

**Contra Mundum**  
The Fragrance of Christ  
Ephesians 5:1-2  
May 17, 2015

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. **-Ephesians 5:1-2**

**I. A FRAGRANT OFFERING (vs. 2)**

- The love of God is displayed most prominently in the sacrifice of his Son, who loved us enough to die (John 3:16; 15:13; Rom. 5:8-10).
- Offerings that were acceptable to God were said to be a “pleasing aroma to the Lord” (Lev. 1:9,13,17; 2:2,9,12).
- Out of love, Christ gave himself up. His life was not taken from him; it was offered up freely (John 10:17-18; Phil. 2:5-8).

**II. HOW DO WE IMITATE GOD? (vs. 1)**

- Only children of God can imitate God (John 1:12-13, 8:43-45).
  1. We walk in love (John 13:34-35).
  2. We put away falsehood (Eph. 4:25).
  3. We don't sin in our anger (Ex. 34:5-7; Jonah 4:2).
  4. We do honest work (Eph. 4:28; 1 Thess. 5:12).
  5. We use pure speech (Eph. 4:29).
  6. We put away slander and anger (Ex. 34:5-7; Jonah 4:2).
  7. We are kind, tenderhearted and forgiving (Eph. 4:32).
  8. We are merciful (Luke 6:36).
  9. We strive for perfection/holiness (Matt. 5:48, 2 Cor. 13:11).
  10. We are generous (Prov. 11:25; 1 Tim. 6:17-19).

**III. THE GODWARD LIFE**

- Imitate God the Father, grow/learn in God the Son, do not grieve God the Spirit.

**KNOW:** We have a practical, albeit difficult, call from Paul. Be imitators of God and walk in love. Christ has shown us the way. The clearest path is the path he has already trod. Jesus the Son gave himself to God the Father as a sacrifice on our behalf. Self-sacrificial love is the best way to imitate God.

**DO:** Imitate God through love and self-sacrifice.

**Suggested Reading:**

*The Pursuit of God*, by A.W. Tozer

*The Christian's Secret of a Happy Life*, Hannah Whitall Smith

**Questions/Discovery Points for  
Life Groups/Families**

**Please read Ephesians 5:1-2**

1. We are called to "walk in love." What does that look like in a family? A workplace? School? Church? Who is our example of walking in love?
2. The Bible calls us to be merciful as God is merciful, to be perfect as God is perfect, to be holy, because God is holy, to imitate Christ and to imitate God. Why does it call us to such things when God knows that human beings are sinful?
3. For a guy that says we are saved by grace through faith, Paul sure seems to spend a lot of time talking about "doing." How do we understand salvation by grace and works of righteousness? Which comes first? Why?
4. Paul tells us that we are beloved children of God. How do children who are loved by their father relate to their father, at least in the best of human circumstances?
5. Paul says that Jesus gave himself up for us, an "offering and sacrifice to God." Why did God demand such a sacrifice? If he loves Jesus, why send him to a cross?
6. What are some practical steps that you will take to be an imitator of God?