

“Imitating Our Father” **Ephesians 5:1-6:9**

Introduction- The word “followers” in verse one is the word “mimics.” So the verse can be translated: “*Be ye imitators of God as beloved children.*” It’s the only place in the Bible where these words occur and what makes them so amazing is that they point to a standard beyond which there is no other.

William Barclay calls this “*the highest standard in the world.*” Alexander Maclaren calls it “*the sum of all duty.*” To Martyn Lloyd-Jones it was “*Paul’s supreme argument... the highest level of all doctrine and in practice...the ultimate ideal.*”

Paul’s admonition to “be imitators of God” sets the theme for this section (5:1-17). Paul is saying to us that as God’s children we are to act like our father.

How is it possible to imitate God who is infinitely above us? Man made in the image of God! A moral image, but marred by sin. When we are born again... “Partakers of the divine nature.” Note God’s attributes, two kinds. So Paul points to four aspects of God’s nature that we should imitate.

I. God is Love, So Walk in Love, vv. 1-7

In applying the doctrines he taught in chapters 1-3, Paul now for the third time used the term “walk.” It means to live. See 4:1, 17, 5:2. How are we to walk? “In love.” Walking in love has both a positive and a negative side.

A. The Positive Side- To actively do good (vv. 1-2).

1. A Forgiving Love (4:32).

2. A Giving Love (vs. 2).

“If we walk in love our lives will be a living sacrifice.” **Illus.:** Like God, Matt. 5:44-45, “rain on just.”

Others, Lord yes, others!
Let this my motto be;
Help me to live for others
That I might live like thee.

-Charles d. Meigs

We can’t do it, we need the Holy Spirit! (Rom. 5:5) A loving person will also not do selfish, sinful things!

B. The Negative Side: To Abstain From Evil (vv. 3-4).

Note the contrast “but” so Paul turns from *sacrificial love* to *self-indulgent-lust*. From the *sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour*. To the *stench of sinful sexuality*. Paul names sexual sins that are lust, not love.

1. Fornication (Greek: *pornia*) I Thess. 4:3
2. Uncleanness- It’s immoral acts and also includes impure pictures, obscene books, and other suggestive materials that go along with lives of indecency and that feed the fires of passion.
3. Covetousness- In context it’s not lust for money or things. It’s sensual covetousness.

- Filthiness (vs. 4) refers to dirty or obscene stories.
- Foolish talking is conversation worthy of a moron.
- Jestings or coarse jestings is unwholesome humor. It’s humor with sexual innuendoes and unsavory hidden meanings.

“It’s not fitting” (vs. 4) some would say “your too stuffy!” For what? In context it could be “sex”. Christians have a bad reputation for being negative towards sex. No! It’s God’s idea.

C. Paul gives us reasons to abstain from sexual sin (vv. 5-7).

1. You won’t inherit the kingdom of Christ (vs. 5).
2. You will experience God’s wrath (vs. 6).

Does this mean that anyone who has sinned in this way will go to Hell? No! You can be forgiven.

II. God is Light, so walk as children of light (vv. 8-14).

1. To live before the eyes of God, not hiding anything.
2. To live as to be revealing God’s light.

III. God is All Wise, So Walk in Wisdom (vv. 15-17)

1. Making the most of your time (vs. 16).
2. Discerning and doing the will of God (vs. 17).

IV. God is A Tri-Unity, Walk in Harmony (5:18-6:9)

1. Be filled with the spirit (vv. 18-21).
2. In the home (vv. 22-6:4).
3. On the job (6:4).

- **God is Love: Walk Lovingly**
- **God is Light: Walk in Integrity**
- **God is Wise: Walk Circumspectly**
- **God is Triune: Walk Harmoniously**

How? Spirit of God. The Word of God.