

Articles and Sermons :: The Preachers Whom I Respect and Follow by Zac Poonen

The Preachers Whom I Respect and Follow by Zac Poonen - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2018/2/9 20:58

Jesus said, "Follow Me" (Luke 9:23)

Paul said "Follow me as I follow Christ" (1 Cor.11:1, Phil.3:17)

In those words of the apostle Paul, we see what the Holy Spirit expects every godly preacher to be able to say to all those to whom he preaches.

Many preachers say, "Don't follow me, but follow Christ". That sounds very humble. But it is only an excuse to cover up their defeated life; and it is totally contrary to the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

The only preachers I respect and follow are those who can say, "Follow me, as I follow Christ". But sad to say, such preachers are rare in our day.

Before Paul's conversion, he was a total failure. Yet God changed him and made him a great example for others to follow, even though he was not perfect (See Phil.3:12-14). (Even the best Christian in the world is not perfect but only pressing on to perfection.)

So, even if you have been a total failure in the past, God can still make you an example for others to follow.

There are seven characteristics that I look for primarily, in a preacher, before I can respect him and follow him as an example:

1. He must be a humble, approachable man. Jesus was humble and approachable (Matt.11: 29). People could approach Him anywhere and at any time. A Nicodemus could visit Him in His home at midnight; and anyone could talk to Jesus at any time in public places. Jesus' humility made Him eager to preach the gospel to the poor (as we read in Luke 4:18). Paul was a humble man who was quick to acknowledge his mistakes and apologize for them immediately (Acts 23:1-5). I will follow only such preachers who make no distinction between the rich and the poor, who have no "superior air" about them, who are quick to apologize for their mistakes, and who always remain as ordinary brothers.

2. He must be one who never asks anyone for money "either for himself or for his ministry" and who has a simple life-style. If he does receive any freely-offered gifts (like Paul occasionally did "Phil.4:16-18) he will receive them only from people who are wealthier than him "and never from anyone poorer than him. Jesus never asked anyone for money either for Himself or for His ministry. And He received gifts only from those who were wealthier than Him (Luke 8:3). Jesus and Paul had simple lifestyles. I will follow only those preachers who have this same attitude that Jesus and Paul had, towards money and material things.

3. He must have a testimony as a godly man. He must be known as a godly, upright man who has a passion for holiness "one who does not seek his own in anything, who controls his tongue (James 1:26; Eph.4:26-31), is merciful to those who fail and who never boasts about his praying, his fasting or his giving (Matt.6:1-18). He must also have a testimony of total purity towards all women "young and old (1 Tim.5:2). I will follow only those preachers who have such an aroma of godliness in their lives.

4. He should have brought up his children in a godly way. His children should be following him as he follows Christ. The Holy Spirit says that no-one can be a leader in a church, if he has not first led his own children to godliness (1 Tim.3:4,5; Tit.1:6). Our children know us better than others, because they see us all the time at home. And if they see us living in a godly way at home, they too will follow the Lord wholeheartedly. I will follow only those preachers who have brought up their children to be godly and humble and respectful to all people.

5. He must be one who preaches the whole counsel of God fearlessly. He should proclaim everything written in the New Testament 'every commandment and every promise' without seeking to please any man (Acts 20:27; Gal.1:10). If he is truly anointed with the Holy Spirit continuously, then, like Jesus and Paul, his messages will always be challenging and encouraging. I will follow only such preachers 'in whom I sense the anointing of God when they speak.

6. He should have a passion to build local churches as expressions of Christ's Body. Jesus came to earth not only to save people from all sin, but also to build His church 'as a Body that would manifest His life (Matt.16:18). Paul's passion therefore was to plant local churches like that everywhere, that would function as Christ's Body (Eph.4:15, 16). And he worked hard towards that end (Col.1:28,29). I will follow only those preachers who seek to build local churches as functioning expressions of the Body of Christ.

7. He should have raised up at least a few co-workers who have his vision and his spirit. A godly preacher will always be concerned about the testimony of the Lord being preserved in purity in the next generation. Jesus raised up 11 disciples who imbibed His spirit and lived by His standards to carry on His work. Paul raised up Timothy and Titus, who lived by his spirit of humility and selflessness to carry on his work (Phil.2:19-21; 2 Cor.7:13-15). I will follow only those preachers who have raised up at least a few co-workers who have the qualities listed above.

If you are called by God to be a preacher, you must pray that He will anoint you with His Holy Spirit continuously and enable you to have all the qualities listed above, so that you can be an example for others to follow.

In this day of compromise and worldliness in Christendom, we are called to raise the standard of life and ministry, high in the church. May the Lord help us to do that. Amen.

Re: The Preachers Whom I Respect and Follow by Zac Poonen, on: 2018/2/9 22:26

This is a very high standard for a preacher...

It is very rare to find preacher like this holding these characteristics...

Amen....

Re: Evangeline - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2018/2/9 22:56

I agree! I think Jesus may be the only pastor with those credentials.

Re: , on: 2018/2/9 23:48

Obviously Zac considers himself to have these traits therefore that breaks the humble rule :) So if your not humble then you are proud, oops there goes another. I have met many pastors in my life, some well known on this site and well respected, but they have all been flawed and would fail Zac's list. The one's I have most respected are the one's that what you see on the platform is what you get in private. No airs and graces. The people I have most disliked are those who are "actors," they pretend to be one thing in front of people but there is a very different man that lies behind the mask. They speak in what Tozer used to disparagingly call "pious tones."bro Frank

Re: The Preachers Whom I Respect and Follow by Zac Poonen - posted by SteveHale (), on: 2018/2/10 16:08

I have personally met and spoken to Zac and I have to say he is a very quiet, humble man. I am sure he lives up to the standard he has set here. Infact I do not think it is too high a standard to set, not just for preachers but for anyone that would call themselves a mature follower of Jesus Christ.

The fact we do not expect this way of life from preachers let alone ourselves just goes to show how lackluster true Christianity is in the developed world.

Blessings Steve

Re: Steve - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2018/2/10 18:36

Quote:
-----Steve said...The fact we do not expect this way of life from preachers let alone ourselves just goes to show how lackluster true Christianity is in the developed world.

Brother Steve, I personally think all born again Christians do expect this way of life from all Pastors, so I have to disagree with you when you say "the fact we don't expect this way" is not really a fact. Personally I feel you might be a tad bias since you have met Zac, but if he does hold all the credentials as the post said, when he passes, he will probably be sitting at God's left hand.

Here's a quote from Brother Zac:

“A dog cannot understand multiplication – how three ones when multiplied can still be one: $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$. Neither can we understand how God can be Three Persons and yet One God. A dog can understand only another dog. He cannot understand a man fully. In the same way, a god that could be explained and understood by our human reason would only be another man just like ourselves. The very fact that the God of the Bible transcends our reason is the clearest evidence that this is indeed the truth.”

You know what's really heart breaking, there are many younger wonderful pastors today, that get covered up by the old school pastors, they don't get the credit they deserve. I linked a YouTube video the other day from Brother Greg Laurie... "How To Go To Church" it has to be one of the top 3 best sermons I've ever heard in my life, but Brother Greg never gets mentioned here. Is it that only the old school pastors have a clue? Because remember they too were young once, I have nothing against the older pastors, I just don't understand all the noise about all the old ones, maybe someone can clue me in. Personally I think if any of the younger pastors today can still preach the true word of God in today's world, their burden is a lot heavier, because the world has really gone south a lot since the early days.

Re: The Preachers Whom I Respect and Follow by Zac Poonen - posted by Sree (), on: 2018/2/10 22:39

I do not see it as a very high standard at all. Which standard emphasized here is not supported by Scripture? Let me tell this, if you need a surgery and you have an option to select the surgeon, who sets a very high standard in Surgery like using sterilized equipment and another who does not sterilize equipment, then who will you select? I am sure none of those who complain that this is very high standard will ever choose a surgeon who does not set a high standard in surgery. This shows that we are more concerned about Physical health than our spiritual health. When it comes to spiritual life, we are content to hear speakers who are not themselves interested in following Christ. If we see such articles we complain that it is a very high standard! No wonder Scripture clearly says that in the end time there will be those who want ear tickling preachers!

I have personally known Zac Poonen, I do not even consider myself worthy to defend him, nor am I taking any effort to do it. I know all these points are true about him. None of these points are higher than the standard set by Scripture and apostles. One thing that stands out about him is, he is not a pleaser of men at all. He will be quick to rebuke his fellow workers if they set their mind on ways of men. He never preaches to please men, the reason he was rejected in India for many years is that he never tried to please men. For a person of such a gift, if he had little bit reduced his standard to please people then he could have become a very powerful Christian leader in India. But he never does. Most of his life was faced with severe poverty while he published his contents for free and never accepted money for service.

Another thing that I find unique about him, is the standard of his coworkers. My own father in law is his coworker. A very Godly man whom I have witnessed at a very close range! I have also worked closely with Zac's Coworkers, I know they all set very high standard in their life. As far as I know all his co-workers (I have known), will easily pass these standards.

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2018/2/11 14:19

When I read stuff I like I love it and hate it at the same time.

I love it because the insistence upon Godliness and holiness is right and true, the necessity of bearing good fruit and being an example to the flock is stressed.

I hate it because people reading this sort of thing will think of their own preacher whom they know and have a wayward son or daughter...therefore they are not a preacher.

Some have suffered at the hands of wicked mates who committed adultery and deserted them...they must be not be a true preacher.

As you go through the list you realize that the men God uses are not great and their so-called earned respect is due to the grace-working of God in their lives. So, Brother Zac has only just a few men he can approve and respect.

I don't see Jesus as doing any such thing. Jesus said 'feed my sheep to a failed, betraying Peter...after 3 years of ministry and discipleship with Jesus. I see the rest of the disciples are forsaking him.

In Zac's Christian world there is no room for the failures, or the sinners of a bible. The David that wrote psalms...well there's no way Zac can approve or respect an adulterer and conspirator to murder. That Abraham saved his skin by lying about his wife...yea Pharaoh might sleep with her but at least I won't be killed. There is no way Zac could respect him. Jeremiah had his doubting and painful moments, letting God know I can continue to do this preaching...all they want to do is kill me...and you do nothing about it. That's a failure to remain consistent and shows no example of perseverance under stress. Zac cannot under his criteria accept such a flop.

But we all know Zac accepts all these men because God accepts them. Maybe we would do well to understand that godly men are so not because they are great, but because God is great.

When I read this self-serving litmus test I recognize that all he said is true and needed in the body of Christ...but acceptance and usability by God is not according to this list, it is found in the grace of God given when we were yet enemies and alienated from God.

Nope, keep the list I'll judge for myself according to the Spirit and word who I give respect. My list is larger and I'm good with that.

Re: , on: 2018/2/11 15:03

Marvin, your post was a mirror of my thoughts, right down to the same heroes of faith that you mentioned.

"Nope, keep the list I'll judge for myself according to the Spirit and word who I give respect."

Amen, it really does come down to that. Poor old Wesley with his terrible wife who did not even make a profession of faith for 20 years after Wesley was in the ministry, he would be found wanting. Having said all that, I would expect nothing less from any saint than to live an exemplary life and to truly be a witness to a dying world.....bro Frank

Re: Marvin and Frank - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2018/2/11 16:18

Great posts Brother Marvin and Brother Frank, If God would have only used men with Zac's credentials, one might wonder if we would have ever known the word grace. I'm always trying to do with God's help to improve myself, but I'm sure not going to live under any bondage of condemnation, while he's working in me, I'm going to live like he is using me just as I am today. They're too many different shoes to fill in the old world, and God knows the one that can fill the shoes to minister to every hurting heart on earth. I don't care how approved you might be according to man, remember all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like a filthy rag; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind, our iniquities sweep us away. That kinda dampens all those good credentials.

Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2018/2/11 17:36

Quote:

In Zac's Christian world there is no room for the failures, or the sinners of a bible.

I do not think you even read this article.
This article clearly says this -

Quote:

So, even if you have been a total failure in the past, God can still make you an example for others to follow.

All these characters whom you have quoted are all old covenant. God still used them. God can even use a donkey. So there is nothing great in being used by God. But God is not pleased with everyone he uses! We are not called to run the race looking at David or Abraham. We are called to run the new covenant race looking at Jesus. If Jesus is our example then we will not take David as an excuse for those who fall in adultery. Nor Abraham as excuse for those who fear and lie.

I want to live the Christian life looking into Jesus, it is a shame that many pastors fall in Adultery and take the excuse of David for their sins. It is very plain that Jesus is not their example. I do not want to hear anyone who follows David, I want to listen to pastors who want to follow Jesus and have the attitude that was in Jesus in them. I am thankful that God has not allowed me to be deceived looking at old covenant examples and their failures.

If we think that the life of all Bible writers are acceptable standard then why not live like Solomon? Lets also worship other Gods like he did! God used him as well to write 2 books in Bible.

Quote:

Nope, keep the list I'll judge for myself according to the Spirit and word who I give respect. My list is larger and I'm good with that.

This is exact point of this article. There is no place the writer of the article is saying that everyone should use these filters. He is saying he uses these filters. If you do not agree with him then use your own filters. Like I said if you do not want a surgeon with sterilized equipment for surgery then choose for yourself a surgeon who uses unclean equipment. It is your choice. You cannot blame the one who wants a surgeon with sterilized equipments!

Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2018/2/11 17:57

I have met people who accuse Zac as false teacher. But I have never met anyone who could Biblically prove that any of his teaching is wrong. Even here people disagree with this article but none has any Biblical reference to support their argument! Can anyone here prove one of the point wrong with Biblical reference? I am absolutely convinced that most of the posters here do not come with a teachable spirit which is one of the rules of this forum. They come only to support those who agree with them.

Re: Sree - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2018/2/11 20:42

Quote:
-----I am absolutely convinced that most of the posters here do not come with a teachable spirit which is one of the rules of this forum. They come only to support those who agree with them.

And some come with a critical and judgmental spirit...

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2018/2/11 23:12

Sree: When you disagree with a post I make, just come out and say it plainly, you need not erect a whole line of straw-men and then begin burning them down. If you are not conversant in logical fallacies, the idea is some 'terrible thing' is associated with the dissenting author, you then begin to burn up that 'terrible thing' and in so doing equate that with showing you have overcome the dissenter's argument. The fallacy lay in the fact the 'terrible thing' was never asserted by the dissenter to begin with, so in short you gave yourself a typing lesson and did nothing to add weight to an argument made in opposition to mine.

I'll make this as plain as I can.

Brother Zac who I esteem as a faithful and good preacher of the gospel gave 7 points on what he considered qualifies a preacher as worthy of his respect.

The issue I took with the article was not in the scripture used to validate and discern good and godly men who seek to be leaders of the Church.

The issue was the addendum affixed to the scriptures which was Zac's approval and respect.

In judging righteous judgment, there must be a discerning that goes past the 'failing' of the person.

Jn8 text with the adulteress is relevant here.

Brother Zac gave room for repentance but only before conversion. You Sree dismiss old testament saints as unfit examples of God's dealing with his people, that's really another subject.

The implication is if one of your children acts out in his teen years... you are unqualified to preach.

If you fund raise in anyway for God's work you are unqualified to preach,

If you are not building a local Church, but a group of disciples in prison, or in the jungles or at a park in a neighboring city you are unqualified to preach.

This is all fine for Brother Zac, he can have this criteria all he wants and he is welcome to it.

But Scripture principles concerning Paul's teachings on Church leaders do not contain Zac's addendums and therefore I can agree or disagree with whether someone not fitting Zac's narrow qualifications will receive my respect.

Secondly, it is important to recognize respect and loving-one-another walk hand in hand, a minister who falls, a preacher whose children get out of hand, a fund raiser for evangelistic outreaches and such like are all well within the parameters of biblical Christianity and instead of showing disrespect, unloving attitudes towards them, it might behoove us to consider they are not our servant's but Christ's servants and in judging them we are essentially judging Jesus too.

Finally in the end you add another fallacy 'poisoning the well', meaning if I decide to stay with my own judgment of the matter I am somehow condoning errant preachers, false standards for leadership or some other thing.

This my brother is just silly, it's not true of me or of anyone else according to the verbiage given on this thread.

Truth is, I do want a good preacher, I do want Godly standards and I do have my own judgment of the people I come in contact with and none of those are successfully impugned by the comments you've made.

It's very good you esteem Brother Zac and so do I, but I exercise my God-given command to '1Th_5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.

Brother Zac is not shy about proving all things he hears and I do the same, even with the things he says. The scriptures are above my proving, but Brother Zac's are not.

For some this is such a minor thing it doesn't merit attention, to me it merited a response so I gave one.

Re: - posted by Heydave (), on: 2018/2/12 5:57

Some good posts on this subject and in particular I agree with Marvin's points, which if I understand correctly, upholds the 7 points of Zac Poonen as good and valid characteristics we should be looking for in ourselves and those called to lead in the church. However we also understand that no person is perfect (as Zac states in the article) and therefore God still works through imperfect vessels. This in no way condones sin or failures, but allows God's grace to operate in those who have a sincere heart to obey Him.

As Mr Bill alluded, only Jesus fully meets the perfect standard of the Good Shepherd. All others, however good are only at best hired under-shepherds.

I have often wondered about the fact that we know nothing about the family or children of any of the Apostles. We do know that Peter was married and assume he must have had children. I suspect some of the other apostles also, but there is not one mention of any detail about their wives or children. And you would have thought that at least one of the apostles' children would have taken over the mantle of leading the church (if you go by today's standard), but there is not one I have heard of.

Re: Marvin - posted by Sree (), on: 2018/2/12 6:24

Quote:

When you disagree with a post I make, just come out and say it plainly,

Other than the post in which I quoted you, none of my other posts are even directed to you. If they were directed then there is no reason for me to put it as multiple posts. It was my judgement of the forum members here and their lack of teachable spirit. I honestly did not even include you in the list. I apologize if I have hurt you in anyway.

I disagreed with only few things in your post. Infact I even agreed the way you ended your post. One thing I still disagree and believe that you are wrong is here,

Quote:

Brother Zac gave room for repentance but only before conversion.

There is no part in this article that supports your view. In fact in the article the writer clearly says that "So, even if YOU have been a total failure in the past, God can still make you an example for others to follow."

The YOU here clearly talks to believers who read it. The writer has written this article to believers and not to unbelievers. Knowing his ministry very well, which is discipleship of believers, I am very certain about this fact.

Now assuming you and I are born again believers, the article clearly states that even if we have failed God in our past, which can be even yesterday or in past few seconds. We can still be an example.

I agree that he gave an example of Paul's pre-conversion failure. The reason is in New Covenant we do not have anyone failed after conversion and being filled with the Holy Spirit. If there was a person like that, Zac could have given his example. Also as far as I know Paul was the only person after Jesus who has told others to Follow him. Paul considered himself chief of sinners, yet God made him an example. That is the point of this article.

The point is not being used by God. Like I said before being Used is different from being an example. God used Solomon to write 2 books in Bible, but he was not an example to even Jews, forget about being an example to Christians! Any one can be used by God even if he is living in open adultery, but they cannot be example for any Christian.

I have no disrespect of any of the Old Covenant saints, I only believe that they cannot be an example because as per H

Hebrews 12:1, Jesus alone is our example. If I disrespect them then the writer of Hebrews as well has done the same.

I still agree with you that these 7 points are not universal or objective. They are subjective and are also soundly Biblical. One can disagree with Subjective opinions but cannot say that they are unbiblical. There is nothing unbiblical about this article.

Being an Example - posted by Sree (), on: 2018/2/12 6:53

I think it is easy to misunderstand that this article states that God cannot USE a failed person. I do not even believe that the purpose of this article is usability to God. The purpose of this article is being an example to other believers.

We have to look into certain scriptures to understand Paul's stand here and how he was an example to other believers.

Phil 4-9:- Whatever you have learned and received and heard from me, and seen in me, put these things into practice.

I think this is a very very high standard to achieve. Paul here literally telling the Church to do anything that they see in him. I have not achieved that state yet, but I believe God is not partial only to Paul, he can make anyone achieve that level, if we believe so and worked with God.

I preach the Gospel frequently as well, but I always tell my shortcomings and make it very clear that I only share the path in which I am now going, it is not that I have reached the destination. But it is a path that God has shown me and I am encouraging others to join me in this path of following Jesus. Many of those who listen to my preaching may be ahead of me in that path, but they still need encouragement to stay in the path.

But Paul here was clearly ahead of anyone in his age in that path of following Jesus, that is why he was able to make such bold statements.

Now God has used me and my preaching and is still using them. I am so thankful to God for his mercy and Grace. But I am still not an example in the way Apostle Paul was, nor I consider myself as an example. But I believe God can make me an example because HE who has called me is faithful. This is how I see this article. It only encourages me to be steadfast in this Goal of becoming an example and not just being satisfied with being used by God. We can easily put our focus on being used by God and forget about the higher standard of being an Example.

Re: Being an Example - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2018/2/12 9:21

I think if the title would have been a little different, it may have been better. Maybe something like "7 characteristics of a godly pastor" when he put who he respects and follows, it seems he was putting himself on a pedestal. So I guess in Zac's world, if you're a young and upcoming pastor, and be on track to become a Zac, he has no respect for you, or would never give you a listen, that in my world is edging into being prideful. I can appreciate the article, I just think the title takes away from all the good content. I'm not here to judge Zac, but the title of this article seems to me to be a little judgemental, and seems to be putting self on a pedestal.

Re: The Preachers Whom I Respect and Follow by Zac Poonen - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2018/2/13 7:01

Brothers,

I am not sure where the reaction against brother Zac's article is coming from.

After all, he does say, "preachers I respect and follow" not saying you must do the same, although by implication maybe so. He is also not speaking of Christians in general.

The standards set are all biblical and not too high for a true servant / minister of the gospel...maybe we have just gotten used to lower standards and compromise?

Perhaps this article is also a response to the many so-called "men of God" arising in our day, and the popular preachers of the day, who are often charismatic in personality but a bit underdeveloped character wise.

I think this is a beautiful picture of what being a man of God is meant to be.

Those of us who desire to serve God in this way must know the requirements and earnestly seek that God will make us

his type of man.

Blessings,

Re: William - posted by MrBillPro (), on: 2018/2/13 10:22

Brother William, for the record, I don't have any negative reaction to the standards that God set forth. If you notice, God did not say, The Preachers Whom I Respect and Follow "By God". No, God just laid out the standards, that he felt were good and should be a part of our growth, as we mature in our ministry. Again, the title is what bothers me personally, it say's to me, if you are not at these standards in your ministry, I won't respect you and will not follow you.

Don't every Pastor deserve a little growth time? William, please don't jump on the "men of God arising in our day" bandwagon, there were bad Pastors and good ones since the second one, because Jesus was the first one on earth, that held all these standards. Some folks need to get out of the box, because I can tell you without a doubt, they're some wonderful and Godly pastors right now today, so we're going to stereotype them all, just because we haven't heard of them or listened to them? Are some of us so shallow in our thoughts, that we believe there are no more Zac's out there? if so we have a spiritual issue, it's normally called a critical spirit.

Quote:
----- Brother William said...After all, he does say, "preachers I respect and follow" not saying you must do the same, although by implication maybe so. He is also not speaking of Christians in general.

Brother, could you elaborate on this statement a little more, for us that might not completely understand what you're saying?

God Bless

Mr. Bill

Re: - posted by StirltUp (), on: 2018/2/13 13:20

Hey brother Bill,

My comments are not aimed at anyone in particular.

I just got the impression that there are undercurrents in the conversation, not against the article in particular but against Zac Poonen. If I am wrong forgive me.

I don't know him or his ministry well enough to judge or examine it.

What he seems to be saying is that, according to his personal judgement as a mature servant of God, these are the characteristics he looks for in anyone saying they are men of God.

When I speak of "the so-called men of God of today" I do not refer to legitimate men of God fulfilling their ministry faithfully and mostly quietly, I refer to those who advertise themselves and promote themselves as " God's anointed man of power for the hour, but when scrutinized fall far short of the requirements set by Paul for pastors and overseers. Just because you have an itinerant ministry and do not directly oversee God's flock does not mean you must not fulfil these requirements.

Wouldn't the church of God be in a better place if we followed these rules?

Zac speaks of " preachers" he respects and follows. By implication he is sort of suggesting we do the same, however he clearly says those HE respects and follows, referring to preachers, who are leaders in the church and are certainly examined and judged by a higher standard than " normal" Christians not in leadership positions and not desirous to be teachers in the church.

In any case, the characteristics he sets forth are worthy of imitating and following for all believers, not only leaders.

Blessings,

Re: Being an Example - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2018/2/13 15:36

Brother Sree: Forgive my mistake, I mistakenly assumed you were referencing to me. Since you were not, it is I who biffed it.

Your last post well worthy of repeating is a great statement of what it means to be 'not there yet, but seeking to be matured'.

Thanks for the clarification.

The article by Brother Zac is a good one, I just didn't like the narrowness of 'who gets respect' when in fact you should receive respect by reason of the love of God in working in us.

Your excellent post depicted the very man that may not fit Zac's criteria yet displays every characteristic of a man who should be respected.

I thank God for his Spirit in you brother Sree.

Re: The Preachers Whom I Respect and Follow by Zac Poonen - posted by narrowpath, on: 2018/2/13 15:37

I listen to Zac a lot and met him in person.

I find this one passage about receiving money a bit difficult:

Jesus recommended the widow in Mark 12:41-43. Surely she was very poor and some of those who received from her must have been wealthier than her.

Can you imagine a pastor going back to the widow saying, please keep your money for yourself ?

If I were a levite at that time, I would take that penny and keep it as a souvenir, so that everytime I see it, it reminds me of the generosity of the widow.

Zac takes a strong stand against pastors or church elders taking a salary. He states that this a particular problem in India, yet I do think it is legitimate for some elders or pastors to be fulltimers and take a salary.

I see myself as a tentmaker and support myself for the work in our little town and do not take any money. However, I think it is not right to make it an universal rule by which all have to abide.

Most of the preachers featured in SI are fulltimers and supported by funding I guess.

We do good to support evangelists and church planters in foreign countries.

I support an evangelist in Eastern Europe. He works full time harvesting souls wherever he goes and I am glad that I can take a little share in it.

1 Corinthians 9:14 Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.

Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2018/2/13 17:15

Quote:

Jesus recommended the widow in Mark 12:41-43. Surely she was very poor and some of those who received from her must have been wealthier than her.

It is a good point. I always used to wonder about this incident. But I do not think it is applicable in this context. Jesus did not ask the Widow for money. Neither did he accept money from her for his ministry or personal expense. She only offered her coins to the temple.

I think the point Zac is making here is, people who ask money openly but live a luxurious living themselves. For example most of the television preachers who ask money in their shows live a wealthier life style than most of them who offer money to their ministry.

I am personally part of a Church that does not pay anyone for any service. But I work closely with other Church pastors who are paid workers, I have nothing against them.

Re: another picture, another perspective - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2018/2/13 17:41

Narrow: It might surprise some that, our ministry to the poor and impoverished includes their giving. It's not that I need their money, in fact I don't take any from the ministry and never have, but that is a personal preference of my own. The reason we want the poor and impoverished to give is for their own understanding that their littlest gifts are important to God and go to their own people. You no doubt know that my plane ticket overseas costs more than many could give in a decade. But we do not want our brothers and sisters overseas to see us as the 'great white-American hope'. We are not, Jesus is their hope, we are not their healing though we bring in doctors, we are not their comforter though we bring in clothing, we are not their salvation though we preach Jesus. From the outset we endeavor to teach them that Jesus is ever present, ever willing to help, ever able to meet their needs long after we are gone. To some, they are jaded by reason of past exploiters that greedily pocketed their monies in order to tell them they qualify for blessing because they received some tithe from them. Now that they don't tithe they are left with that ole Malachi curse and expect nothing from God because if you don't give you don't get. We do not preach tithing, we preach Jesus as their sole means of support, their giving is like our giving out of our willingness to express love to Jesus Christ. The trips we make, the clothing, medical, gospel or benevolent aid they receive is all given for Jesus Christ. By this we set the example, live the example and yet "take from the poorer-than-ourselves" because God is teaching us how to better aid the poor.

Jesus taught us the widow you mentioned gave 'more than all of them' not because Jesus is speaking of a ratio of gift to income, but because her giving represented 'her all' As we preach we want everyone to give their 'all' to God.

So, without any apologies we recommend the poor give, the impoverished share, the lowest of the low learn to open their hand.

No doubt along the way, someone who makes less will give to someone who makes more and it will be God who is orchestrating it to be done.

It isn't that Brother Zac is wrong in the limited view he has taken, I fully agree, but only within a specific context, not as a universal requirement that if violated is tantamount to sin.