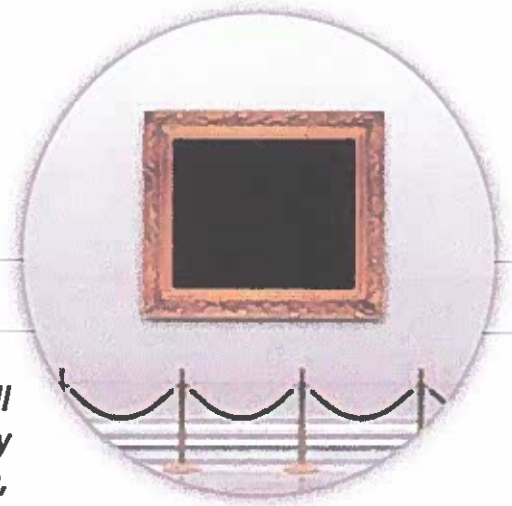


## God Wants You to Be a Good Imitation

Participant's Guide

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# God Wants You to Be a Good Imitation



*You imitate God by loving people.*

*Occasionally, when you read the Bible, you'll come across a verse that overwhelms you by virtue of its sheer impossibility. For example, when Jesus said, "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Or the time when Jesus told what was left of his original band of disciples to "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation" (Mark 16:15). Sounds like "Mission Impossible" for 11 ragtag, uneducated men, doesn't it? There's another scripture where Paul tells us to do the seemingly impossible: "Be imitators of God ..."*

**Scripture:** Ephesians 5

**Based On:** "You Are God's Masterpiece," by Steve May, [PreachingToday.com](http://PreachingToday.com)

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### Part 1 Identify the Issue

There's more to imitating God than just talking the talk. Some people think that if they just quote enough Scripture enough times in enough conversations, they'll be branded as godly. Quoting Scripture is, of course, a good thing, but there is more to imitating God than just repeating his best-known lines.

So, how do we imitate God as Ephesians 5:1 says we are to do?

### Part 2 Discover the Eternal Principles

**Teaching Point One: You imitate God by forgiving others.**

**Teaching Point Two: You imitate God by suffering for others.**

**Teaching Point Three: You imitate God by being careful, perceptive, and filled.**

**Teaching Point Four: You imitate God by being good to your spouse and family.**

**There are at least three ways to be a good husband:**

- 1. Accept your role as a leader (vv. 22–23).**
- 2. Accept your role as a lover (vv. 25–29).**
- 3. Accept your role for a lifetime (v. 31).**

**[Q]** If your wife is present in this group, get together with her and discuss the following. If she is not present, take time to answer these questions yourself and then find a time to discuss them with your wife.

- Is there any area in which I am abdicating my leadership?
- I need your help in fulfilling my role in the following ways: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- How can I better love you? What would make you feel loved?

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#### What about being a good wife?

1. Listen to his counsel.
2. Look to his leadership.
3. Respect your husband (v. 33).

**[Q]** If your husband is present in this group, get together with him and discuss the following. If he is not present, take time to answer these questions yourself and then find a time to discuss them with your husband.

- How can I better listen to your counsel? When do I cut you off and not let you give your opinion?
- When do I challenge your leadership and make it impossible for you to lead?
- How do you make decisions? How can we make decisions together?
- Do I show you respect? If not, how can I do that better?

## Part 3 Apply Your Findings

Imitating God isn't impossible, or he wouldn't have commanded us to do it. It's possible, but we can't do it in our own strength. We need to rely on Jesus to help us.

One thing you will learn as you practice imitating God is that you get better at it. Just like Dana Carvey's impersonation of George Bush became more and more convincing over the years, our imitation of God's love becomes more and more like his. We get better at it.

**Action Point:** Do you want to learn to imitate God? Then begin to say no to yourself and yes to others. Make a list of who you need to forgive and who you need to serve. Think of one action that you need to take daily to serve someone else.

—Study by Steve May, with JoHannah Reardon