

IMITATE GOD

Ephesians 5:1-7

In a world of bitterness, unforgiveness, impurity and sexual immorality, followers of Christ are to be different. We are called to imitate God in love and holiness.

1.LIVE A LIFE OF LOVE AS GOD’S BELOVED CHILDREN – Ephesians 5:1,2

- Because we are God’s beloved children, we are to imitate God. We are to imitate Him in continually loving others. We are to imitate the Father’s love – John 3:16; 1 John 4:10,11. We are to imitate God the Son – Galatians 1:4; 2:20. God’s kind of love is self-sacrificing, and focused on the needs of others. The greatest need we have is to find our joy in God. Jesus Christ gave Himself up for us as a sweet-smelling sacrifice to God His Father. The cross of Christ is always first God-focused and God-centered. Jesus died on the cross for the love of God. Jesus died on the cross for the glory and honor of God – Romans 3:25,25. As a result, God is just even in forgiving us. His forgiving love is the basis of our love for others.
- God’s people are to respond to His great love by being loving toward others. This is how we represent God to the world – Matthew 5:43-48. The glory of God is at stake in how we love and forgive others.

2.LIVE A PURE LIFE AS GOD’S HOLY ONES – Ephesians 5:3-7

- Because we are God’s saints, we are to imitate God in holy purity – verse 3. If you are a Christian you are a saint. We are to live a life different from the world especially in sexuality and greed – 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5. *“The moral life of the Graeco-Roman world had sunk so low that...fornication had long come to be regarded as a matter of moral indifference, and was indulged in without shame or scruple, not only by the mass, but by the philosophers and men of distinction who in other respects led exemplary lives.” – Kenneth Wuest, Word Studies in the Greek New Testament.* We live in similar times now, where almost anything goes. Immorality refers to any kind of sexual activity outside of the marriage bond. Impurity is uncleanness and filthiness like lusts, pornography, and giving our minds over to impure desires. Covetousness is the “insatiable desire to have more even at the expense of harming others.” It is the idolatry of desiring stuff more than God.
- Sins such as immorality, impurity, and greed should not even be named in an ongoing way among God’s people – verse 3. This means these sins should not be acceptable or associated with Christ’s church. Instead, we as God’s people should continually desire to live pleasing to God in our daily lives. We should be careful what we watch, listen to, and laugh at. We should be careful what we treasure and value – Hebrews 11:24-26.
- Sins such as filthiness or obscenity, foolish talk, and dirty jokes should be replaced with thanksgiving – verse 4. All three words refer to a dirty mind expressing itself in dirty speech. No follower of Christ should be known for filthy language or “off-color” jokes. *“...There are some things of which Christians should never make jokes – some are too sacred and some are too filthy.” – Curtis Vaughn, Ephesians.* Thanksgiving is the proper attitude and speech of the follower of Christ – Ephesians 5:20; Colossians 3:15-17.
- Sins such as immorality, impurity, and greed will receive God’s judgment – verses 5,6; Hebrews 13:4. Stop being led astray, those who practice immorality and idolatrous greed will not inherit

the “The Kingdom of Christ and of God” - Galatians 5:19-21; Colossians 3:5,6. Ongoing sin has eternal consequences. Sons of disobedience describes their character as disobedient to God. You cannot casually and brazenly continue in sin and be a follower of Christ – 1 Corinthians 6:9-11. Christ died for us and loves us too much to let us continue in our sin.

- Because we belong to Christ, we are not to be partners with evil and immorality – verse 7. This does not mean no contact with unbelievers, but not participating in sin with or like the world. *“Paul’s point here is that fully participating in the worldview and conduct of unbelievers in matters of sex and money is incompatible with membership in the people of God.” – Frank Thielman, Ephesians.* We are to be separate from the world in living for God – 2 Corinthians 6:14-16.

Concluding applications:

- What is the direction of your life?
- Are you known as a loving person?
- Do you laugh at the same jokes, talk the same way, and live the same way as the world?
- Are you desiring purity in your life for the glory of God?