

Imitating God
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Eph 5:1-20
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Synopsis:

We learn proper behavior by proper worship, because behavior is determined by imitation, what we worship. We either imitate truth or falsehood. The truth is a God who loves us through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. Here's the take-away for today: We need to imitate Jesus.

I.

Imitation is Worship

Eph 5:1 "Therefore be imitators of God as beloved children"

Imitation: Children imitate parents

1. Negative: Dad and tools, housefan in Colorado
2. Positive: Language of children

Worship is Imitation:

hero worship, we model ourselves after someone

Model:

Imitate God who loved us in death of Jesus Christ.

II.

Worship is Behavior

Eph 5:2 "Live in love . . . a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God"

Worship is not something we do only on Sunday

Worship language in this text: Look

Fragrant offering and sacrifice	v 2
Thanksgiving	vv 4, 20
Purity and "as is proper"	v 3
Idolatry	v 4
Light and dark (ass with tabernacle)	v 8
Fruit (sacrifice)	v 9
Drunk and Spirit	v 18
Psalms, hymns, spiritual songs	v 19

Our behavior reflects our worship. The problem is not our behavior, it is our worship. If we get our worship right, our behavior will follow.

What was Ephesian behavior?

*Reminder: This is addressed to church people, insiders!

III.

Bad Behavior is Bad Worship

Eph 5:3 “But fornication and impurity of any kind, or greed”

E.g. Smokey Joe: Sweet smell or stinky smell?

3 kinds of sexual behavior

3 kinds of speech behavior

Sex: fornication, impurity, and greed

Fornication: adultery, incest, homosexual

Impurity/Filth: wild sexual behavior, pornography

Greed/Lust: out of control desires

*If this is a church, this stuff is here!

Speech: obscene, silly, vulgar

Obscene: foul mouth

Silly: spreading rumors, tearing down others

Vulgar: slick speech

*If this is a church, this stuff is here!

This is Ephesian behavior. What is Geneva behavior? Remember, behavior comes from worship.

Imitation: Dionysius and Artemis worship

Imitation: Geneva worship?

Paul recommends for church people:

1. Stop It!

2. Stop associating with those who do these things.

3. Stop others if you hear and see it.

IV.

Good Behavior is Good Worship

Eph 5:20 “Giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”

Solution is not better behavior.

Solution is better worship/imitate God in Jesus Christ.

When we imitate God, here’s what happens:

Thanksgiving	v 4
Goodness, righteousness, truth	v 9
Self-giving love	v 2
Psalms, hymns, spiritual songs	v 19
Walk in light	v 8

Turn around Ephesian behavior:

Sex: good relations, honor, proper desire

Speech: praise, building up, authentic speech

Here’s some take-homes for church people.

Worship first:

1. Begin to imitate Jesus: read and pray (John 8:12)
2. Find someone to imitate who imitates Jesus (Heb 13:7)
3. Be someone to imitate: Watch me! (Paul: “Imitate me!”)

Behavior second:

If you are engaging in sexual indiscretion, stop it.

If you are slandering, vulgar, tearing down, stop it.

If you see others doing this (in church), stop them.

The only way to improve our behavior is to improve our worship, to imitate God in Jesus Christ.