



Monday, February 15, 2021

Scripture: Ephesians 5:1-2

TITLE: Be King Imitators

About two years ago, my family and I spent part of a vacation in Branson, MO. Branson is an interesting town. It's like the Christian version of Las Vegas. Why do I say that? Well, it's full of entertainment, good food, no gambling, and a lot of imitators. You see people imitating Elvis, the beach boys, Franki Valli, Johnny Cash, and the list goes on. Some of these imitators are so good, you'd swear you're watching the real thing.

Well, as Christians, we are called to be imitators as well. Not imitators of singers, actors, and comedians. But imitators of the King! And I don't mean "the king" Elvis Presley.

Listen to Paul's words in Ephesians 5:1-2.

Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. ²Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.

Paul says, Christians, you are to be imitators of God. He means to copy the specific characteristics of another person. Well, we are to study and mimic the characteristics of God and, above all, His love.

Paul paints a beautiful picture of a child and their Father. It's like that scene from *Jaws* where Michael is imitating his dad, Chief Brody. He mimics every move – every facial expression. Paul says, be like a child imitating his Father. And Paul highlights one particular characteristic: Love.

Now, we need to be clear about what Paul means by "love". Today, there's a lot of confusion about love. You see signs in people's yards that say, "Love is love". I'd agree, but there's a disagreement over what love is and is not.

Paul uses the word "agape," which is selfless love. It's a love that says "no" to oneself and says "yes" to another. But are there limits to this? With true love, yes.

Love does not endorse nor promote sin. Love does not celebrate nor promote rebellion from God and His ways.

So true love has limits, but inside those boundaries, it is a sacrificial love. Just like Christ. Christ gave up His throne in heaven by becoming the God-man. He surely gave up a lot by dying for us on the cross.

Today, we have opportunities at work to show sacrificial love as imitators of God. Perhaps it's by staying late to help your coworker finish a project.

We have opportunities to show sacrificial love by cooking the evening meal to give a spouse a break.

We have opportunities to show true Christ-like love by picking up groceries or a meal for a shut-in in your neighborhood.

When we show God's love, it is worship and a sweet aroma to God.

My challenge for you today is to find one person to show Christ-like love. Who is that person for whom you can tangibly demonstrate the reality of God in your life?

I'd love to hear what you have to share on our app, goTandem. I'm there daily to interact with you.

Let's imitate God and share the impact of this kind of love!