


IMITATION Michael Pickford

As children, we imitate our friends, our teachers, and especially our parents. As we grow into adults, many of us take on more of a personal identity, yet we still imitate the actions and characteristics of others from time to time.

We tend to imitate those with whom we spend the most time; sometimes without even realizing it. This is why it's so crucial that we spend as much time with other Christians as we can.

To imitate someone is to pattern yourself after them. The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1). It's good to pattern your life after faithful Christians. "...but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promise" (Heb. 6:12).


We must imitate the good in others, not the bad! Sadly, sometimes we do both. John wrote, "Beloved, do not imitate what is evil, but what is good..." (3 Jn. 11). It is most important that we imitate God! "Therefore be imitators of God as dear children" (Eph. 5:1). This is done by reading and studying His word, then applying it in our lives. What kind of people, actions, characteristics, and things do you imitate? Good or evil? 

The elements of our worship, as prescribed by God's word, are as follows:

- **SINGING:** Ephesians 5:18,19; Colossians 3:16
- **PREACHING/TEACHING:** Acts 2:42; Eph. 4:11,12
- **PRAYING:** Acts 2:42; Acts 12:5
- **LORD'S SUPPER:** 1 Corinthians 11:23-26; Acts 20:7
- **GIVING:** 1 Corinthians 16:1,2; 2 Corinthians 9:6,7

COME WORSHIP WITH US!

SUNDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY...9:00
SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP.....10:00
SUNDAY EVENING WORSHIP.....6:00
WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICES....7:00

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- www.defendthegospel.com
 - 1st Sunday Singing Night: 6 pm
 - 5th Sunday Night: Guest Speaker
 - Men's Business Meeting. 1st Sunday evenings following services.



SOUTHSIDE SEARCHER

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"They...searched the scriptures daily..." –Acts 17:11

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THE LOCAL CHURCH & THE GOSPEL

Michael Pickford

Regarding the Gospel, the local church must...

Stay Focused. Many local churches lose their focus. Instead of focusing on the Gospel, their primary focus seems to be on the wisdom of the world. More and more preachers have their sermons saturated with "Wise" quotes from popular men. One here and there to emphasize a point is certainly acceptable (Titus 1:12), but often these quotes and thoughts seem to outweigh scripture in the pulpits. And often, the quotes used do not reflect sound biblical truth, but rather contradicts Gospel teachings. Paul did not rely on the wisdom of men, but on the Gospel of our Lord to convert folks (1 Corinthians 2:1-5).

Stand Fast. In writing to the church at Colossae, Paul rejoiced to know of their "steadfastness" in the faith (Colossians 2:5). He warned them not to be deceived by the persuasive words of those who would lead them away from the Gospel (Verse 4). The church is the Pillar and ground of the truth and it needs to stand firmly upon that foundation (1 Timothy 3:15). Churches can become unsound. They can come to the point where they will no longer accept "Sound doctrine" (2 Timothy 4:3). A local church can lose its fellowship with Christ by not standing fast (Revelation 1:12-13, 20; 2:1, 5, 15-16). Gospel preaching must be sound. Someone once said "A church is only as strong as the preaching it demands." A local church, rather than having itching ears for what it wants to hear, must DEMAND that preachers preach sound, wholesome doctrine. Paul demanded such of both Timothy and Titus (2 Timothy 1:13; Titus 2:1). Many churches of Christ have strayed into error due to the leadership of their unsound preacher. Paul wanted folks to follow him only insofar as he faithfully followed Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).

Sound Forth. Paul commended the church of the Thessalonians because from them "The word of the Lord has sounded forth" (1 Thessalonians 1:8). It was God's eternal purpose that the Gospel be made known by the church (Ephesians 3:9-10). The purpose of this sounding forth is two-fold. (1) To save the lost. The Gospel is God's power of salvation to all who believe (Romans 1:16). (2) To keep the saved saved! The Lord set up different ones in the church for the purpose of equipping the saints, and edifying (building up) the body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-16). 

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IGNORING GOD

Michael Pickford

God said, “My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge” (Hosea 4:6). The rest of the verse goes on to explain the reason for their lack of knowledge. It was because they chose to be ignorant by rejecting the knowledge of God. Many today are making this same mistake by rejecting the Gospel of Christ and substituting in its place their own wisdom or the wisdom of other men. Paul wrote of such people in Romans 10:3, “For they being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.” Consider some ways in which men today ignore God’s righteousness.

Many teach a system of “Faith Only” salvation. They contend that all one has to do to be saved is believe on Jesus as the Son of God. Their basis for this teaching is a perversion of Romans 5:1 which states that we have been justified by faith. No one denies faith as a necessity for salvation, but the text never said faith “only.” These folks ignore what God said in James 2:24, “You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.”

Some try to ignore the fact that the Old Testament has been nailed to the cross. They seek to authorize some of their religious practices based on the Law of Moses. They ignore such passages as Hebrews 8:7-13 which plainly teaches that the old law has been made obsolete by the bringing in of the new covenant (vs. 13).

Many ignore God’s clear statements about Baptism being necessary for salvation. Jesus stated, “He who believes and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16). Paul taught in many places that baptism saves (Rom. 6:1-4; Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:12, etc.). Peter made clear the necessity of baptism for salvation (Acts 2:38). He stated in 1 Peter 3:21, “There is also an antitype which now saves us - baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”

Ignoring God’s word and substituting the traditions and doctrines of men are condemned By Jesus (Matthew 15:7-9). Read and heed the entire Gospel. Don’t be guilty of ignoring God. ☞

EXCUSES

Michael Pickford

We often try to make excuses for ourselves. We don’t want to do something, or we made a mistake, or we’re late for an appointment. Excuses, excuses, excuses!

Sadly, many try to make excuses to God. “I just didn’t have time to read the Bible today, or pray, or share my faith.” “After all, I have a busy life, I have a lot of responsibilities, a lot of people depend on me.”

When God wanted to send Moses to deliver the people of Israel from Egyptian bondage, Moses tried to make excuses.

It’s always sad when someone leans on an excuse to keep from obeying the Gospel. In Acts 24:22-25, we read of just such a man. When he heard Paul speak about the faith in Christ, he reasoned about righteousness, self control and the judgment to come. He even trembled! But then he offered an excuse to not obey. His excuse was that it was not a convenient time for him. Hell is filled with countless souls who made this same excuse.

Obedience to the Gospel is essential if one hopes to go to heaven (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). Promptness is stressed (Acts 16:33).

DUTY LIST...

SUNDAY MORNING

- Announcements.....Michael Pickford
- Scripture Reading...Kenny Todd
Reading: Proverbs 10:27-32
- Song Leader.....Michael Pickford
- Opening Prayer.....Sam Miller
- Lord’s Table:
 - Lead.....John Nelson
 - Serve.....Kenny Johnson
 - Serve.....Lynn Buttrey
- Closing Prayer.....Jeff Isbell

SUNDAY EVENING

- Song Leader.....Lynn Buttrey
- Lord’s Table.....Lynn Buttrey

WEDNESDAY EVENING

- Song Leader.....Kenny Johnson
- Invitation.....Kenny Todd

Thank You For Serving!

GOD’S PLAN OF SALVATION

There is only one true saving plan of Salvation outlined in Scripture. No substitutes will do. Have you really been saved? Get out your Bible and study the plan below.

- Hear The Gospel: Romans 10:17
- Believe: Mark 16:16; John 8:24
- Repent of Sin: Acts 2:38; 17:30
- Confess Faith: Romans 10:9, 10
- Be Baptized: Mark 16:16;
Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21
- Remain Faithful: Rev. 2:10

Obey Today!

***Home Bible Studies
Available Upon Request!***