

## IT IS TOO! SOMEBODY'S BUSINESS!

Have you tried to protect yourself from critical review when your conduct has been careless and the example you set has not been the proper one, by concluding, “**It’s nobody’s business how I live**”? Do you really think that you are an, “**Island Unto Yourself**”? Are you deceived into thinking that your speech and deeds affect only self and no one else? If so, you are wrong and you need to think again, especially, if you are a Christian.

Notice the emphasis the Bible places on examples, and the need to be influenced by the proper kind. The Christ is, of course, our great example, as Peter relates, “*For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an **example**, that you should follow His steps:*”<sup>22</sup> “*Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth;*”<sup>23</sup> “*who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously;*” (1 Peter 2:21-23).

Paul qualified his own example in this way, “**Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.**” (1 Corinthians 11:1) That Paul recognized the value of influence is evident in his inspired instruction to Timothy, “*Let no one despise your youth, but be an **example** to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*” (1 Timothy 4:12)

Peter shows that elders have a special responsibility in this matter by writing that they are to “*Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly;*”<sup>3</sup> “*nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being **examples** to the flock;*” (1 Peter 5:2-3). Peter further notes that Sarah will serve as a worthy example for women today. “*For in this manner, in former times, the holy women who trusted in God also adorned themselves, being submissive to their own husbands,*”<sup>6</sup> “*as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, whose daughters you are if you do good and are not afraid with any terror.*” (1 Peter 3:5-6). Jesus instructed His disciples by command in the expected effects of a right example and, consequently, removed it from the realm of option for the child of God. *Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your*

*good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”* (Matthew 5:16)

While it may be that some at times deliberately and maliciously misinterpret the intent of some of our speech and deeds, that does not relieve us of responsibility to make our conduct as clearly godly as we can. Some may, also, sincerely be misled by our unintended but questionable activity.

Indeed, the words we speak, the deeds we do, and the life we live are important as far as our own physical and spiritual welfare is concerned, and they are important as far as their example before and influence upon others is concerned. Are we setting the proper example as a Christian must? **Yes, it is somebody's business, you know?**