Eph. 5:1, 2a

We learn so much by imitation. Young Christians do well to pick healthy role models and imitate them, as they follow Christ (see 1 Corin. 11:1). This is "monkey see, monkey do" in its best sense. Who are you or did you imitate / mimic in your early days in Christ? How did / do some of your early examples in Christ influence your walk with the Lord (or still impact you)?

2 Thess.3:7 & 9 "For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. 9 We did this . in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow."

Phil. 3:17 & 4:9 "Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me--put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you."

1 Corin. 4:15 "Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. 16 Therefore I urge you to imitate me. 17 For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church."

BECOMING MODELS

Examples of Steadfastness in Suffering

"in spite of severe suffering,
you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit.
And so you became a model to all the believers
in Macedonia and Achaia." 1 Thess. 1:6b-7

Suffering proved these newborns' conversion and commitment and it made them examples for others to look to! What difficulties or sufferings are you going through that tempt you to give up? Who is or might be watching you to see how they should live and / or handle their trials?

What are you purposefully doing (or not doing) to intentionally set a good example, be a healthy role model for others?

Paul was not afraid to point back at how they had lived ("You know how I lived" - Acts 20:18). Are you? We are to live lives that are an example - intentionally incarnational like Christ. Paul advised Timothy: "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." (1 Tim. 4:12) How would you grade & improve the example you are in these areas:

Area Grade Ways to Improve
Speech

Life

Love

Faith

Purity

It is said that "imitation is the highest form of flattery." Does knowing others are watching and taking notes flatter or scare you?

BEING MEGAPHONES

Does The Gospel Reverberated From Us?

"The Lord's message rang out from you.

--your faith in God has become known everywhere.

.for they themselves report what kind of reception you gave us.

They tell how you turned to God from idols

to serve the living and true God,

and to wait for his Son from heaven.

--Jesus, who rescues us from the coming wrath." from vs. 8-10

Their "colors were clear"! Anyone who knew these former idolaters knew they had changed! They had people talking. They were now serving the

one true and living God, waiting confidently for Jesus to come back.

What are some of the changes that God made in your life that are obvious to those who knew you "before and after"? What are some of the idols you turned from?

The good news about Jesus was reverberating from them. How is the gospel going out from you / us? What are we / you known for?

We turned from serving idols to serve the living and true God - as compared to dead and false idols. How are you serving the Lord (in what ways and with what attitude or vigor)?

While worshipfully working for the Lord, they were also wisely waiting for Him. How should a life of hopeful anticipation of Jesus' return effect our lives: our attitudes and actions? How can knowing that Jesus has delivered us from the wrath to come effect your perspective towards the future? Does it?

>From Mimics to Models to Megaphones

From 1 Thess. 1:5-10

By Kerry S. Doyal

>From mimics to models to megaphones

Is a journey God wants us to make.

>From copying other believers

To role modeling as the gospel we take

As children learn by imitating

So too we all begin

Our walk of faith in Jesus

By copying copiers of Him

As we watch and learn and imitate

And walk as they have walked

The lessons that they teach us

Are more often caught than talked

Then as we grow we model

The life we've learned to live

We move from merely taking

To those who seek to give

Examples and role models

Is what we all become.

Do we model wisdom?

Or habits that are dumb?

Purposefully displaying

Traits that others should grow

Seeking to mark for them

A way that they can go

And then the final step is
To actively declare
The life and love God offers
To people everywhere

So those still young and starting
In their walk with God
Should carefully pick their patterns
Lest they turn out odd

Those with more advancement
In their life in God
Should seek to leave a path
That is safe for others to trod

And yet a good example
Is not enough to spread
The message of salvation
To those whose hope is dead

The message must ring out from
Believers far and wide
So others can serve Jesus
And not just foolish pride

Who are you imitating?
Who are you trying to lead?
To whom will you share Jesus
So they on Him feed

So let's pick our heroes carefully
Then for others blaze a trail
Then boldly spread the gospel
Make your life a "Show and Tell."

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