

“Tomorrow’s Champions”

(Luke 14:1-6)

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Worth Imitating...pt.1
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I. Introduction

A. Visiting our kids in California

1. Michigan kids...and California kids
2. Annie and Josh
 - a. Deploying with Marines to Afghanistan
3. Our son John
 - a. Different than me in many ways
 1. Much more patient...and taller
 - b. But so much like me in so many other ways
 1. His morning coffee...to how he plays golf
4. Where and when did he pick up all of those mannerisms?
 - a. My dad returning extra change
 - b. John’s integrity
5. It’s like my dad lives on in my son
6. Brief comment
 - a. Jennifer
 - b. Carolyn speaking....Sanctity of Life Sunday

B. Letter to Chuck Swindol

1. From a new Christian, age 27

2. *"I've also heard you say that one becomes like those with whom he spends his time. I'm surrounded by mediocre people. The more I mature in the Lord, the fewer people I find worth imitating. I'm not so mature, though, that God is the only model...you are a model for me. I want to know...are you like my other "models?" Do you rip your wife apart in front of other married people? Do you talk big but turn wimpy when it's time for action? Are you worth imitating?"*

C. Are you worth imitating?

1. Not so much what you say, but how you live
 - a. The ordinary things...on ordinary days
 - b. Your kids are watching
2. Teaching by example
 - a. Thomas Fuller, an old Puritan

"Teaching is like tapping nails in the wood...Example is like hammering them deep"

- b. *"Children learn from observation...not argumentation"*

1. ...and they are observing you every day

D. The number one rule in parenting?

The number one rule in parenting is to "set a genuine example that is worth imitating"

1. Paul to the church in Corinth (I Corinthians 11:1, KNJV)

(1) Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ

E. Our passion for the kids of Chapel Pointe

1. Preparing them to impact their world for Jesus Christ
2. Preparing the parents in our church
3. A five-part series *"Worth Imitating"*
 - a. Next week, *"Walking with Destiny"*

F. Quick Review

1. Jesus moving toward Jerusalem and the cross
 - a. Preaching as he goes....large crowds
2. In chapter 14 he gives a model “worth imitating”
3. The first 6 verses....What not to imitate

II. Text...Luke 14:1-6

A. The Sabbath Meal (v.1)

(1) One Sabbath, when Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully watched.

1. A “prominent Pharisee”
 - a. Leader of the synagogue”
2. Gathering of the elite
 - a. Pharisees and experts in the law
3. They loved to have long dinners on the Sabbath
4. Why was Jesus there?
 - a. Likely for “entrapment”
 - b. *“he was being carefully watched”*
 1. “to watch with suspicion”

The Sabbath was the high point of their week in terms of law keeping and therefore it was the potential high point of their week for law breaking. They developed an endless array of regulations making efforts to comply so exhausting that the Sabbath became anything but a day of rest.

5. The bottom line...
 - a. They wanted Jesus to violate the Sabbath
 - b. To prove that He was not from God

B. The Suffering Man (v. 2)

(2) There in front of him was a man suffering from dropsy.

1. Dropsy
 - a. *“hoo dro pik os”*
 - b. Water retention
 - c. Not a disease, rather symptom of a disease
 - d. Could include bloating, kidney or liver failure, congestive heart failure
2. Why was the man there?
 - a. Felt like a set up
3. Jesus knew what they were up to

C. The Silent Response (vs. 3-4)

(3) Jesus asked the Pharisees and experts in the law, “Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not? (4) But they remained silent. So taking hold of the man, he healed him and sent him away.

1. ***“But they remained silent”***
 - a. They smelled a trap
2. Jesus then took the initiative
 - a. ***“taking hold of”***
 1. *“ep i lam ban om ahee”*
 2. Seized him
 3. Wrapped his arms around the sick and bloated man
 - b. And healed him
4. And then Jesus sent him away
 - a. ***“You can go now”***
 - b. Go tell your wife the good news!

5. The Bible records seven times when Jesus healed on the Sabbath

D. The Silly Rules (vs. 5-6)

(5) Then he asked them, “If one of you has a son or an ox that falls into a well on the Sabbath day, will you not immediately pull him out?” (6) And they had nothing to say.

1. Addressed this issue in a recent sermon
2. “And they had nothing to say”
 - a. *It’s easier to make rules than to make a decision*
 - b. And these guys knew how to make rules
3. Jesus was about to clean up the mess they had made
4. His toughest condemnation was directed at them
 - a. Why was that...and what does it mean to us?
 - b. Why did God lead me to preach “Luke?”
 - c. Why did God bring me to this area?
5. Email from young guy that walked away from his church
8. The hurting generations of this area
9. Churches that were proficient at making rules
 - a. But failed to live like Jesus lived and taught
10. Recent reports on our “Apathetic” kids
 - a. Not “religious...rather spiritual”
 - b. How they define “spiritual”
 - c. Next Sunday

III. The Pharisees

A. The seven types of Pharisees

1. The Shoulder Pharisees.

They wore their good deeds on their shoulders and performed them to be seen by others.

2. The Wait-a-Little Pharisees

They could always find a good excuse for putting off a good deed until tomorrow

3. The Bruised or Bleeding Pharisees

No Jewish Rabbi could be seen talking to any woman on the street, not even his wife or mother or sister. But certain of the Pharisees went further. They would not even look at a woman on the street; they even shut their eyes to avoid seeing a woman; they, therefore, knocked into walls and houses and bruised themselves; and then exhibited their bruises as special badges of extraordinary piety.

4. The Hump-Backed Pharisees.

They walked bent over in a false and cringing humility

5. The Ever-Reckoning Pharisees

They were always reckoning up their good deeds and, as it were, striking a balance sheet of profit and loss with God

6. The Timid Pharisees

They went about in constant fear of the wrath of God. They were not helped but haunted by their religion.

7. The God Loving Pharisees

A very small group that imitated the heart of God and lived in faith and charity

B. How did so many get it wrong?

1. They were moral.
2. They were extremely religious
3. They were separated from sinners
 - a. "Pharisee" means "to be separated"
4. They opposed the "compromisers" called Sadducees

- a. The liberals who ran the temple
 - b. Who denied the supernatural
5. They did a lot of good things
- a. Strong doctrine, scriptural authority
 - b. Prayed
 - c. Fasting and charitable giving
 - d. Called themselves the “Guardians of the Faith”
6. They started strong between the Old and New Testaments
- a. It was a “Back to the Bible” movement.
 - b. It was a middleclass movement
 - c. It was a lay movement
 - d. Started local congregations and small groups
 - e. Expository preaching
 - 1. Like Ezra’s revival in Nehemiah 8
 - f. Started religious education classes
7. Some even became followers of Jesus
- a. Nicodemus, Saul, and Joseph of Arimathea
8. But...most chose religion over Christ
9. All their goodness meant absolutely nothing apart from Christ

C. The Pharisees started out so strong

- 1. But something went terribly wrong
 - a. They lost what God values most
 - b. They lost their love for God and their fellow man

2. Just like the church in Ephesus

a. Revelation 2:2-5

(2) I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false. (3) You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary.

(4) Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love.

3. The great threat to churches in West Michigan

4. The value of love in parenting...

III. Are You Worth Imitating?

A. The challenge in I Timothy 4:12-16

(12) 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. How old was Timothy?

- a. Approximately 40 when written
- b. Still considered "young"
- c. Didn't consider "mature" until at least 50
- d. Wanted leaders who were past their "youthful indiscretions"

2. We want young men and women who "set an example"

- a. Who can live it and not just talk it

3. We want to be preparing champions

B. Parents....are you worth imitating?

1. Remember that talk is cheap

(12) 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.

- a. Difficult for young people to gain respect
 - 1. People won't respect them for their talk
 - 2. But they will respect a godly example
- c. Example will trump age
- d. Beware of arrogance and bragging

2. Choose your words wisely

(12) 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.

- a. Never talk behind the back of another
- b. Never lose your temper
- c. Abstain from harsh or hurtful words
- d. Say nothing to intentionally deceive or mislead
- e. Beware of off-color or offensive stories
 - 1. My "statues" joke
 - 2. "If its doubtful, its dirty"
- f. Don't use sexual innuendo
- g. Don't swear, "Oh my God!"

3. Conduct your life with discipline

(12) 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.

- a. Conduct yourself with discipline in every area of your life
 - 1. In dating
 - 2. Physical health
 - 3. Your study habits

4. Your marriage and family
 5. Your finances
 6. Your ministry
 7. Your personal time with God
- b. Learn to outwork other people
 - c. Hard work will always beat talent...when talent doesn't work hard

4. Be a lover

(12) 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.

- a. Parents who “*speak the truth in love*”
- b. The most important commandment

Mark 12:28-31

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?” “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

- c. Parents...show your kids the love of God
 1. If there is only one thing we can exemplify...let it be love

5. Trust God when you don't have all the answers

(12) 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.

- a. Do you demonstrate trust in God when things get tough?
 1. When your health is falling apart?
 2. When you're searching for a job?
- b. Your kids are watching in those moments

- c. Our vision for Chapel Pointe
 - 1. Taking the big steps of faith
 - 2. If it isn't scary...it isn't a step of faith
- d. Even the tough times are part of His plan
 - 1. They keep us on our knees

6. Guard your mind from trash

(12) 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.

- a. You are what you think
 - 1. As a man thinks in his heart...
- b. Protecting your mind
 - 1. Movies
 - 2. The internet
- c. The key is Philippians 4:8

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable...if anything is excellent or praiseworthy...meditate on these.

7. Become a lifelong learner of the Bible

(13) Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.

- a. The final arbiter of right and wrong
- b. Our "standard of excellence"
- c. Stay in the Word daily
- d. Teach others what the Bible says

8. Maximize the use of your Spiritual Gift

(14) Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

- a. The purpose of spiritual gifts is to help the rest of the body of Christ
- b. If you aren't exercising your gift...somebody is suffering
- c. Be involved is serving in the body of Christ

9. Don't quit when things get tough

(15) Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. (16) Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

- a. The race is not always run by the fastest
 - 1. It's won by those who don't give up
- b. Sometimes it feels like we are losing ground
 - 1. Never give up on a child
 - 2. Some are more work than others

10. Keep your eye on the prize

Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

- a. Parents....start with your kids
- b. Kids are won to Christ by our example more than our words
- c. Parents....Philippians 4:9

(9) Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice.