

Ephesians 5:1

Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.

This short eight-word verse speaks for itself. But when I read this, it always reminds me of when I was a little kid. I still remember it even though it's been over 60 years ago. I remember my dad cutting the front lawn with his power mower, and I had my play plastic mower following right behind my dad, like I was cutting the grass just like he was. Simply I was imitating my dad.

Unfortunately I grew up imitating my dad, who used to go out and drink and use women for his pleasure. But one good thing came out of imitating my dad, and that was that he gave his life to Jesus several years before he died. And I followed shortly after him, following my dad's example, giving my life to Jesus, just like my dad did. But my dad also died at a very young age, in his 50's. So being a Christian, I did not have that part of my dad to follow. Over my early years I would see friends and men who were Christians and would want to be like them. Some of them today, years later, are great Christian men, and some others, all I will say is that I am glad I did not follow their example.

Now, don't get me wrong. I know I have made mistakes over the years myself, but a true Christian learns from their mistakes and grows as a Christian. You have probably heard the expression, "*He's his dad's son.*" meaning he is just like his dad. But do people say that about you and your Heavenly Father? Do they see you imitating God in the way you live, work, play, talk, give, pray, or when troubles hit?

They say that people look like their dog. But you know what, people's heart's look like their God or god. How do you see what someone's heart looks like? By the things they say and by what they do. Our ultimate example of this is Jesus. We know His heart was to love others to the fullest extent, by His death on the cross for all.

But even before His death, we read of how He loved all and ministered to all. He was not a respecter of men where He chose only the rich and famous, but rather because He chose the lowest of the low in the world's eyes. Those like, a widow with only two pennies to her name, a tax collector, a woman who had been married five times and was living with a guy. People with leprosy, maimed, blind, deaf, sick, rich and well off. We could go on and on. But what about us? In these times of all that's going on in this world and the USA, are we walking around imitating Jesus by what we say and how we treat others, or are we imitating the world with our posts on social media or things we say or even think about others?

One final thought is that Jesus never allowed Himself to be taken advantage of or walked over. Instead, He loved and spoke the truth in love to others, no matter how they treat Him.

† **3 John 1:11** *Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good. He who does good is of God, but he who does evil has not seen God.*

† **Matthew 5:44** *But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,*

† **John 12:26** *If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.*