

Show Them How To Live
1 Corinthians 11:1

1 Corinthians 11:1 (NKJV)

¹ Imitate me, just as I also *imitate* Christ.

Introduction:

A. Learning by Imitation

1. All of us are a product, in part of those we chose to imitate.
 - a) God knows we are like this – He made us this way!
 - b) We have a natural built in system that imitates.
 - c) That’s how we learn to talk and do nearly everything we do.
 - d) It’s not the only factor in our nature, but it is an important one.
 - e) God actually commands us to use this inborn system of learning to grow in Christ.
2. Imitate Christ, imitate mature Christians, imitate God, imitate faithful churches.
 - a) All of these are either commanded or condoned in the scriptures.
 - b) Do not imitate evil.
 - c) Avoid the very appearance of evil.
 - d) Evil companionship corrupts good morals.
3. Imitation is the way God calls us to grow in our faith.
 - a) We need more than a Bible class relationship with a teacher, we need a life changing influence relationship with those who are mature and can teach us.
4. Robert Coleman says in *The Master Plan of Evangelism* that the secret of Christ’s effective teaching was his careful, consistent demonstration of the right way to live.
 - a) It is vital for us to understand this!
 - b) The men and women we help spiritually will inevitably learn the standards for living the Christlike life through what they see in us.
5. In a technical sense, life precedes action.
 - a) But in a very practical way we live by what we do.
 - b) You must breathe, eat, exercise, and work if you are to grow physically.
 - c) If these needs of the body are neglected, life will cease!
 - d) The same is true if you are to grow in your spiritual life.
 - e) That is why Jesus worked so hard to get across to his disciples the secrets of his spiritual influence.
6. **John 1:38-39 (ESV)**
 - ³⁸ Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, “What are you seeking?” And they said to him, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are you staying?”
 - ³⁹ He said to them, “Come and you will see.” So they came and saw where he was staying, and they stayed with him that day, for it was about the tenth hour.
 - a) When you look carefully and deeply at Jesus’ relationship and interactions with the disciples you see clearly that He had a deliberate strategy, a Master strategy.
 - b) Jesus knew what was important for living in the Kingdom of God and that is what He showed the disciples.

I. The Critical Elements for Spiritual Life

A. The Practice of Prayer

1. It was no accident that Jesus often let his disciples see Him praying with the Father.
 - a) They could see the strength which it gave to his life, and though they could not understand fully what it was all about, they must have realized that this was part of his secret of life.
 - b) Notice that Jesus did not force this lesson upon them.
 - c) They saw Jesus praying and then they saw what happened after He prayed.
 - d) He just kept praying until at last the disciples got so hungry that they asked him “Lord, teach us to pray!”
2. Jesus seized the opportunity when they asked and He proceeded to give them a lesson that their hearts were prepared to receive.
 - a) First He explained to them the more basic principles of prayer.

- b) Then before He finished, He illustrated what He meant by repeating before them the model prayer that we call “The Lord’s Prayer” (Luke 11:1–11; Matthew 6:9–13).
3. Jesus did not take this opportunity for granted!
 - a) It was too important to their lives spiritually, so He actually gave them words to pray as an example.
 - b) I have noticed that with our grandchildren, they wind up praying the same words they hear us praying!
 - c) This is such a basic method of teaching!
 - d) It is necessary to get people started in this discipline of prayer.
 - e) If you want to teach somebody how to pray, then show him or her with your own life!
4. After they saw it in His life, Jesus emphasized prayer over and over again when talking with his disciples.
 - a) He continually enlarged the meaning and application of prayer, as they were able to understand the deeper realities of His Spirit.
 - b) This was an indispensable part of their training and they needed to learn it well so they could transmit it to others.
5. One thing is certain - unless they grasped the meaning of prayer, and learned how to practice it consistently in their life, not much would ever come from their lives.
6. We need to see that, too!
7. It is the first thing we need to show those we disciple and we show them with our own life.

B. Using Scripture

1. Another aspect of Jesus’ life that was He vividly portrayed to the disciples was the importance and use of the Bible.
 - a) They could see it both in the way He maintained His own personal devotion to God’s Word and in the way He used it in winning others to what they called “the Way”.
 - b) Often Jesus would take special care to impress upon his followers the meaning of a passage in the Bible, and He never ceased to use the Scriptures in His conversation.
 - c) There are at least 66 references to the Old Testament in His dialogues with the disciples in the four Gospels.
 - d) Then there are more than 90 times He uses the scriptures in speaking with others.
2. All this showed the disciples how they too should know and use the Scriptures in their own life.
 - a) Jesus used the Bible with them repeatedly.
 - b) He practiced in His own life the principles of Biblical exhortation.
 - c) This is how they learned the basic rules for scriptural interpretation and application.
3. Jesus’ ability to quote from memory Old Testament passages must have impressed the disciples with the necessity of memorizing the Scriptures.
 - a) Then the Bible becomes the authority for teaching.
 - b) Jesus made it abundantly clear that the word written in the Bible and the word that He spoke were not in contradiction, but rather complemented each other.
 - c) Because what Jesus said aligned perfectly with God’s Word, the Scriptures became the basis of their faith in Christ.
4. Jesus also made it clear to them that if they were to continue in fellowship by the Holy Spirit after He was gone from them in the flesh, they would have to abide in His word (John 15:7).
 - a) **John 15:7** If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.

C. Supremely Soul-Winning

1. Jesus used the same method to teach the disciples how to win souls – He showed them with His own life:
 - a) With Nicodemus who came to Him at night in John 3
 - (1) **John 3:16** “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.”
 - b) With the Samaritan woman at the well
 - (1) **John 4:13-14**
 - ¹³ Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again,
 - ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”
 - c) With Zacchaeus