

Do as I do

Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

Philippians 4:9

As the apostle Paul wrote from his Roman jail cell to the Philippian church, he appealed in this statement to their memories of his times with them, where they had received his instruction, not only in formal teaching, but also by seeing his life among them. He was confident enough in his walk with the Lord that he could exhort them, not only to follow his teachings, either by spoken word or by epistle, but to follow his example, from which they also could learn and receive instruction. Earlier in this epistle, as he instructed them to strive to be likeminded (2:2; 3:15-16), he tells them to “be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so, as ye have us for an ensample” (3:17). So not only could he point them to his own example, but he could also point them to others who were living consistent with the apostolic teaching and example.

How about us? Can we exhort other believers as Paul did, to follow not only our words, but also our example? Actually, if we are to obey his instruction in this epistle, we should be able to do the same as he. Of course our initial reaction to such thought is to focus on our faults and failings, which we would never want someone else to follow. Yet if we understand the implications of what the apostle emphasizes here, as well as the admonition of our Lord throughout scripture, the aim of our heart, mind, soul, and life, which have been bought with the price of His precious blood, will be to press toward the mark for the prize of His high calling (3:14). Then, although we remain for this time in these earthly bodies, which still slip and fall at times, our faith in Christ will persevere through and out of those circumstances to demonstrate our general aim and goal to which He calls us. Unto this goal we can invite others to accompany us in our journey. Therefore, let us walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, that we may not be ashamed to humbly invite others to follow.