

IMITATING THE CHARACTER OF JESUS CHRIST

Romans 13:14

Introduction: Ever been in a play? As children growing up, we "played like" we were this person or that animal, we acted. Today our television is filled with "actors" of all ages and they act out all sorts of characters. It is said that some of the actors take their "roles" so seriously that they actually begin to act and live like the characters they are representing in the roles they are playing. So "acting" or "role playing" is not new to us. When we are told by Paul in *Romans 13:14* to "...**put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ...**" we know that he is telling us to start acting like Jesus Christ. So, what is going to be involved with us "playing the role" and "acting" like Jesus Christ?

I. GOD WANTS ALL HIS CHILDREN, HIS FAMILY, TO ACT LIKE HIS SON, JESUS CHRIST

1. God wants us all to assume the character, personality and peculiarities of Jesus.
- In a way God is telling us to become actors and to imitate Jesus Christ.

II. WHERE DO WE START IN IMITATING JESUS CHRIST?

1. We must put away all self interests that would conflict with imitating Jesus.
2. We must begin to live for the same purpose that Jesus lived, the salvation of others.
3. We then must learn to have but one thing in mind - obedience to the Father.
4. Then we must learn to think like Jesus in order to be able to imitate Him.

III. HOW DO WE LEARN ABOUT THE CHARACTER OF JESUS CHRIST?

1. First there must be a deep and intense study of the character of Jesus in order to see the spirit and intentions of Jesus so that we may be more able to imitate Him.
2. Then we must fully believe that we can do it. With God's help we can be like Jesus.
3. We must be totally "sold out," fully committed to becoming as much like Jesus as we can.
4. We must be fully prepared to make any sacrifice, even our friends, material things, no matter what that would stand in the way of our being completely like Jesus. **This is essential.**
5. We will have to maintain a close, constant, personal relationship with Jesus, constantly talking to Him, to learn how He thinks in order to be able to act as He would.
6. Another thing is that we will have to keep things open and clear between us and Jesus. There will be no place for any unconfessed and unrepented of sin. Nothing can be between us and Jesus.

7. We will have to learn how to stop being so independent or we cannot be like Jesus.
8. We must actually claim and use all the great and precious promises God has given. No promise is good for anything unless it is fulfilled. We must use the promises of God.

IV. EVERY BELIEVER IS ACTUALLY OBLIGATED TO GOD TO BECOME LIKE JESUS

1. A fact: None of us will ever do exactly as Jesus did nor does God expect that of us.
 - God does want us to do as Jesus did under the same circumstances.
 - If a plumber, a lawyer, a butcher, a mechanic, a farmer, a secretary, etc., how would Jesus handle it? What would He be like?
 - If Jesus were doing what you are doing, or have done, if placed in your circumstances, how would He have acted? Like you? Then go do as He would have done.

V. OBEDIENCE IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL FOR ALL BELIEVERS

1. *"You cannot serve God and mammon.."* We cannot act less than Jesus Christ and be all that God wants us to be nor than we can be.
 - We cannot devote ourselves to the world and God at the same time. We give ourselves completely to one or the other. We belong to God, not the world.
2. We must be like Jesus Christ, regardless, no matter what.

CONCLUSION:

1. We will have a lot of opposition in trying to be like Jesus Christ. Not very many liked Him.
2. We can expect many difficulties and trials as everyone else has had who tried to be like Jesus.
3. We will need a lot of meekness, patience and character in order to endure what will happen to us.
4. However, we will have a peace of mind that will be worth more than anything bad that can happen.
5. Sadly, our church roles are full of those who "profess" to be believers but their life and works reflect otherwise. Don't be one of those.
6. Let's join God's cast of imitators of His Son, Jesus Christ. Let's start today learning how to be like Jesus Christ and then go about our lives thinking, speaking, going, doing, exactly what Jesus would do . We can do it!