

Being Imitators

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Introduction

Relevant English Words

Webster defines **imitate** as to follow as a pattern, model, or example, to be or appear like (someone or something): resemble, to produce a copy of: reproduce, to mimic, counterfeit. The word **mimic** refers to a mime, or one that mimics (noun), one who is imitative (adjective), to imitate closely (verb). The English word *mimic* derives from the Latin *mimicus*, from the Greek *mimikos*, from *mimos*.

Relevant Greek Words

The verb *mimeomai*, occurring 4x, derived from *mimos* [a mimic], means “to use as a model, imitate, emulate, follow.” The noun *mimētēs*, occurring 6x, derived from *mimeomai* [to imitate] refers to “an imitator.” We must follow the Biblical pattern. We must imitate God, Christ, and the inspired apostles.

Biblical Usage

We must imitate the God of heaven (Eph. 5:1-2; cf. 1 Pet. 1:13-16; 1 John 4:7-14). We must imitate the inspired apostles (1 Cor. 4:14-17; 11:1-2; 1 Thess. 1:6-10; 2 Thess. 3:6-15). We must imitate those who are faithful: churches (1 Thess. 2:13-16), OT heroes (Heb. 6:9-12), and NT teachers (Heb. 13:7-9). We must not imitate what is evil, but rather that which is good (3 John 11; cf. Ps. 34:8-18; 37:27-34). Follow not the crowd in the paths of evil (Exod. 23:2; Prov. 1:10-16; 4:14-15); rather, follow the Christ in the way of righteousness (Matt. 4:18-22; 8:18-22; 16:24-27).

Conclusion

Let us remember to imitate God the Father and Christ the Son, the inspired apostles and prophets, and also faithful brethren, both of times past and the present. In contrast, let us avoid imitating the world, evil companions, customs, manners, and styles that violate principles of truth.