

Discussion Questions

How to Imitate God

Ephesians 5:1-19

(Share about a time when God spoke powerfully to you through the words or actions of someone else.)

In this sermon, Peter shared a story about a boy who was shunned by his community. They said he “wasn’t any good” and “he’d never amount to anything” because he didn’t know who his daddy was. They called him Ben the Bastard Boy.

- Can you think of a time when you felt shunned or rejected by those around you?
- What emotions were present at that time?
- What lies did the enemy whisper in your ear?

I believe the enemy likes to use these sorts of situations to fill our hearts with shame and isolate us from each other and God. He likes to convince us that we’re not worthy of God’s love or the love of others.

- Are there any areas in your life where you feel tempted to isolate yourself from God or others?
- Are there any areas in your life where you have come to believe you have to earn God’s love?
- Are there any areas where you feel you have to earn the love of others?

Although we live in a world that seems to demand that we act, look, live, perform (etc.) a certain way *before* we can be accepted; God, in Christ Jesus, reveals that He loved us even before we ever took our first breath:

The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ... **has [already] blessed** us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he **chose** us in him **before the creation** of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he **predestined** us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—to the praise of his glorious grace, which he **has freely given** us in the One he loves. In him we **have [already]** redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace that he lavished on us. —Ephesians 1:3-9

- How does knowing God’s love is a done deal impact you? Is it easy for you to accept and believe? Why or why not?

In Ephesians 5, Paul writes, “Therefore imitate God as beloved children. He doesn’t say “Imitate God *so that* you can be beloved children. He says, “Imitate God *as* beloved children.”

- Do you think this differentiation is important? If so, why?

In his sermon, Peter said that when children know their parents love them they just imitate them; they imitate everything, always, even if it hurts, even if they don’t understand. They may do it poorly, but it’s perfect in their father’s eyes. The message of God’s unending love for all His children echoes all throughout Scripture and is pivotal to the Gospel.

- Why do you think knowing that we are loved by God is vital to our relationships with God and others?
- How might it protect us from the schemes of the evil one?
- What are some ways that you have tried to imitate your Father but feel you have failed?
- As a loving Father, how do you think God might see those attempts that you and the enemy might call “failures?”

At the end of the story about “Ben the Bastard Boy,” we learned that Ben’s acceptance of the word that God is Daddy and he is God’s beloved child transformed his life and his relationships with everyone around him.

Take a moment to hear your Heavenly Father telling you that you are His beloved child. Picture Him looking straight into your heart and loving you with an everlasting unstoppable love. Let His love fill your heart and set you free from any shame or lies that have been placed on you.

Take a moment to ask God to replace the areas where you still feel like you have to earn His love with an overwhelming assurance that it has *already* been freely given to you.

**These questions were created by Kimberly Weymen*