



John's Schedule

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## Followers of Christ in a Christ-less World



Part 27 (080622AM)

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Jesus said that eternal life is all about following Him; and He summarized His entire plan for the disciples in just two words: "Follow Me" ([Matthew 4:19](#)). Those two words were what He spoke to Peter, Andrew, James and John as they fished and to Matthew as he sat at the tax office ([Luke 5:27](#)); and those two words are what He still calls for as He walks through this world.

This morning, are you personally following Jesus? Does your day revolve around Him: as you start the day with **seeking Him**, as you go through the day **servicing Him**, and end the day with **thanking Him**? Believers are Christ's personal followers in a Christ-less world.

Jesus explained as He taught, that His disciples were those who heard His voice, became His sheep, and "followed" Him ([John 10:27](#)). Jesus called those followers His disciples or "learners". The Gospels are a record of how disciples spent time with Jesus for over 3 years watching, listening, and most of all "following" Him.

Jesus called Himself the "Way"; and described salvation as the beginning a life-long journey of following Him ([John 14:6](#)). This call to a life of following needs to at times be renewed as Jesus demonstrated after His resurrection, when Peter was restored to ministry as Jesus again said "follow" Me ([John 21:19](#)).

### Are We His Followers?

So Christ's plan was to have close, personal "followers" who were also learners and doers of His Way. They listened and followed Him as they learned from Him how to do what He did.

Then book of Acts goes on to describe the early believers as those who were "followers" of Christ Jesus, the Way:

- [Acts 9:2](#) and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were **of the Way**, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. NKJV
- [Acts 18:25-26](#) This man had been instructed in **the way of the Lord**; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John.26 So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him **the way of God** more accurately. NKJV
- [Acts 19:9, 23](#) But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of **the Way** before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus. 23 And about that time there arose a great commotion about **the Way**. NKJV
- [Acts 22:4](#) "I persecuted this **Way** to the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. NKJV
- [Acts 24:14, 22](#) "But this I confess to you, that according to **the Way** which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets. 22 But when Felix heard these things, having more accurate knowledge of **the Way**, he adjourned the proceedings and said, "When Lysias the commander comes down, I will make a decision on your case." NKJV

The Church at the beginning was simple, everyone was following Jesus, acting so much like Him they were described by unbelievers as little-Christ-imitators or "Christ-ians". As the

church gathered, they were taught that every facet of their lives were to be reflective of what they learned while following Jesus personally.

## Learning by Example

This “learning and doing by example” model was the key to Titus 2 discipleship; Paul described a plan for having each person in Christ’s Church actually involved in a life-long learning process of following Jesus Christ. In fact, believers are called little imitations or “mimics” of Jesus Christ. The Greek word in the Epistles for “follow” and “followers” is **mimetes** (literally “mimics”).

Listen to the clear call we have all been given by Christ’s Apostles to follow or “mimic” Christ:

- [1 Corinthians 4:16](#) Therefore I urge you, **imitate** me. NKJV
  
- [1 Corinthians 11:1](#) **Imitate** me, just as I also **imitate** Christ. NKJV [That is the clearest description of what Titus 2 discipleship is all about!]
  
- [Ephesians 5:1](#) Therefore be **imitators** of God as dear children. NKJV
  
- [1 Thessalonians 1:6](#) And you became **followers** of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, NKJV
  
- [1 Thessalonians 2:14](#) For you, brethren, became **imitators** of the churches of God which are in Judea in Christ Jesus. For you also suffered the same things from your own countrymen, just as they did from the Judeans, NKJV
  
- [2 Thessalonians 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. NKJV
  
- [Hebrews 6:12](#) that you do not become sluggish, but **imitate** those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. NKJV
  
- [Hebrews 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. NKJV
  
- [1 Peter 3:13](#) And who is he who will harm you if you become **followers** of what is good? NKJV
  
- [3 John 11](#) Beloved, do not **imitate** what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God. NKJV

This morning, God is looking for those who will not merely hear God’s Word, study God’s Word, memorize God’s Word, master the content of God’s Word—He wants those men and women, and boys and girls who will follow Christ.

## The Lessening of Modeling

In Christ’s day and His Apostles, the Church was a community of believers who followed Christ.

But, as the Church moved deeper into the Greek culture it slowly became more of a philosophy, and less of a community living out truth;

Within a few centuries as the Church moved to Rome and became more of a building than a body;

And after a few more centuries, as the Church permeated Europe, it became more a culture than a community;

And finally today, the Church in America is more of a business, and less of a band of devoted followers of Jesus Christ who live out Christ’s Way in every day life.

Oh how we need to return to being disciples, followers, close-knit brothers and sisters imitating Christ and nurturing each other.

And that is the heart of Paul’s message in [Titus 2:7](#). Please stand and listen to Paul’s plea for Titus to personally live the truth and not just teach it, train it, study it, or discuss it!

*Titus 2:7, NKJV*

*in all things  
showing yourself  
to be a pattern of good works;  
in doctrine showing integrity,  
reverence,*

Paul went to the heart of God's goal for the church as he wrote to Titus. Paul instructed Titus himself to set the pace.

Before Titus launched this mentoring, discipleship plan in the church on the island of Crete, he was to do a self-examination. What Paul made Titus do is very important for all of us who want to follow Christ.

In **Titus 2:7** note how Paul broke the flow, he steps away from a list of curriculum topics for older men (v.2), older women (v. 3-4a), younger women (v.4b-5), and younger men (v. 6), to a very personal appeal.

1. **Total Consecration:** "in all things"; Titus was not to allow himself to give in to Satan's lie called "Compartmentalization" where he would have a public life, a private life, a business life, a personal life—each with a differing degree of Christ's Lordship. No, Jesus wants all of us. He wants to shine into every part of our lives. No locking Him out of an area that we say has nothing to do with Him. Christ has everything to do with all of our lives. Secondly,
2. **Personal Implementation:** "showing yourself"; Titus was called to a life of integrity, no hypocrisy was allowed. He could not teach one thing, and live another. Rather, he was to hold out to all who would look, a life lived in integrity.
3. **Visible Demonstration:** "to be a pattern of good works"; Titus was to be living his life going against the flow. He was to actively resist the bad works of the world by making constant choices to DO good works. The Devil wants believers to become passive and just drift along with the flow of the world instead of actively confronting the darkness with light, the evil with good, the selfishness with self-sacrifice—and all of these things as an imitation of Christ!

That is the essence of this next point about grace-energized men, they were men who sought to **Become Representations of Christ in A Christ-less World**. But the question we always face is—How? I think that the clearest explanation for anyone who wants to represent Christ well in this world, was given by Paul to Timothy. So, to expand upon the **Titus 2:7** mandate that grace-energized men be imitators that represent Jesus well before a watching world, please turn with me to II Timothy 2.19-26.

This section of God's Word contains a complete list of how we can maintain a life that God can use for His Glory, and a life God rewards.

This is God's standard for any and every man, woman and child who want to be a good and faithful servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

As I speak to young men specifically, just put your name in their and ask God through His Spirit to enable you to also live this way.

## The Model to Follow

A grace-energized, godly man will model obedience to God's Word.

Here are the seven areas that the Apostle Paul pointed out to Timothy and that every man of God must always guard.

These are intentionally sought disciplines; these are deliberately guarded areas; these are never areas you can coast through; but always areas we must engage our hearts in seeking out by His grace and through the power of His Spirit.

1. *A grace-energized representation of Christ must have **A LIFE THAT IS CLEAN*** in God's sight. This is that great Old Testament call to living in the fear of the Lord.

**2 Timothy 2:19-21** a Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ **depart** (aor. impv.) from iniquity."<sup>20</sup> But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor.<sup>21</sup> **Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor . . .**

Depart (NKJV for **aphisteimi** [868]) is a well chosen word that says in as many ways as it is possible to say it—stay away from sin. It means to cause to withdraw, to remove; to go away from, to depart from; to desert; to shun, flee from; to cease; to keep one's self from, absent.

Grace-energized young men will—flee sin, hate sin, and keep themselves in the love of God so that they have a life that is clean.

2. *A grace-energized representation of Christ must have **A BODY THAT IS YIELDED*** to God's Work. This is servant hood.

**2 Timothy 2:21b** Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter, he will be a vessel for honor, **sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.**

Grace-energized young men will—keep their body as God's instrument to do His will. As Christ's constantly desired and said, may you continually say, "Not my will but Thine be done". Adelaide A. Pollard wrote a magnificent poem of 1907, "Have Thine own way". May these words be your hearts desire for a body that is yielded to God's work.

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!  
Thou art the Potter, I am the clay.

Mold me and make me after Thy will,  
While I am waiting, yielded and still.

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!  
Search me and try me, Master, today!  
Whiter than snow, Lord, wash me just now,  
As in Thy presence humbly I bow.

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!  
Wounded and weary, help me, I pray!  
Power, all power, surely is Thine!  
Touch me and heal me, Savior divine.

Have Thine own way, Lord! Have Thine own way!  
Hold o'er my being absolute sway!  
Fill with Thy Spirit 'till all shall see  
Christ only, always, living in me.

3. *A grace-energized representation of Christ must have* **A HEART THAT IS PURE** as God's Home.

**2 Timothy 2:22** Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace **with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.**

Just as Robert Boyd Munger says in his booklet *MY HEART CHRIST'S HOME*, we must constantly examine our life, as if it were a house full of interconnected rooms. We must be sure Christ is at home in every part of our house.

Grace-energized young men will—guard their hearts, renounce their flesh, purge themselves from any filthiness of the spirit as Paul exhorts and be that man of God who is pure in heart that sees God. Let your eyes be fixed upon the land that is far off and ever see the King in His beauty—from a heart that is pure.

4. *A grace-energized representation of Christ must have* **A MIND THAT IS DISCERNING** God's way.

**2 Timothy 2:23** But **avoid foolish and ignorant disputes**, knowing that they generate strife.

Grace-energized young men will—cultivate the mind of Christ, invite the wisdom that is from above, and think the Word. Always remember we live in a crooked and perverse generation. Let your life be a light as you walk in His light.

5. *A grace-energized representation of Christ must have* **A MANNER THAT REFLECTS** Christ's meekness and gentleness.

**2 Timothy 2:24** And **a servant of the Lord must not quarrel but be gentle to all**, able to teach, patient,

Grace-energized young men will—be meek and gentle in the power of Christ's Spirit. Take Christ's yoke He promised and let Him grow the fruit of the Spirit of God unhindered in your life. Christ's **MEEKNESS** is the opposite of asserting yourself; it is the ending of your personal agenda; it is living daily as crucified with Christ.

6. *A grace-energized representation of Christ must have* **A SPIRIT THAT IS HUMBLE** to God's Word. The only way to change people is through the Word. We can't.

**2 Timothy 2:25** **in humility correcting those who are in opposition**, if God perhaps will grant them repentance, so that they may know the truth,

Grace-energized young men will—clothe themselves with humility. Wrap up in the apron of a servant as Peter said to the elders he served. Let the humble mind of Christ be in you and let God lift you up. There is no limit to what God can do with you if you let Him get all the credit!

7. *A grace-energized representation of Christ must have* **A HEART THAT IS COMPASSIONATE** like Christ's.

**2 Timothy 2:26** and that they may come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil, **having been taken captive by him to do his will.**

Grace-energized young men will—put on a heart of compassion. Clothe yourself with Christ and be moved as He was for the flock He gives you. Love them, feed them, lead them—all with Christ's compassion, and you will receive that unfading crown of His good and faithful shepherds of His flock!

So ask yourself, "How am I doing at following Christ"? Do I represent Him well? If not, why not stop and right now renew your decision to be a grace-energized, personal-follower of Jesus.

Here is the goal: a *grace-energized representation of Christ must have*:

- ✓ A LIFE THAT IS CLEAN in God's sight.
- ✓ A BODY THAT IS YIELDED to God's Work.
- ✓ A HEART THAT IS PURE as God's Home.
- ✓ A MIND THAT IS DISCERNING God's way.
- ✓ A MANNER THAT REFLECTS Christ's gentleness.
- ✓ A SPIRIT THAT IS HUMBLE to God's Word.
- ✓ A HEART THAT IS COMPASSIONATE like Christ's.

May we all follow and imitate Christ all our days, by His grace!

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