

EXAMPLES

“Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did” (1 Cor. 10:6). (See also v. 11)

Apparently God does not make everyone an example who sets his heart on evil things. Millions do evil things that the Bible never mentions. The people mentioned in our text, however, God specifically chose to mention in the Bible as examples to teach us not to set our hearts on evil things as they did. Note the unique circumstances surrounding this example. They were all in Egypt. They were all baptized into Moses. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink. Perhaps God chose to make examples out of these people because they were the first generation to live and die under the Law of Moses.

Here is a brief list of other “firsts” that involve BAD EXAMPLES.

- Cain committed the first murder. God apparently punished him differently than other murderers (See Gen. 4:10 - 12). His bad example is mentioned centuries later: **“This is the message you heard from the beginning: We should love one another. Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother.” (1 John 3:11-12).**
- Ham was the first person to commit a sexual sin after coming out of the ark and God made an example out of him and his son Canaan (Gen. 9:20 - 27).
- God also made examples out of Sodom and Gomorrah (Jude 7; 2 Pet. 2:6).
- When the Law was given 3,000 people were killed for committing fornication and for worshiping a golden calf (Ex. 32:25 - 39). God put this in the Bible as an example to help prevent others from doing what they did.
- God also made an example out of Nadab and Abihu. They were apparently the first priests to offer unauthorized fire before the Lord (Lev. 10:1 - 9).
- Apparently the first person to defiantly break the Sabbath was placed in custody until God revealed what to do with him. The Lord made an example of him and said: **“The man must die. The whole assembly must stone him outside the camp” (Nu. 15:27 - 36).**
- Achan was the first person to steal something after Israel crossed the Jordan. God also made an example out of him (Josh. 7:25, 26).
- Annanias and Sapphira were the first to commit a blatant sin after the church was established and God also made an example out of them (Acts 5:1 - 11).
- These are a few bad examples we read about in the Bible. Note that the fingerprints of God are on every one of them. We need to learn from these examples. Paul put it bluntly, **“The wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23).** We need not learn this lesson by experience.

GOOD EXAMPLES

- Jesus said: **“I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.” (John 13:15)**
- Paul wrote: **“Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” (1 Cor 11:1).**
- The prophets also set a good example of patience in the face of suffering (Ja. 5:10).
- With reference to suffering Jesus also set a good example that we should follow in His steps (1 Pet. 2:21).
- Elders are not to be greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock (1 Peter 5:2, 3)

BE CAREFUL WHOSE EXAMPLE YOU FOLLOW, FOR WHEN THE BLIND LEAD THE BLIND, BOTH FALL INTO THE DITCH (MATTHEW 15:14)