

"Be Imitators of God"

Eph.5:1-21 - 1/8/17

How Can I be an 'imitator of God'?

*Ephesians 5:1+2

1) By Walking in Love - As a Sacrifice to God

Not only is Jesus our example, but He's our source.

Just as with Jesus, may our offering of love for one another become a "fragrant aroma" to God.

*Ephesians 5:3-6

2) By Not Giving Ourselves Over to Any Impurity or Greed - Including Sexual Immorality

How we live matters - if we're going to follow Christ.

*"Let no one deceive you with empty words, for **because** of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience."*

"The most personal gift that I can ever give is myself; I have nothing more precious to give... I want to give my spouse the best that I have - my whole self, as completely as I can."

If sexual sin was an issue before coming to Christ, then know that you've been forgiven of all of it.

There's grace for the child of God - though it is never a license or an excuse to sin. But if we've crossed the line, or missed the mark as Christians, *though not habitually - abusing God's grace (which the Bible gives stern warnings against, with eternal consequences)...*

Then we need to leave it in the past and move God-ward.

*Ephesians 5:7-14

3) By Not 'Partaking' of Sin - But Exposing It... And Then Learning What Is Pleasing To The Lord.

Stay away from what you know to be sin, and then *expose* it; don't hide sin in your heart.

We also need to learn what is pleasing to the Lord and we do this, through our relationship, the Word and prayer.

As we're committed to Christ, we're pleasing to the Lord. As we serve Christ, we're pleasing to the Lord. As we exalt Christ, we're pleasing to the Lord. As we lead others to Christ, we're pleasing to the Lord. There are many ways we see in Scripture, to be pleasing to the Lord.

"God wants them to learn to walk, & must therefore take away His hand. If only the will to walk is really there... Then He is pleased - even with their stumbles." C.S. Lewis - The Screwtape Letters

4) By Being Wise - Making The Most of Our Time... By Understanding What The Will of The Lord Is

*Psalm 90:1-12

We need to number our days - so that we can present to God, a heart of wisdom.

"We are always complaining that our days are few - and acting as though there would be no end." -Seneca (Roman philosopher)

"Time, is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have; and only you can determine how it will be spent. So be careful - lest you let other people spend it for you."