

Patterns

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[0:00] 1 Timothy 4 I'm talking about patterns.

I'm talking about patterns.! God gives us patterns or examples of how we are to live our lives. And 1 Timothy 4 verse 12 gives us such a pattern.

! 1 Timothy 4 verse 12 gives us such a pattern. 1 Timothy 4 verse 12 it says, Paul writes, Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

We're going to come back to that later. It's a strong call for us to be an example. For a pattern for others to follow.

Webster's dictionary calls a pattern a form or a model for imitating. It's a blueprint. We look back in the word of God and we see various patterns, various blueprints, various instructions.

[1:19] For example, we see Moses. The Lord gave Moses a pattern to build the tabernacle of how it was to be built. We read that in Hebrews 8 verse 5.

The Lord told Moses, See that thou make all things according to the pattern that I showed thee in the mount. God gave a pattern about the tabernacle, about this tent of meeting, about the instruments, the equipment, about how the people would worship.

And there was significance to this tabernacle, to the truth of it, the meaning behind all the items, all the things that made up the tabernacle. Likewise, in 1 Chronicles 28 verse 11 to 19, we read how David gave to Solomon the pattern that the Lord had given to David.

About the temple, of its construction, of its various furnishings, all of which again had a very important spiritual meaning. Now that's something we might explore in a message later one day about all the various meanings behind all the various items of the tabernacle, of the temple.

It was important that the pattern was followed. In Noah's time too, in Genesis 6 verse 22, it says that Noah was instructed on the construction of the ark, of the pattern that the Lord gave.

[2:52] And it says in Genesis 6 verse 22, thus did Noah, according to all that God commanded him, so did he. He followed the pattern, he followed the instruction, the directions of God about how the ark was to be made.

And the ark again was of very special significance because the ark represented Christ. Christ, in the time of judgment of the world, it was the safe place, it was the shelter, it was the safety.

And likewise too, Christ is our ark. He is the one we can flee to, to have safety from judgment, from wrath. His saving work is pictured in the ark.

So again, a pattern, a very critical and important. And just so, there's patterns for us that are human beings. There's patterns for us in the lives of people, men and women, through the pages of scripture.

There's patterns that we can follow. And the pattern or model that we adopt to follow for our life is vital, it's essential, it's critical that we follow the right model.

[4:02] We can follow a right model or a wrong model. We need to follow the pattern or the model that God has given for us, men and women, who act as patterns for our lives of how to live.

For example, James spoke in James 5 verse 10. He admonishes the believers. He says, Take my brethren, the prophets who have spoken in the name of the Lord for an example of suffering, affliction and of patience.

An example of suffering, affliction and of patience. So, when we face such things, brothers and sisters, who should we look to for an example of how to live?

The prophets of old, the ancients of old. The ones in the scriptures that we can see the accounts of their lives and how they stood fast. Paul, the apostle himself, is a pattern.

We know Paul is especially important to the church of God. A worthy example for us to follow. We see of his life in 1 Timothy 1 verse 15.

[5:10] And I know I was reflecting just on Wednesday night as we were studying the letters of Paul. How it stands out how Paul is such a dramatic example of what God can do with a human being.

He is a man who is totally contrary to the church of God. Threatening and hurting the believers. Destroying the church of his day. Standing steadfast against it.

And then God gets his attention. He's transformed. He's converted dramatically. And what a change. What a dramatic encounter for Paul. And that God should choose Paul, of all people, to be such an important figure for us as the church of God today.

And we read of Paul in 1 Timothy 1 verse 15. Through it says, The chief of sinners was the one. Our Lord chose to bring forth his gospel. A pattern for them who should hereafter believe.

[6:52] Paul. And Paul says likewise in Philippians 3 verse 17. He says that we are to follow him and those who walk like him.

Elsewhere it says, Be followers of me as I follow Christ. Be imitators of me. In Philippians 3 verse 17 it says, Brethren, be followers together of me and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an example.

An example for the believers. Paul was an example. He says, Follow me. He says, Follow those who walk like me. We can learn much from Paul, can't we?

What a life he lived. What a testimony. His life was filled with many challenges and tests. Much suffering and affliction. And God chosen of all people in all of his hate of Christ and the Christ followers to be that strong testimony.

What God can do in the life of a human being. What a testimony. What an example his life can be. How do we measure up to this pattern? The pattern of Paul. A template, if you like.

[8:01] What a Christ. He's the ultimate model. If you like. The template. If you could think of a perfect template. Now this is a very poor substitute. But a template as it were.

I know when I was at school, we used to, in metal work, you had a template. Remember that? Boys and girls. When you were back in school. And some of you ladies, you might have played around with some patterns to make dresses.

You know, in the old fashioned days, before we used to get everything from China. We used to cut out things, didn't we? You'd lay something on a piece of cloth and you'd get those scissors out and you'd start cutting away around the pattern.

So you could make that dress, ladies. Or some of you men might like to make dresses too. But, you know, you might have made something in metal work or woodwork. You had a pattern.

You had a template that you laid on something and you used the bandsaw or whatever it was to make that production. Likewise, Christ is, if you like, that template. That template, that pattern for us.

[9:05] And who is our Lord? What is he? The ultimate servant. The ultimate model. We see him in John 13. Washing the disciples' feet. Washing even the feet of Judas.

His betrayer. And what does he say in John 13? For I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you.

You should do as I have done. He was the ultimate servant. We can learn from Christ our Lord as the ultimate living example and pattern of how we are to walk and to please God.

Many of these men and women through history, we hear of Esther, for example, as a lady. That we can learn the character of the person, of the humility, of the integrity of these men and women.

1 Peter 2. Peter writes, For this is thankworthy if a man, for conscience towards God, endured grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it if when ye are buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently?

[10:06] But if ye, when ye do well and suffer for it, ye take it patiently. This is acceptable with God. For even here unto where ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example.

Leaving us an example. That ye should follow his steps. What kind of example? It goes on. Who did no sin. Neither was guile found in his mouth.

There wasn't a lack of truth in his mouth. Whatever his words were, were true. There was no lies there. There was no guile there. Who when he was reviled, reviled not again. When he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously.

What of you, brother, when you're reviled? When someone speaks ill of you? When someone says something against you? Do you fight fire with fire?

We can make that mistake, can't we? Instead, let's follow the template. Follow the template. The pattern of Christ. So that we can come to that fullness of the stature, of the measure of Christ.

[11:10] He should be our pattern. We're constantly exhorted through the word to follow Christ. To follow his example. To be a follower of the Lord, of the godly way.

It goes against the grain sometimes, doesn't it? Let's be honest. It goes against the grain to be like Christ. It goes against the human inclination. Against the flesh. Against that real me.

As it were. Sometimes that we've got to die daily to self. And keep that fire. Against self. Against pride.

Against seeking after our own way. It's in all of us. 1 Thessalonians 1.6 Through it says, And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost.

So that you were examples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia. Paul says, 1 Thessalonians 1.6 You're followers of us and of the Lord.

[12:15] You're examples to others. You're examples. How? Having received the word in affliction, in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost. Could it be that when the refiner's fire of much affliction comes, it's the Lord giving us more of the Holy Spirit's comfort and blessing.

Could it be when you're going through that fire, that God is doing a work by His Spirit within your life. Making you more like Christ. One of the best examples we can find is in Titus 2.6-8.

You might like to turn there. One of the best things we can do is to be an example. Titus 2.6-8.

Paul's addressing young men. He says, Young men likewise exhort to be sober-minded in all things, showing thyself a pattern of good works.

There's that word again. A pattern of good works. In doctrine, showing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity. Doctrine's important.

[13:24] Sound speech, that thou can't be condemned. That he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you. So there's doctrine, there's sound speech, there's how we believe, there's how we behave.

It's hand in hand, it's the pattern, it's the pattern that we're exhorted to. Young men, be sober-minded. Be a pattern of good works. In sincerity, in integrity, in uncorruptness, in that quality of your living.

In that quality of your speaking. In that quality of your doctrine, of your teaching. We need to be faithful to the biblical pattern. That's what we earnestly, I pray, want to be on.

Trust that it's your heart's desire to, to be like Christ, to be more Christ-like, to be more like that biblical pattern that he wants us to have. Elders likewise are exhorted on the same line in 1 Peter 5, verse 3, neither being as lords over God's heritage, but being examples to the flock.

Now that could apply, I think, to all of us older men, in some ways. People are looking to us. People are looking to us for the example of our own life, the example of our attitude, the example of our nature, the example of how we conduct ourselves.

[14:43] And every Christian should aspire to aim for being that right model, for being more like the template, as it were, that is Christ, our Saviour.

On the other hand, there is the wrong model. The wrong model. We see that in the example of the unfaithful people in the wilderness, in 1 Corinthians 10, through 1 through 11.

The unfaithful people in the wilderness wanderings, they're an example too, but an example not of right living, but of wrong living. We read that there in 1 Corinthians 10, from 1 through it says, Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptised unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea, and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink, for they drank

of the spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.

He's talking of the wilderness wanderings of the promised people, of God's beloved people, as they wandered through the wilderness times. They were fed with manna, with quail, they were watered through the rock, and it was a picture of Christ there, the spiritual rock.

But it goes on in verse 5, But with many of them, God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples. These things were our examples.

[16:19] They're examples, they're a pattern. He writes, To the extent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as some of them.

As it is written, the people sat down to eat, and drink, and rose up to play. You know, when they came down, when Moses came down from the mountain, they were rising up and playing. They had a big rock band, and everything, all the bells and whistles, and the golden calf, and they were dancing and jiving, and having a great time. But they were idolaters.

Eating and drinking, rising up to play. And God was displeased with them. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day 23,000.

Immorality is something, we need to take note of that, and seek to live according to God's will. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

[17:23] Neither murmuring, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Murmuring. Evil speaking. Now, all these things happen, I'm saying, for examples.

They happen for examples, and they're written for our admonition, for our warning, for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the world are come. We can learn from the example of these, in 1 Corinthians 10, how not to live, not to lust after evil things, not to commit sexual immorality, not to chase after idols, not to test God's patience, not to murmur.

The account of their lives, is a very loud example. It's a very strong example, for you, for me.

People are watching, how you live, how you talk, how you conduct yourself.

Don't be a stumbling block. You are a model. You are on display. On display to the younger ones about us. And you know, I've noticed that, the older I get, there's more people younger than me around.

I don't know if you ever noticed that. But, there's more people younger than me, it seems, more and more every day. And, little ones, they're just multiplying. And, the, the greyer I get, the more I notice, there's more and more people younger than me.

[18:45] And you know what? They're watching. They are watching you, older people. So, you know, we've all got to wake up to that. We've all got to consider, am I being a model, that's a good thing, for them to be watching.

And you know, as fathers, it's a pretty tough call too. Those little ears are listening, to what the dad says. They're watching what the dad does, or the mum. And we need to watch, how we're living.

Are we models, that are right or wrong? And back to the text, that we started with. 1 Timothy 4, verse 12. 1 Timothy 4, verse 12. What kind of pattern, are we displaying, to the world?

How do we respond, to situations, to life in general? Are we living up to the pattern? If it could be, that we could have, a template, as it were. And we could get some, a pair of scissors, and you know, start with that raw material, that is our life, and start, start to just do some of this, you know, I'm not meant to be flippant, about this, but, if it could be, that we could, we could do some of this sort of stuff, to our lives.

We could look at Christ, more and more, day by day. And we could, go through, going through, the pattern, that is Christ. Looking at Christ, and who he is, and what he's all about.

[20:08] And we see that here, in 1 Timothy 4 verse 12, let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example, of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

Six dimensions, if you like. Timothy here, I'm told, although he's addressed as a youth, he was probably about 38 to 40 years old, someone reckoned.

I don't know, how they worked that out, but, someone, probably wiser than me, worked that out. So, some of you might think, you're not out, you're out of the youthful stage, but you may not be that far

off, still being a youth.

So, there you go, you're not, you're not as old as you thought you were. So, Timothy was maybe only, about 40 years old, he was addressed by Paul, there's a pattern for you here, Timothy, a pattern, an example, of what you should aspire to be, of how you should aspire to live, your life. How do you measure up to that pattern, that is Christ, the Christ-like nature, that we should aspire to have. He sets out the basic parameters, of the life to live, and he leaves it up to us, to fill in the details.

[21:22] You know, I think sometimes, when Moses was told, about the tabernacle, there were certain measurements, there were certain items, but there was men, of cunning art, there were certain craftsmen, that were called upon, to make those things.

They weren't given the detail, of some of those items, of furniture, within the tabernacle. They were just given, the basic instructions, of the items, that were required. It was left up to, the humans, to fill in the detail.

I think likewise, with the temple, as well. We fill in the detail. I think sometimes, we get a picture of Christ, and of what he is about, of Christian living, and it's up to each one of us, to fill in the detail, as it were.

Living Christ, in your life, might be different, how he lives out, in another's life. But the ultimate model, is Christ.

It's Christ likeness. How, does our word, measure up? We go through, these six dimensions, if you like. How does our word, measure up, to the pattern? The word, that we speak.

[22:28] Does it measure up? Do I speak, with integrity? Can my, words be counted on? When I say something, will my yes, be yes, and my no, be no?

Or some people think, did he really mean that? Is he really talking, fair dinkum? Is he, is he really talking, turkey to me? Is that really, the honest truth, that he's telling to me?

Are you slow to speak? Or do just words, fall out of your mouth, before you, engage the brain? I know I have that problem, sometimes. Now Julie will say, I'm into that.

Now can people, trust your word? What you say, it's your speech course. Are there words, that come out of your mouth, that you wouldn't utter, in the presence of, of some, and yet, you will in the presence of others, or when no one's watching?

Course words, falling out of your mouth, when you are reviled, do you revile again? Do you stick up for yourself, and, you know, make a fuss, when there's an argument?

[23:31] Or will you be, I know I was encouraging, a brother of late, you know, he was, as a lamb, before, her shearers was done. He didn't defend himself, he didn't, launch a counter attack, when he was attacked, and, and reviled, did he, our saviour?

Shouldn't we be like that, in our words? What about, what's coming out of our mouth? Is it bitter waters, or sweet? The Bible says, it should be one or the other.

Let's take account, of our words. What about our conversation, or our lifestyle? How we conduct ourselves? Your conduct, your behaviour, is it conduct becoming, of a Christian?

Do our lives line up, with the pattern, of Christ? Is your attitude sweet, or is it so, often selfish, and vain? Are you above reproach, before the world, before those, outside of the Christian circle?

Do you keep short accounts, with God, and with men, when you offend someone, or when they're offended, with you? Do you seek to reconcile? Do you seek to sort it out? Or do you let it fester, and get more smelly, and putrid, and vile?

[24:44] Deal with it brother, deal with it sister. Let your conversation, measure up, to the fullness, of the stature, of Christ. Your conversation, your giving, your loyalty, your kindness, it's all about, your conduct isn't it?

Your conversation, those basic parameters, we've seen the word, we've seen conversation, what of your charity, your charity, your love? Would you lay down, your life for the brethren?

Would you lay down, your life for another? Have you got love, like Christ had? How deep is your love? How do you measure it? Your brotherly love? We're brothers and sisters, we might not all, entirely see eye to eye.

That's about the differences, God allows. That's about, that kind of, individual, difference, that, he gives to us, as a church. Do you mend quarrels, and broken relationships?

Is there a bond, of love, of charity? Fourthly, spirit, an example in spirit. How does your spirit, measure up? Is there a meekness, in your spirit?

[25:49] A gentleness, an easy to be, entreatedness, a humility? Do you conduct yourself, with that spirit, that is forgiving? Or do you bear grudges, and have you got, big chips on your shoulder?

You know, and you're, walking around like this, they're getting heavier, and heavier. Have you got, that kind of spirit, that just want to, hang on to those, little hurts? You know, you keep them in your pocket, and you get them out, every so often.

Now look, oh so and so hurt me, and oh ten years ago, so and so did this to me, and fifteen years ago, someone borrowed some money, they never paid it back. You know, we can be like that, can't we?

We can have that kind of spirit, that holds on to things. Or have you got, a cheerful spirit? Have you got, a glad heart? Do you act, in accordance, with the Holy Spirit, when the pressure, is applied? What happens, when you get into hot water? There's, all the bad stuff, come out. How do you display, the spirit, of your life?

[26:55] Is it in the works, of the flesh? Is the spirit, of Christ evident, in your life? Friends, we can all, consider, make that assessment. How do we measure up, to the pattern?

What about your faith? Christ is our example, of faith. Powerful faith. Our Lord prayed. How much more, should we?

Faith. Pray. Christ is our example. And lastly, number six, purity. Be an example, in purity. It speaks, of separation. It speaks, of separation, of purity, of heart.

The word speaks, of a pure heart. It speaks, of a pure mind. What's what you, saturate that sponge, that's in your head with? You know, sometimes we've got to, almost, you know, unzip it, and squeeze it out, every so often.

What's in that sponge, that is filling our head? What are we letting it, saturate, and, and be filled with? Let it be purity, of heart, of soul, of mind.

[27:58] The Lord wants us, to be a people, pure. Building according, to the pattern. And he's shaping us, he's shaping us, day by day. He's getting out, as it were, the, the, the, the scissors, of the Holy Spirit.

And he's, I trust that, he's forming Christ, in you. That, that somehow, eventually, a pattern will emerge. A pattern will emerge.

Imagine if we had, a church, where, all copied Christ. He was our template, if you like. That Christ, was our template, so much, that in every one, of our lives, one by one, there would be this, wonderful, picture of Christ, his body.

The template, who is Christ. That person, who is Christ, in every one of us. Not that we're going to be, clones of one another. There's different shapes, and sizes, and colours, and backgrounds. Different gifts, and callings, and qualities, and abilities.

But they're Christlikeness. There's Christlikeness there. There's a Christlike character, as we're growing up, into the stature, of the fullness, of the measure, of Christ.

[29:10] He, is our template. He, is our template. And brothers and sisters, let's be challenged to think, how can I have, that kind, of, pattern, in all things, showing thysself, a pattern, of good works?

In doctrine, showing uncorruptness, gravity, and sincerity. Sound speaks, that cannot, be condemned. Let no man, despise thy youth, but be thou, an example, of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

That we all might, aspire, to that pattern, that is Christ our Lord. That we might all, aspire, to be more like him. Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we, ask you Lord, to, make us more, like Christ.

Help us to see, in Christ, everything that we can be, everything we should aspire, to be. That others, who watch our lives, will see, Christ in us. That they'll see, less, of us, and more, of you.

That as we decrease, you will increase. Lord, that, that example, that we set, will not be, a wrong example, but a right example, an example, that others, should aspire to follow.

