

BE AN IMITATOR OF GOD  
13 AUGUST, 2006  
FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH - BROWNSVILLE, TX.

**EPHESIANS. 4:25-5:2** THEREFORE EACH OF YOU MUST PUT OFF FALSEHOOD AND SPEAK TRUTHFULLY TO HIS NEIGHBOR, FOR WE ARE ALL MEMBERS OF ONE BODY. <sup>26</sup>"IN YOUR ANGER DO NOT SIN": DO NOT LET THE SUN GO DOWN WHILE YOU ARE STILL ANGRY, <sup>27</sup>AND DO NOT GIVE THE DEVIL A FOOTHOLD. <sup>28</sup>HE WHO HAS BEEN STEALING MUST STEAL NO LONGER, BUT MUST WORK, DOING SOMETHING USEFUL WITH HIS OWN HANDS, THAT HE MAY HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE WITH THOSE IN NEED. <sup>29</sup>DO NOT LET ANY UNWHOLESOME TALK COME OUT OF YOUR MOUTHS, BUT ONLY WHAT IS HELPFUL FOR BUILDING OTHERS UP ACCORDING TO THEIR NEEDS, THAT IT MAY BENEFIT THOSE WHO LISTEN. <sup>30</sup>AND DO NOT GRIEVE THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD, WITH WHOM YOU WERE SEALED FOR THE DAY OF REDEMPTION. <sup>31</sup>GET RID OF ALL BITTERNESS, RAGE AND ANGER, BRAWLING AND SLANDER, ALONG WITH EVERY FORM OF MALICE. <sup>32</sup>BE KIND AND COMPASSIONATE TO ONE ANOTHER, FORGIVING EACH OTHER, JUST AS IN CHRIST GOD FORGAVE YOU. <sup>5:1</sup>BE IMITATORS OF GOD, THEREFORE, AS DEARLY LOVED CHILDREN <sup>2</sup>AND LIVE A LIFE OF LOVE, JUST AS CHRIST LOVED US AND GAVE HIMSELF UP FOR US AS A FRAGRANT OFFERING AND SACRIFICE TO GOD.

THIS SCRIPTURES INSTRUCTS US TO BE IMITATORS OF GOD.  
THIS IS THE WORD OF GOD AND IT CAN BE TRUSTED.

TO FULLY UNDERSTAND THIS SCRIPTURES WE NEED TO INVESTIGATE WHY THE HOLY SPIRIT SPEAKING THROUGH THE APOSTLE PAUL IS TELLING US TO BE IMITATORS OF GOD.

IF WE ARE BORN AGAIN WE DEAL WITH TWO NATURES, WE MAKE CHOICES EVERY DAY ABOUT WHICH ONE OF THOSE NATURES WE ARE GOING TO LIVE OUR LIVES BY.

WHEN GOD CREATED MAN, HE MADE HIM IN HIS OWN IMAGE, GENESIS 1:26  
THEN GOD SAID, "LET US MAKE MAN IN OUR IMAGE, IN OUR LIKENESS, AND LET THEM RULE OVER THE FISH OF THE SEA AND THE BIRDS OF THE AIR, OVER THE LIVESTOCK, OVER ALL THE EARTH, AND OVER ALL THE CREATURES THAT

MOVE ALONG THE GROUND."

AT CREATION ADAM WAS CREATED IN THE LIKENESS AND IMAGE OF GOD. HE HAD FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD. HE LIVED IN A GARDEN, MEANING A PLACE OF GREAT BEAUTY.

BUT WHEN HE DISOBEYED GOD HE LOST IT ALL. HE NO LONGER HAD THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD THAT HE ONCE HAD, NOW HE FEARED THE PRESENCE OF GOD. HE WAS NO LONGER UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD, A KINGDOM OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, BUT HE IS NOW A PART OF THE KINGDOM OF THIS WORLD, WHICH IS IN REBELLION AGAINST GOD.

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT IT MAKES IT CLEAR WHERE NATURAL MAN IS IN RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD. **EPHESIANS. 2:3** ALL OF US ALSO LIVED AMONG THEM [THAT IS THE UNSAVED] AT ONE TIME, GRATIFYING THE CRAVINGS OF OUR SINFUL NATURE AND FOLLOWING ITS DESIRES AND THOUGHTS. LIKE THE REST, WE WERE BY NATURE OBJECTS OF WRATH

WE ARE TOLD AGAIN IN SCRIPTURE THAT WHEN ADAM HAD A SON, THE SON WAS IN THE LIKENESS AND IMAGE OF HIS FATHER ADAM. SO MAN IS NO LONGER CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD, BUT CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF THE FALLEN MAN. **ROMANS 5:12** THEREFORE, JUST AS SIN ENTERED THE WORLD THROUGH ONE MAN, AND DEATH THROUGH SIN, AND IN THIS WAY DEATH CAME TO ALL MEN, BECAUSE ALL SINNED--

AFTER THE FALL OF ADAM ALL MEN ARE BORN WITH THIS NATURE, YOU CAN SEE THIS IN THE ACTIONS OF HIS CHILDREN, ONE KILLING ANOTHER. WE CAN SEE IT IN THE FIRST ELEVEN GENERATIONS OF MAN AS THEY BECAME SO VIOLENT AND ARROGANT THAT GOD DESTROYED MOST OF THEM AND STARTED OVER AGAIN.

AFTER SOME TIME, **GENESIS 12:1-2** THE LORD SAID TO ABRAM, "LEAVE YOUR COUNTRY, YOUR PEOPLE AND YOUR FATHER'S HOUSEHOLD AND GO TO THE LAND I WILL SHOW YOU. "I WILL MAKE YOU INTO A GREAT NATION AND I WILL BLESS YOU; I WILL MAKE YOUR NAME GREAT, AND YOU WILL BE A BLESSING.

ABRAM DID AS GOD INSTRUCTED AND GOD CALLED HIS OFFSPRING, MY PEOPLE.

AND THAT WAS THE WAY IT WAS FOR TWO THOUSAND YEARS.

IN THE BOOK OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, HOSEA 1:10 IT SAYS "YET THE ISRAELITES WILL BE LIKE THE SAND ON THE SEASHORE, WHICH CANNOT BE

MEASURED OR COUNTED. IN THE PLACE [JERUSALEM] WHERE IT WAS SAID TO THEM, 'YOU ARE NOT MY PEOPLE,' THEY WILL BE CALLED 'SONS OF THE LIVING GOD.'

SO GOD WAS DECLARING THAT THERE WILL BE A CHANGE, THE PEOPLE THAT FOLLOW HIM, BELIEVE IN HIM, THEY WOULD NO LONGER JUST BE THE PEOPLE OF GOD, BUT NOW THEY ARE THE SONS OF THE LIVING GOD.

JESUS TEACHING AS RECORDED IN **JOHN 1:12** YET TO ALL WHO RECEIVED HIM, TO THOSE WHO BELIEVED IN HIS NAME, **HE GAVE THE RIGHT OR THE POWER TO BECOME CHILDREN OF GOD—**

WE KNOW BY FAITH THAT **1 JOHN 5:1** EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES THAT JESUS IS THE CHRIST IS BORN OF GOD, AND EVERYONE WHO LOVES THE FATHER LOVES HIS CHILD AS WELL.

AND IF WE ARE BORN OF GOD THEN WE CAN SAY **2 PETER 1:3-4 2 Peter** HIS DIVINE POWER HAS GIVEN US EVERYTHING WE NEED FOR LIFE AND GODLINESS THROUGH OUR KNOWLEDGE OF HIM WHO CALLED US BY HIS OWN GLORY AND GOODNESS. THROUGH THESE HE HAS GIVEN US HIS VERY GREAT AND PRECIOUS PROMISES, SO THAT THROUGH THEM **WE MAY PARTICIPATE IN THE DIVINE NATURE AND ESCAPE THE CORRUPTION IN THE WORLD CAUSED BY EVIL DESIRES.**

SO IF WE ARE BORN AGAIN, WE HAVE A NEW NATURE, **2 COR. 5:17**

THEREFORE, IF ANYONE IS IN CHRIST, HE IS A NEW CREATION; THE OLD HAS GONE, THE NEW HAS COME! .

MY PROBLEM, I REMEMBER MY OLD NATURE, I HAVE BECOME VERY FAMILIAR WITH IT, AND FAMILIAR THINGS ARE NOT ALWAYS EASY TO GIVE UP.

THAT NATURE TAUGHT ME HOW TO LIVE, DO EVERYTHING I HAD TO DO TO SURVIVE, DO WHAT EVER IT TAKES TO GET AHEAD IN LIFE, GATHER ALL THE TOYS THAT MY EYES SEE TO BRING GRATIFICATION TO MY SELF, DO NOT WORRY ABOUT OWNERSHIP, IF YOU SEE IT, AND IT LOOKS GOOD, TAKE IT. IF YOU THINK ON SOMETHING AND IT MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD, DO IT.

THE SCRIPTURE SAYS I HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE POWER THE POWER TO DO GOOD OR EVIL, IT IS MY CHOSE.

AGAIN I SAY WE ARE TOLD THAT WE MAY PARTICIPATE IN THE DIVINE NATURE AND ESCAPE THE CORRUPTION IN THE WORLD CAUSED BY EVIL DESIRES - WHETHER OR NOT WE PARTICIPATE IS OUR CHOOSE

THE GOSPEL SCRIPTURE LESSON THIS MORNING IS SHOWING US A PICTURE OF OURSELVES, WHETHER WE ARE LIVING OUR LIFE IN THE OLD FAMILIAR NATURE, OR THE DIVINE NATURE OF GOD.

WE ARE GIVEN SOME ILLUSTRATIONS THAT SHOW THE OLD, THE NEW AND WHY WE SHOULD CHANGE.

SPEAKING ABOUT THE OLD NATURE	INSTRUCTING THE NEW NATURE	EXPLAINING WHY AND THE REASON WE SHOULD CHANGE
EACH OF YOU MUST PUT OFF FALSEHOOD	SPEAK TRUTHFULLY TO HIS NEIGHBOR [FOR WE NO LONGER HAVE A REASON TO LIE]	FOR WE ARE ALL MEMBERS OF ONE BODY- [THE BODY OF CHRIST]
IN YOUR ANGER DO NOT SIN", [THAT IS HOLDING SOMETHING AGAINST A BROTHER]	DO NOT LET THE SUN GO DOWN WHILE YOU ARE STILL ANGRY	DO NOT GIVE THE DEVIL A FOOTHOLD [IN YOUR LIFE]
<sup>28</sup> HE WHO HAS BEEN STEALING MUST STEAL NO LONGER	BUT MUST WORK, DOING SOMETHING USEFUL WITH HIS OWN HANDS,	THAT HE MAY HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE WITH THOSE IN NEED.
<sup>29</sup> DO NOT LET ANY UNWHOLESOME TALK COME OUT OF YOUR MOUTHS,	BUT ONLY WHAT IS HELPFUL FOR BUILDING OTHERS UP ACCORDING TO THEIR NEEDS,	THAT IT MAY BENEFIT THOSE WHO LISTEN
DO NOT GRIEVE THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD	[IT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT] WITH WHOM YOU WERE SEALED	[IT IS THIS SEAL THAT YOU WILL NEED ON] THE DAY OF REDEMPTION

<sup>31</sup> GET RID OF ALL BITTERNESS, RAGE AND ANGER, BRAWLING AND SLANDER, ALONG WITH EVERY FORM OF MALICE	<sup>32</sup> BE KIND AND COMPASSIONATE TO ONE ANOTHER, FORGIVING EACH OTHER	JUST AS IN CHRIST GOD FORGAVE YOU. [GOD DOES NOT FORGIVE US UNLESS WE FORGIVE OUR BROTHERS]
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AS WE CAN SEE ABOVE, IT IS TO MY BENEFIT TO WALK IN THE NATURE OF GOD.

WE ARE INSTRUCTED TO BE IMITATORS OF GOD,  
AS DEARLY LOVED CHILDREN  
TO LIVE A LIFE OF LOVE,  
AND THAT LOVE WILL BE JUST AS CHRIST LOVED US  
AND GAVE HIMSELF UP FOR US. HE LEFT THE GLORY OF HEAVEN AND CAME  
HERE TO LIVE AND WALK AS WE SHOULD WALK, SO THAT HE COULD BRING US  
INTO A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FATHER. OUR OLD NATURES MUST  
DECREASE AND ALLOW JESUS TO INCREASE THE DIVINE NATURE IN US, SO  
THAT OTHERS WILL SEE GOD IN US, AND GIVE HIM THE GLORY.  
AND ONE OF THE REASONS JESUS DID AS HE DID, AND WE SHOULD FOLLOW IN  
HIS EXAMPLE;  
JESUS LIVING THE LIFE HE LIVED WAS A FRAGRANT OFFERING AND SACRIFICE  
TO GOD.

WE KNOW THIS TRUTH; **1 JOHN 5:4** FOR EVERYONE BORN OF GOD  
OVERCOMES THE WORLD. THIS IS THE VICTORY THAT HAS OVERCOME THE  
WORLD, EVEN OUR FAITH  
YOU AND I HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE POWER TO DO GOOD, TO WALK AS JESUS  
WALKED, **1 JOHN 4:4** WE ARE, DEAR CHILDREN, WE ARE FROM GOD AND  
HAVE OVERCOME THEM, BECAUSE THE ONE WHO IS IN US IS GREATER  
THAN THE ONE WHO IS IN THE WORLD. .

WHEN PEOPLE LOOK AT THE LIFE WE LIVE, DO THEY SAY, WOW I WOULD  
LIKE TO BE LIKE THAT, OR DO THEY SAY, IF THAT IS WHAT IT  
MEANS TO BE A CHRISTIAN, A CHILD OF THE LIVING GOD, I  
WANT NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.

HOW DO OTHERS SEE US? DO THEY STILL SEE PARTS OF OUR OLD NATURE, OR DO THEY SEE THE DIVINE NATURE OF GOD.

LET US PUT ON THE CHARACTER OF OUR HEAVENLY FATHER; **COL. 3:12** THEREFORE, AS GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE, HOLY AND DEARLY LOVED, CLOTHE OURSELVES WITH COMPASSION, KINDNESS, HUMILITY, GENTLENESS AND PATIENCE.

LET US STAND TALL IN THIS TRUTH. **1 JOHN 3:1-2** HOW GREAT IS THE LOVE THE FATHER HAS LAVISHED ON US, THAT WE SHOULD BE CALLED CHILDREN OF GOD! AND THAT IS WHAT WE ARE! THE REASON THE WORLD DOES NOT KNOW US IS THAT IT DID NOT KNOW HIM. <sup>2</sup>DEAR FRIENDS, NOW WE ARE CHILDREN OF GOD, AND WHAT WE WILL BE HAS NOT YET BEEN [FULLY] MADE KNOWN. BUT WE KNOW THAT WHEN HE [JESUS] APPEARS, WE SHALL BE LIKE HIM, FOR WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS.

LET US BE IMITATOR OF GOD, LET US WALK AS HE WALKS AS SEEN IN THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST IT IS OUR CHOICE  
AMEN.