

# WHERE ARE THE PATTERNS?

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Daily devotions written by Pastor Thomas Smith

“So that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia.”

I Thessalonians 1:7

When Paul wrote the church at Thessalonica he commended them for being “ensamples” to believers throughout that region of the world. The word ensample means a “model or pattern for others to follow.” When a seamstress is preparing to sew a garment, she might begin with cutting out a pattern. The pattern is the design of how the finished product should appear. The pattern enables the seamstress to reproduce the article accurately and repeatedly. The word ensamples is like a pattern. It is a model or an example to be imitated. The church at Thessalonica served as a pattern for others to follow. This church was worthy of imitating.

We understand that every individual and every church has its own uniqueness and particular distinctions. However, there should be qualities or characteristics in each that deserve to be imitated or emulated. This is a part of what discipleship should include – learning from others. We follow others as they follow Christ. With that in mind, it would be wise for us to seek to pattern certain things in our lives and churches after worthy “ensamples.” We can readily think of Christians, as well as assemblies of believers, that we would do well to pattern ourselves after.

On the other hand, there are church members and churches that it would not be wise to imitate. One of the sad things about the state of churches in our country during this generation is that many are seeking to emulate congregations that are not the right

kind of patterns. Because of this, churches are being produced that are shaped after the pattern of a poor example. Many individual Christians and congregations are moving in the wrong direction.

We should be careful to follow the pattern that is set forth in the Word of God and observed in the life of the godly. Perhaps it is the way a young person respects his elders, the way a mother manages her home, the sincerity in someone's prayer life, the modesty of someone's dress, or the compassion one has for souls. These kinds of role models are important and valuable. Where are the examples for young people, families, or churches to pattern themselves after? May God help us be Christians and churches that would be worthy of imitating.

### **Let's Pray**

Dear heavenly father, thank you for your word today. I pray that this devotional has blessed the person reading this and that the Holy Spirit will continue to speak to his or her heart. I ask this in Jesus name. Amen