

Ephesians: Unsearchable riches of Christ

Study 24: Imitate God and Walk in Love

READ Eph 5:1-2 and Luke 7:36-50 and **LISTEN** to Pastor Craig Baxter's [sermon](#).

The common saying goes, the apple never falls far from the tree, meaning a child usually has a similar character or qualities to his or her parents. Children are like their parents. And Paul, in this section (5:1-21), acknowledges that, as “beloved children” (v. 1) of God, we are called to walk or live in a godly manner, like our heavenly Father. The first aspect of this walk will be to walk in love as God has been and continues to be loving to us.

Main lesson: As God's beloved children we are to imitate Him by loving others as Christ has loved us.

Questions:

1. What do you think it means to imitate God? What does and doesn't it include?
2. How does being “beloved children”, adopted into God's family, provide both the means to be able to imitate God as well as the expectation to imitate God? Consider Col 1:27; Eph 1:4-5; 1 John 3:1-3.
3. Once a person is a child of God what is a prerequisite to being able to imitate God rightly? Is it something we imagine or can we be more certain? Explain.
4. Generally speaking, what does it mean to “walk in love” (v. 2)? Why is it essential to have a biblical definition of love? What problems arise if we don't?

5. A. We are called to love as Christ loved us (v. 2). How has Christ loved us from v. 2? See also Rom 5:8; 1 John 4:10.

B. From your answer, what does loving others really look like? See 4:31-32; Matt 5:44-45, 48. Do you find it difficult to love like this?
6. Read Luke 7:36-50. What motivated the sinful woman to love like she did? What do you learn from her example in light of Simon the Pharisee's response?
7. Consider the fact that Jesus “gave Himself up for us” as a means of loving us. He didn't give us stuff but Himself. How can this inform the way you might love others, ie. spouse, your enemies, your children, etc? Be as practical as possible.
8. Why was Jesus' perfect character and sacrificial way He loved called a “fragrant offering” (v. 2)? See Lev. 1:9, 13, 17; 2:9. How might this apply to us?
9. What has been most convicting or encouraging from this study and what change(s) might you make as a result?

STOP AND PRAY:

Praise: God for His perfect display of love in sending His Son to die for His children

Thank: the Lord for saving us and adopting us into His royal family to live for Him

Pray: that you might have grace to walk in love toward those who have hurt you