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## Imitating God

Ephesians 5:1-2

### THE TRUTH ABOUT IMITATING:

- ▶ Imitating is a conscious decision.
- ▶ You start by watching and learning.
- ▶ Great imitations take practice and patience.
- ▶ At first you won't be any good.

### WHAT DO WE IMITATE?

Ephesians 5:1-2, Philippians 2:5-15, Mark 12:28-31, 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

We are called to imitate our Father.

We have already been given an example.

- selfless
- servant
- humility
- obedience

The end result will be sacrificial love.

### HOW DO WE IMITATE:

Colossians 1:26-29 & 2:6-10, Galatians 2:20, 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, Philippians 1:6,  
John 14:18-21, 15:1-17 & 17:20-26, Ephesians 3:16-19

We have been given Dad's DNA.

It is an inside out process.

Honestly, our spiritual imitating will always have the tension of  
remaining and doing.

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of May 29, 2005

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This is our final week of the Spring Quarter. Along with an abbreviated study, you will take some time to reflect on your group experience and then have communion together. Growth Groups will take a summer break and resume the week of September 18. *Have a great summer!*

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## MY STORY

1. Summer is just about here! Do you have any special plans, activities or prayer requests for the summer?

2. This week we looked at our call to live out the love of Christ to those we encounter. Was there any specific point, statement or concept that was particularly helpful, challenging, or confusing?

## DIGGING DEEPER

1. In this week's sermon we saw in 1 Corinthians 13 some practical examples of sacrificial love in action. Write down the actions in the following verses and how they display sacrificial love.

### Luke 23:34

34 Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing." And they divided up his clothes by casting lots. [NIV]

### Romans 12:15,16

15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. 16 Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. [NIV]

### Romans 14:19, 21

19 Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. [NIV]

21 It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall. [NIV]

### Galatians 6:1

Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. [NIV]

### Hebrews 13:1-3

Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. 2 Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it. 3 Continue to remember those in prison as if you were together with them in prison, and those who are mistreated as if you yourselves were suffering. [NIV]

2. How does 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 help us keep the vision of loving others as Jesus loved us?

**2 Corinthians 5:14-21**

14 For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died. 15 And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.

16 So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. 20 We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. [NIV]

**REFLECT AND REMEMBER**

1. This is the last meeting of the Growth Group year. During your Growth Group meeting, you will spend time reminiscing and sharing together about how God's love was revealed through something you are thankful for, or a significant moment about your group life this past year. Take a few moments to think through what you would like to share with your group.

2. Jesus is our greatest example of loving others sacrificially. The ultimate act of this love was shown by His willingness to die on the cross so that we might have life. This week's Growth Group time will be concluded by taking communion and focusing on how much He has loved us and what He has done for us. To prepare for this, take a moment and read 1 Corinthians 15:1-8 & 11:23-26 reflecting on the significance of Christ's sacrificial love.

**1 Corinthians 15:1-8**

15 Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep. 7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles, 8 and last of all he appeared to me also, as to one abnormally born.

**1 Corinthians 15:23-26**

23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." 25 In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This

cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.” 26 For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

3. As you look back on this week’s sermon notes and Growth Group homework is there one particular example of Jesus’ love that you are especially thankful for at this point in your journey?