

CHRISTIANS ARE TO IMITATE CHRIST

Mt. 11:29 Jn. 13:15 Phil. 2:5 1 Pet. 2:20, 21 1 Jn. 2:6

Intro: Every one has had somebody he/she has admired and copied something about them, hair style, clothing style, speech, singing style, even preaching mannerisms. One imitates because there is something admired. As Christians the ideal one to imitate is the Lord Jesus Christ. Christians need to be like Jesus in all their ways and in all things.

I. WHAT IS INVOLVED IN IMITATING CHRIST?

- 1. Obviously the first thing is to be born again** - One must have the spirit before he/she can walk in the spirit as Christ did when He was here.
- 2. One cannot live according to his/her own will** - No Christian is wise enough to direct his/her own life as in the ways of the Lord, therefore Christ is the one to be like.
- 3. One cannot tell others what to do concerning sin** - Everyone commits sin, even the best of Christians at their best, still make errors, have faults and are unqualified to advise about sin.
- 4. It is a very strict and exacting way of life** - There can be no worldliness or self-indulgence, nor laxity. There must be the denying of self at all times.
- 5. There must be an admittance of falling short in every respect to be like Christ** - Comparing one's self with the spotless life of Christ can only bring humbleness and repentance and abhorance of one's self.
- 6. One must strive to be Holy as Christ was Holy** - The nearer one approaches Christ's example of being "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" the closer to being like Christ one becomes.
- 7. Imitating Christ is evidence that one has indeed been born again** - It distinguishes one as being separated from the world and that his/her profession is real.

II. IN WHAT PARTICULAR RESPECTS IS CHRIST TO BE IMITATED?

(Obviously some things the Christian is not expected to do as Christ did, forgiving sins, etc.)

- 1. The Holiness of Christ** - Without pretense, genuine, sincere, without simulation, constantly, the same all the time, under all situations. (How inconsistent we are).
- 2. The Obedience of Christ to the Father's Will** - Obeying without grumbling, griping, but cheerfully, constantly, unselfishly, seeking to honor the Father (and the Lord Jesus) in everything.

3. **The Self-Denial of Christ** - *"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me."* (Mt. 16:24). Who can calculate what Christ gave up in order to bring man to the Father? How trivial in comparison is any sacrifice the Christian is called upon to make. Christ was under no obligation to deny Himself in any way. Let all selfishness be put aside.
4. **The Diligence of Christ Fulfilling the Will of the Father** - In three short years Christ accomplished what was needed for salvation, never slowing down, never giving up despite the greatest opposition, taking advantage of every opportunity. The greatest honor God can give a Christian is to be called into His service and the more diligent in serving God, the more like Christ one becomes.
5. **The Inoffensiveness of Christ's Life on Earth** - He never gave reason for any to be unjustly injured. He gave up His own personal rights to avoid giving offense. The Christian is also to *"Be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves, ...bameless, the sons of God, without rebuke."*
6. **The Humility and Meekness of Christ** - He became a servant. He stooped to the lowest office by washing the feet of His disciples. He fellowshiped with the lowest, the outcast and the hated. Pride is not very becoming of one who professes to be a follower of the Lord Jesus as there is no place for pride around Jesus.
7. **The Contentment of Christ in His Low Condition in the World** - Born in a stable, raised by lowly parents, deprived of the comforts of the world most of the time, yet Christ never complained or murmured. Let there be no complaints or blaming God for what one has or does not have or what has happened to him/her.

Conclusion:

1. All who are born again (saved) should want to imitate the life of Christ.
2. One must make sure that his/her claim to be saved is real and then imitate Christ in all ways.
3. It is a real blessing to fellowship with those who are genuinely trying to imitate Christ.
4. Weaknesses do not break the everlasting covenant with God as it is God's faithfulness that holds.
5. The Holy Spirit turns failures into spiritual advantages, increasing faith, teaching and humbling.
6. Sorrow and repentance of the believer for failure is well pleasing in God's sight.
7. Imitating Christ is not an option for the believer. It is mandatory and is proof that one has indeed been born again.
8. Follow no man's example but that of Christ - Listen to no man's teachings but those of Christ - Obey no man's orders but those of God the Father - Expect nothing good from anybody but the heavenly Father - Stay close to those whose lives reflect the image of Christ - Do not waver nor question God's Word, but obey it immediately and to the fullest.