

## Jesus Christ Our Perfect Example Clay Bond

For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:

(1 Peter 2:21)

If you are in Christ Jesus, then your goal in life should be to become more and more like Him. The Apostle John said, "He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked" (1 John 2:6). Through transformation we can become more like Jesus every day (Rom. 8:9; 12:1-2; Col. 3:1-4). Jesus suffered and died on the cross so that we would stop living for self and start living for Him (2 Cor. 5:15).

With the help of God's Word, each one of us can be an imitator of Christ. We have Jesus' words written down in the Bible to guide our steps (Col. 3:16; 2 Tim. 3:16-17). We also have His example to follow. Listen to what Peter says in 1 Peter 2:21, "For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps."

Jesus is a perfect example in obedience. His whole purpose in taking upon Himself the form of a servant and being made in the likeness of men, was so that He could do His Father's will (John 4:34). Jesus said, "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me" (John 6:38). The powerful truth that all of God's commandments are righteousness is found in Psalm 119:172. Understanding that, consider Jesus' words when John the Baptist tried to prevent Him from being baptized, "thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." John accepted Jesus' words and fulfilled righteousness by baptizing the Creator of all things. Jesus Christ was emphasizing to John the importance of obedience. Even when it was difficult to do the Father's will, Jesus "humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:8). It is imperative that we follow Christ's example in this area. God wants us to be obedient children because, as far as He's concerned, "to obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Sam. 15:22). The only way Jesus can propitiate for our sins is if we obey Him (Heb. 5:9). There are strong warnings in the Scriptures for those who refuse to submit to God's will (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

Jesus is also our perfect example in humble service. I believe the greatest example of this is seen in John 13:1-17 where Jesus took a towel and washed His disciples' feet. At times the apostles were arguing about who would be the greatest in the kingdom. When Jesus got down on His knees and washed their feet, He taught them the valuable lesson that they did not need a title, they needed a towel. Jesus said, "For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you" (John 13:15). If we follow the example of Jesus, we are going to be busy serving others (Phil. 2:1-5). The focus will not be on self. We will say with Jesus, "I am among you as the One who serves" (Luke 22:27). This is one of the marks of true greatness in Christ kingdom, "whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant. And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave" (Matt. 20:26-27). If we learn to serve others, people will see Christ living in us.

Finally, Christ is our perfect example in constant prayer. His day often began in prayer, "in the morning, having risen a long while before daylight, He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed" (Mark 1:35). When He had to make important

decisions, like choosing His twelve apostles, He spent all night in prayer (Luke 6:12). Before He faced the excruciating pain and suffering of the cross, He prayed fervently to His Father (Matt. 26:36-46). If we will follow the example of Jesus, we will begin every day in prayer, approach every decision with prayer and face every challenge with prayer (1 Thess. 5:17). In prayer we cast our cares upon the one who cares for us (1 Pet. 5:7). Instead of worrying about everything, we should be like Jesus and pray about everything (Phil. 4:6). Prayer helped Jesus through this life and it can also help us. There is power in prayer (James 5:16).

If you are already a Christian, challenge yourself to emulate Jesus more fully each day. If you are not a Christian, now is a great time to start imitating the Master.