

Be an Imitator of God
International Bible Lesson
Ephesians 5:1-14
Sunday, December 23, 2012
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“Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour” (Ephesians 5:1,2—KJV).

“Since you are God’s dear children, you must try to be like him. Your life must be controlled by love, just as Christ loved us and gave his life for us as a sweet-smelling offering and sacrifice that pleases God” (Ephesians 5:1,2—GNB).

“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” (Ephesians 5:1,2—NRSV).

Through Moses, God commanded us to love God and others. When God gave us the Ten Commandments, He explained some of the actions we should or should not take in order to live in love. After Jesus Christ humbled himself and came into the world as a little baby, He later demonstrated and taught even more ways that we could express our love for God and others. He further expressed the love of God for us and our world when He suffered and died on the cross to save us from practicing sin and the consequences of our sins. Through the gift of His Son, God demonstrated the breadth and depth of His love. In the light of these facts, the Bible commands us “be imitators of God, as beloved children.” Even as Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, taught and demonstrated the love of God, so His followers, as children of God, should be willing to teach and demonstrate the love of God.

The Bible reveals that God’s beloved children should live as “children of light” or “children of truth.” As children of light, the followers of Jesus will do what “is good and right and true” (Ephesians 5:8, 9). If we seek to imitate God, we will avoid doing or saying anything that is not “good and right and true.” When we think about the future, the new year ahead, a possible new job or occupation, a new way of life, the Bible tells us, “Try to find out what is pleasing to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:10).

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Thinking Further

1. What might happen to Christians and to churches if they promoted only the Bible's teachings on belief and faith?

2. What might happen to Christians and to churches if they promoted only the Bible's teachings on moral and immoral behavior?

3. How do Paul's letters and the Bible teach about belief, faith, and behavior in the best ways?

4. According to Ephesians chapter 5, what will distinguish a beloved child of God from others?

5. Where can you find the fruit of the light (see Ephesians 5:9)? Where else might you find the fruit of the light?