

THE APOSTOLIC PATTERN AND EXAMPLE

I. THE STANDARD/PATTERN

A. One Standard

¹⁴I am writing these things not to make you feel ashamed, but to warn you—as my dearly loved children! ¹⁵For even if you were to have in the Messiah thousands and thousands of guardians, you only have one father. In Messiah Jesus, you see, through the gospel, I became your father. ¹⁶In light of that, I beg you: Follow *my example* (“be imitators of me” [ESV]; “imitate me” [HCSB]). ¹⁷That is the reason I have sent you Timothy, my dearly loved and trustworthy son in the Lord. He will remind you about my way of life (Gk *tas hodous mou*—“my paths,” “my roads”; “my ways” [ESV]; “principles of conduct” [NJB]) in union with the Messiah, which agrees with what I teach everywhere, in every assembly. (^{BHT} 1 Co 4:14-17)

B. The Cross

¹⁵This is the kind of mindset, therefore, that those of us who are mature need to maintain. And if you have, in some particular area, a different mindset, this, too, God will reveal to you. ¹⁶In any case, whatever progress we have made, we must continue to live our lives according to the very same standard. ¹⁷Follow *my example*, all of you, brothers, and pay careful attention to those who are living their lives this way, just as you have an example in us. ¹⁸Many, you see, about whom I have spoken to you many times, and now do so again even with weeping, live their own lives as enemies of the cross of the Messiah, ¹⁹who are on a course for utter ruin, whose god is their own selfish interests and appetites, and who pride themselves in things of which they should be ashamed, whose minds are set on these: The sinful ways of the earth. (^{BHT} Php 3:15-19)

- Then he said to them all: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. ²⁴ For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will save it.” (^{NIV} Lk 9:23-24)

C. A Very Serious Matter to God

¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few. (^{ESV} Mt 7:14)

⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed (“eternally condemned” [NIV]; “condemned to hell” [TEV]) (^{ESV} Ga 1:8)

²¹ “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. (^{ESV} Mt 7:21)

II. THE EXAMPLE

A. “Don’t Become A Stumbling Block”

³¹ So, whatever you do, whether it’s eating or drinking or anything else, do it all in a way that will bring great honor to God. ³²For the sake of Jews, and Gentiles, and God’s assemblies, don’t become a stumbling block, to any of them, ³³just as I, too, constantly take it upon myself to serve people of all kinds, in every way, laying down my own desires and doing what is best not for myself, but for the greatest number of people possible, so that they may be saved.

¹Follow my example, just as I follow the example of the Messiah. (BHT 1 Co 10:31-11:1).

¹² If others have this right of support from you, shouldn’t we have it all the more? But we did not use this right. On the contrary, we put up with anything rather than hinder the gospel of Christ.

¹³ Don’t you know that those who work in the temple get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in what is offered on the altar? ¹⁴ In the same way, the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel.

¹⁵ But I have not used any of these rights. And I am not writing this in the hope that you will do such things for me. I would rather die than have anyone deprive me of this boast. ¹⁶ Yet when I

preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! ¹⁷ If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me. ¹⁸ What then is my reward? Just this: that in preaching the gospel I

may offer it free of charge, and so not make use of my rights in preaching it. ¹⁹ Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. ²⁰

To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law (cf Ac 21:23-26). ²¹ To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am

not free from God’s law but am under Christ’s law), so as to win those not having the law. ²² To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. ²³ I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings. ²⁴ Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the

prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. (NIV 1 Co 9:12-24)

B. “At The End of the Procession”

⁵ Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men’s hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God. ⁶ Now, brothers, I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, so that you may learn from us the meaning of the saying, “Do not go

beyond what is written.” Then you will not take pride in one man over against another. ⁷ For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not? ⁸ Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! You have become kings—and that without us! How I wish that

you really had become kings so that we might be kings with you! ⁹ For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession (“like prisoners of war at the end of a victor’s parade” [NLT]; “exhibited us apostles as last of all” [ESV]; “the last act in the

[gladiatorial] show” [REB]; “last in rank” [UBSHS (1 Co)]), like men condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to men. ¹⁰ We are fools for Christ, but you are so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honored, we are dishonored! ¹¹ To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are in rags, we are brutally treated, we are homeless. ¹² We work hard with our own hands. When we are cursed, we bless; when we are persecuted, we endure it; ¹³ when we are slandered, we answer kindly. Up to this moment we have become the scum of the earth, the refuse of the world. ¹⁴ I am not writing this to shame you, but to warn you, as my dear children. ¹⁵ Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. ¹⁶ Therefore I urge you to imitate me. ¹⁷ For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church. (NIV 1 Co 4:5-17)

C. “I Press On Toward the Prize”

¹Finally, my brothers, rejoice because of your union with the Lord. To write to you about things I've previously told you about is for me no inconvenience, and is for you a protection. ²Watch out for those dogs, watch out for those evil workers, watch out for those who practice self-mutilation—I refuse to call it "circumcision." ³We, you see, are the ones who bear the circumcision that makes one truly acceptable to God, who worship and serve by the very Spirit of God, who exalt what Messiah Jesus has done and put no confidence in mere human strength and accomplishment and credentials—even though there are many things in that category I could claim in my favor. If anyone else, and I mean anyone, believes he has warrant for placing confidence in such things, my reasons outshine theirs: ⁵Circumcised on the eighth day, belonging to the nation of Israel, a member the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew-speaking Jew born of Hebrew-speaking parents; in regard to the Law of Moses, strict in my interpretation and adherence, a Pharisee; ⁶as for zeal, persecuting the assembly; as for the righteous and saving acts that are based on a law code, blameless. ⁷Nevertheless, those things that were in my eyes gains, I have come to regard, on account of the Messiah, as loss. ⁸No, more than that, I regard *everything* a loss on account of that which is so much more valuable, namely, knowing Messiah Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I forfeited all those things and regard them as dung, so that I may gain the Messiah himself ⁹and be found in union with him, not having a salvation *of my own* based on a law-code, but that which comes on the basis, yes, of faith in the Messiah, the salvation that comes *from God* on the basis of faith. ¹⁰I want to know the Messiah and experience the power of his resurrection and share in his sufferings, being conformed to his death, ¹¹in the hope that, by any means possible, I will share in the resurrection from the dead. ¹²I'm not claiming that I have already made the Messiah's death and life my own, or that I have already been fully consecrated. Rather, I am pressing on to make them my own, because Messiah Jesus has made me his own. ¹³Brothers, I don't think of myself as having already made them my own. Still, one thing I do: Forgetting this—what lies behind—and straining toward this—what lies ahead—I press on *toward the goal* in order to win the prize to which God summons us from on high through Messiah Jesus. ¹⁵This is the kind of mindset, therefore, that those of us who are mature need to maintain. And if you have, in some

particular area, a different mindset, this, too, God will reveal to you. ¹⁶In any case, whatever progress we have made, we must continue to live our lives according to the very same standard. ¹⁷Follow *my example*, all of you, brothers, and pay careful attention to those who are living their lives this way, just as you have an example in us. ¹⁸Many, you see, about whom I have spoken to you many times, and now do so again even with weeping, live their own lives as enemies of the cross of the Messiah, ¹⁹who are on a course for utter ruin, whose god is their own selfish interests and appetites, and who pride themselves in things of which they should be ashamed, whose minds are set on these: The sinful ways of the earth. ²⁰As for us, the capital city that lists us among its citizens and governs our way of life is here: In the heavens. From this city we eagerly await, too, a Savior, the Lord Jesus the Messiah, ²¹who will transform these weak and mortal bodies of ours so that they are conformed to his glorious body, using the same great power by which he is also able to subject to himself the whole creation. (BHT Php 3).

D. “So That Christ Jesus Might Display His Unlimited Patience”

¹²I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me faithful, appointing me to his service. ¹³Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. ¹⁴The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. ¹⁶But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life. ¹⁷Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen. (NIV 1 Ti 1:12-17)