

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Ephesians 5:1-2

Lesson #30

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1

Ephesians 5

“¹ Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; ² and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.”

Imitating God means we imitate Jesus' sacrificial love.

2

Philippians 2

“⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”

3

Revealing the holiness
of God and the
seriousness of sin

Revealing God's
heart, power,
and justice

The atonement for sin
with redemption and
reconciliation with God



The fulfillment and
end of the Law
covenant

A picture of our death
to self & sin
“in Christ”

**An example
for us to follow**

4

Ephesians 5

“¹ Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; ² and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.”

- Christian ethics starts with love not holiness.
Note what is NOT mentioned: **moral holiness, social justice, doctrinal purity, mission in the world, etc.**
- Sacrificial love is God's priority; is it ours also?

5

How are we to imitate God's love?

1. This passage is about **forgiving** those who have wronged us.

¹ **Therefore** be imitators of God, as beloved children; ² and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you,

- This exhortation is tied directly to the last words in ch.4.

³² Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”

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Ephesians 4

“³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.”

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Ephesians 5

“Therefore **be imitators of God**”

- From the beginning of time humans have been obsessed with playing God.
- The question is - what part of God do we aspire to Mimetai (mimic)?



8

We have a long history of being after God's job.



9

God's post-its to His anxious children



10

Ephesians 5

“Therefore **be imitators of God**”

- From the beginning of time humans have been obsessed with playing God.
- The question is - what part of God do we aspire to MIMETAI (mimic)?

If 12 Apostles are asked: What is the first sign of a Christian's witness to the Gospel?

FORGIVENESS

11

How are we to imitate God's love?

"as **beloved children**"

2. Imitation is rooted in **attachment**.

- We love because He first loved us (1 Jn.4:19).
- Children learn by imitating adults to whom they have some meaningful attachment.
- The theme of ch 1-3 is "attachment" ("chose", "adoption", "redemption", "inheritance", "sealed", "seated with", "brought near", "reconciled", etc): exhortation to imitate follows in ch.5.
- The prayer at the end of ch.3 is that we would know the love of Christ (before we can be full of it to overflowing).

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Ephesians 3

"¹⁴ For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, **being rooted and grounded in love**, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and **to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge**, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God."

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How are we to imitate God's love?

3. Forgiveness calls for **self sacrifice**.

"just as Christ also loved you, and **gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God** as a fragrant aroma."

- We are asked to suffer the loss of justice (penalty and repayment).

1 John 3:16

"We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us; and **we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.**"¹⁴

How are we to imitate God's love?

"a sacrifice to God as **a fragrant aroma.**"

4. Forgiveness is a sacrificial act of **worship**.

- Christian ethics is not just social manners.

Romans 12

"¹ I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to **present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.** ² And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."¹⁵

When asked about her ministry as a social worker she replied,

"My ministry is not social work, it is worship. My care for the suffering is my love for Jesus."



Mother Teresa

16

"In the end, dear friend, it is always between us and God, not between us and them."



Mother Teresa

17

Romans 5:8

“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that **while we were yet sinners**, Christ died for us.”

**Reconciliation
precedes
Reformation**

This is the Gospel.

18

How are we to imitate God's love?

Forgive offenders

Free offenders from any debt.

Suffer loss of what was justly ours
Absorb debts & loss of justice.

Worship for God

See our actions as a salute of awe to
Christ who forgives us.

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How are we to imitate God's love?

1. Forgiveness is not about the **DISCOMFORT** of dealing with differences of taste, style, culture, maturity, etc.
2. This is about **SIN**; actions that need to be forgiven (injustice, loss, wrongs). *Matt.18*
3. Someone needs to **PAY** to make this right.
4. The **CROSS** of Christ is a self - sacrifice in payment.
5. We must **BEAR** a cross to forgive others.
6. This is about **WORSHIP** of God.

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Matthew 16

“²⁴ Then Jesus said to His disciples, “If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. ²⁵ For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it.””

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