



DISCUSSION GUIDE

THIS WEEK: "The Power of Imitation" - Ephesians 5:1-20

GETTING STARTED

What is one thing you are thankful for this week and what is one thing we can pray for you this week?

Remind each other of our simple expectations for meeting together

In what ways have you observed in life that 'what you value gets imitated'? (kids, work, culture, friendships, parenting etc.?)

QUICK REACTIONS

How would you summarize/paraphrase the message in your own words?

What point/idea resonated most with you? Why?

Did you disagree with something said, or what do you think should have been added or expanded on?

QUESTIONS FROM THE MESSAGE

1. Agree or Disagree ... Everyone is imitating someone or something?
2. Agree or Disagree, and why... Who or what we imitate matters because imitation runs downhill into the choices we make?

Of the three points Dave made about how we imitate Christ (walking in self-giving love, walking in light, walking in wisdom).

3. Which convicted you most? Which connected most with you? Of the people you are in relationship with, which of the three do they need to see you most emulate?

Of the three ways to walk in wisdom (Carefully consider your life, Make the most of the present, Prioritizing what's important)...

4. What most needs your attention? Why?
5. What simple goal could you establish over the next month in this area?

EXPLORE THE PASSAGE [Ephesians 5:1-20]

(Yes, these questions can seem silly, however good discussion and interpretation of the Bible begins with having a proper understanding of the basic facts; who, what, when, and where in the text.)

How are Christians to imitate God? (5:1-2)

What things ought imitators of Christ not practice? (5:3-6)

What are the consequences of remaining in these kinds of practices? (5:5-7)

Why are we to not participate with the 'things' these people do? (5:7-8)

How does life in darkness contrast with life in the light? (5:9-20)

In what ways ought we to live our lives? (5:15-20)

QUESTIONS THAT HELP US UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEXT

What is the basis/foundation for imitating God and following the example of Christ?

What are some wrong motives for imitating God? How can we avoid those?

Why does Paul use these specific examples in verses 3-7 to help us understand that are wrong/broken patterns for the Christian to follow in? What does he say we should do instead? Why is thankfulness to God important?

What is the difference between participating with immorality verses being guilty through association? In what ways as followers of Jesus can we be “associated with sinners” without participating in its corrupting influence?

BONUS THOUGHT—QUESTION 😊

Why is it important to integrate who we are in Christ (our experience as Christians) with what we believe (theology) with Christian ethics/morality (i.e. how we conduct ourselves as Christians)?

For example—in Ephesians Paul weaves all three together. We are of ultimate value to God as His dear children (Christ died for us), so, as His dear children, we believe God is most concerned for our ultimate good. Therefore, we seek to copy His behavior (we see this most clearly in that God has become flesh in Christ to demonstrate this for us). So, it stands to reason that we would seek to avoid those things (actions, behavior) that harm ourselves, others and displease God.

In what ways does this inform how we interpret Paul’s behaviors that he says we ought not to participate in? (no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed. No obscene jokes, foolish talk or course jokes)

How does this inform how we are to understand the consequences of consistently, unrepentantly, over time walk in these ways? (vv 5-7).

In what way does light both make dark things visible and also transform what it shines upon? What does this mean for us in terms of sharing Christ with others?

Dave said, when we imitate Jesus—it pleases God, but it also turns out well for us and others. In what way does this change the way you think about how what you do or don’t do matters to God?

APPLY THE PASSAGE

What do we learn about God and about ourselves in this passage?

What may God be asking you to change, do differently, repent of, pray about as a result of engaging with this passage?

How can we pray for each other?