

Be Imitators of God

Ephesians 5:1-2

Introduction

The pattern of imitation in the scriptures:

1. Jesus imitated the Father - Jn 8:28; 14:31
2. The disciples imitated Jesus - Jn 20:21-23
3. The believers imitated Paul - 1 Cor 11:1
4. Others are to imitate us - 1 Tim 4:12; 2 Tim 2:2

I Be Imitators of God

Imitate = To mimic or copy

A. The general call to imitate God

1. Be kind and compassionate - Eph 4:32
2. Be merciful - Luke 6:36
3. Be pure - I Jn 3:1-3
4. Be holy - 1 Peter 1:15-16
5. Be perfect - Matt 5:48

B. Paul's specific call to imitate God

1. In His forgiveness - Eph. 4:32; Col 3:12-13; Rom 5:8
2. In His love - I Jn 4:11-12; Matt 5:44-48; Lk 6:35-36

C. Hindrances to imitating God

1. An underdeveloped relationship with God
2. An underdeveloped knowledge of God
3. An underdeveloped submission to God
4. An underdeveloped obedience to God

II Live A Life of Love

A. The foundation of our love

1. God's love and acceptance - Rom 5:8; I Jn 4:19
2. God's adoption of us - Jn 1:12

B. The scope of our love

1. Love for God - Deut 6:4
2. Love for others - Jn 13:34-35

III Be Imitators of Christ

A. The general call to imitate Christ

1. Be humble - Phil 2:5-8
2. Be loving - Eph 5:25
3. Be a servant - Jn 13:14-17
4. Be willing to suffer - 1 Pet 2:21
5. Be just like Him - I Jn 2:6

B. Paul's specific call to imitate Christ

1. In His love for us - Jn 15:12-14
2. In His surrendered life - I Jn 3:16
 - a. A fragrant offering
 1. To God - Lev 1:9
 2. To others - 2 Cor 2:15-16
 - b. A sacrifice to God - Rom 12:1

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Take some time this week to consider the following:

1. Who is the person in your life (past or present) who has been positive role model for you? What aspect of their life would you most like to imitate?
2. Take a moment and list as many of the character qualities of God as you can. Which ones would you most like to imitate?
3. The model for agape love is Christ. What condition were you in when He loved you? [Hint: Rom 5:8] How can you demonstrate this same kind of love to others?
4. Christ's love for you prompted Him to willingly sacrifice himself for you. On a scale of 1-10 (10 being the highest), how sacrificial is your life for others? What needs to happen for that number to be higher? [Hint: Read Romans 12:1]
5. What is hindering you from imitating God more fully -- an underdeveloped 1) relationship, 2) knowledge, 3) submission or 4) obedience? How can you grow in this area this week?
6. Thank God for the great privilege He has given you to be His son/daughter, and ask Him for power to be an accurate reflection of His likeness before a lost world.

BOB HALLMAN - THE EPIC LIFE

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