

Genuine Imitation

Imitators

- “No man ever yet became great by imitation”
–Sm. Johnson
 - BUT he also said, “Example is always more efficacious than precept”
- ‘Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery’ –
Chas. Colton
 - Oscar Wilde added, “...that mediocrity can pay to greatness”

Imitator

Verb: use as a model, *emulate*, *follow*.

- To copy someone's behavior
- Aristotle used it to describe how people imitated animals –
 - Learned weaving from a spider . . .
 - Learned building from a swallow
- Students imitated teachers. 1 Pt.2:21, For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an **example**, that you should **follow** His steps

Related words

- Mime – one who acts out an imitation of another person
- Pantomime – originally, a theater production that was without words
- Mimeograph – machine that makes many copies from one stencil

I. Imitate Paul

1 Co.4:16-17; 11:1

“But I can’t imitate Paul...”

- Persecuted the church
- Vision of Jesus on road to Damascus – direct revelation
- Apostle – closed to further applicants, Ac.1:22-23 [Acts 12] . . . 1 Co.15:8-10
- Miraculous signs – Ac.20
- Looks – some disciples imitated teachers in way they dressed, walked, and taught; we cannot

1 Co.4:16-17; 11:1

We can imitate Paul in his...

- Priorities. Obsessed with teaching any who will listen. Ac.17:17. Ac.18:1-11 –
 - 18:1-4, persuaded
 - 18:5, preached more
 - 18:6-11, persisted

1 Co.4:16-17; 11:1

“We can imitate Paul in his...”

- Priorities. Ac.17:17. Ac.18:1-11
- Perseverance. Ac.18:12-17
 - 1 Th.1⁶ And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit
 - 2 Th.2¹⁵ Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle

1 Co.4:16-17; 11:1

“We can imitate Paul in his...”

- Priorities. Ac.17:17. Ac.18:1-11
- Perseverance. Ac.18:12-17
- Passion to the end.
 - Ac.20:24
 - 2 Tim.4⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith...
 - Lk.14

1 Co.4:16-17; 11:1

“We can imitate Paul in his...”

- Priorities. Ac.17:17. Ac.18:1-11
- Perseverance. Ac.18:12-17
- Passion to the end. Ac.20:24. 2 Tim.4:6-7
- Plea to imitate his obedience to gospel.
Ac.26:...24-29
 - Ac.22:16
 - Ph.3:17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us

1 Co.4:16-17; 11:1

“We can imitate Paul in his...”

- Priorities. Ac.17:17. Ac.18:1-11
- Perseverance. Ac.18:12-17
- Passion to the end. Ac.20:24. 2 Tim.4:6-7
- Plea to imitate his obedience to gospel.
Ac.26:....24-29
 - Ac.22:16
 - Ph.4:9 What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me — practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you

I. Imitate Paul

II. Imitate God

Ep.5:1 – “Therefore” → Ep.4

- Put off / Put on
 - 22: old man – ruled by sin
 - 24, new man – ruled by righteousness

Ep.5:1, 22, **Old man** (behavior to put off)

- Lying, 25 (v.24)
- Sinful anger, 26-27
- Stealing, 28
- Sinful speaking, 29
- Grieving Holy Spirit, 30
- General corruption, 31

Members of one
another (25) –
to speak or to
live a lie hurts
all Christians

Ep.4:32 – **New man** (behavior to put on)

- Kind to one another...as God is kind
- Tenderhearted, as God is
- Forgive, as God does...

Ep.5:1 – **therefore...imitate God**

- Children naturally imitate parents
- How to imitate God? Mt.5:48 therefore you shall be perfect just as your Father in heaven is perfect
- Echoes Lv.19:2: You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy

I. Imitate Paul

II. Imitate God

III. Imitate faith of other
believers, Hb.6:12

We learn by watching

- Hb.6:12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises
 - 13: Abraham – great faith (11:8-10, 17)
 - 14: God's promise: *Surely...*
- *Conduct proves parentage*
- The closer the parent-child relationship, the more likely the training will take

We have a choice

3 Jn.¹¹ Beloved, do not imitate evil but imitate good. Whoever does good is from God; whoever does evil has not seen God

We face same choice as Gaius

3 Jn.⁹ I have written something to the church, but Diotrephes, who likes to put himself first, does not acknowledge our authority.¹⁰ So if I come, I will bring up what he is doing, talking wicked nonsense against us. And not content with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers, and also stops those who want to and puts them out of the church