

Weekly Devotional - Be Imitators Of GOD 1-12-22

Therefore become imitators of GOD [copy HIM and follow HIS example], as well-beloved children [imitate their father]; and walk continually in love [that is, value one another—practice empathy and compassion, unselfishly seeking the best for others], just as CHRIST also loved you and gave HIMSELF up for us, an offering and sacrifice to GOD [slain for you, so that it became] a sweet fragrance. [Ephesians 5:1-2 AMP]

This word translated as “imitators” or “followers” in English versions of the Bible is *mimētai* in the Greek, the root of our word *mimic*. It has the positive connotation of emulating a pattern set by an admired mentor, and it is used seven times in the New Testament to advocate following or emulating certain early church leaders, CHRIST, and, ultimately, GOD.

In the NFL imitation is often a form of flattery. Troy Vincent, the NFL's head of football operations, and a star player for 15 pro seasons and former president of the players union recognizes that trends always will be a part of the sport. He said, "We are a copycat league, you bet,". ("In The NFL, Imitation Is A Form Of Flattery, By Fox Sports. August 31, 2014)

A child imitating his or her parents is the most natural thing in the world. It's how children learn everything from brushing their teeth to putting away toys to treating others with respect. Young children want to grow up to be like their parents, and they will often pretend to be their parents—trying on their parents' shoes, wearing their hats, etc. It's an important part of childhood play as they imitate what they see in their parents. This is the type of mimicry that Paul alludes to in Ephesians 5.

When Paul instructed the believers to be imitators of GOD, he specified “be imitators of GOD, as beloved children” [Eph. 5:1]. Perhaps this is why some translations use the word *followers* instead, to emphasize that Christians must imitate GOD in such a way that follows HIS example. To properly imitate GOD, we must first be HIS children. “But to all who did receive HIM, who believed in HIS Name, HE gave the right to become children of GOD, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of GOD” [John 1:12-13]. If we receive CHRIST and believe in HIS Name, we become GOD'S beloved children.

GOD says I am HIS beloved child [1 John 3:1]. I am chosen, adopted into HIS family through JESUS CHRIST to be HIS child forever [Eph. 1:4-6 NLT; see also 1 Thess. 1:4;2:13].

GOD says I am valuable. HE calls me HIS workmanship [Eph. 2:10 NLT]. I am redeemed [1 Pet. 1:18-19 NLT].

GOD says I am a new person in JESUS CHRIST [2 Cor. 5:17]. I am HIS friend [John 15:15].

GOD says I am HIS ambassador [2 Cor. 5:20; Eph. 6:20].

GOD says I am a member of JESUS CHRIST'S Body [Eph. 3:6]. I am an heir to HIS Kingdom and HIS glory [Gal. 4:7; Eph. 1:11; Rom. 8:17], a citizen of heaven [Phil. 3:20].

GOD says I am exceedingly loved [Rom. 5:8; see also Rom. 8:31-39; John 3:16-17].

The more we study the WORD of GOD, the more we discover who we are in CHRIST. We are transformed into the person GOD says we are when we make JESUS CHRIST the pursuit of our lives: "So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the LORD. And the LORD—who is the SPIRIT—makes us more and more like HIM as we are changed into HIS glorious image" [2 Cor. 3:18; see also Rom. 8:29; 12:2; Phil. 1:6; Eph.4:15].

***Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17 AMP**

May we always have a mind through which CHRIST thinks; a heart through which CHRIST loves; a voice through which CHRIST speaks; a hand through which CHRIST helps; and be a vessel through which CHRIST lives!

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