

## DOCTRINE OF IMITATION

### 1. Definition:

- a. Imitation is the execution of an act supposedly as a direct response to the perception of another person performing that act or the assumption of the modes of behavior observed in others.
- b. To imitate is to follow as a pattern, model, or example; to copy to resemble or mimic.

### 2. Vocabulary:

- a. μιμέομαι - mimeomai - (Greek verb) - imitate, emulate, follow (1 Thess. 3:7, 9; Heb. 13:7; 3 John 11) Always used in exhortations and always in the continuous tenses, suggesting a constant habit or practice.
- b. μιμητής - mimetes - (Gk. noun) - imitator (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Eph. 5:1; 1 Thess. 1:6; 2:14; Heb. 6:12; 1 Pet. 3:13 - variant reading).
- c. ζηλωτής - zelotes - (Gk. n.) - zealot, enthusiast, one who is eager for or zealous for (1 Pet. 3:13)
- d. συμμιμητής - summimetes - (Gk. n.) - fellow imitator (Phil. 3:17)
- e. ἐπακολουθέω - epakoloutheo - (Gk. vb.) - follow upon, follow after, accompany, imitate (1 Pet. 2:21; 1 Tim. 5:10, 25)
- f. τύπος - tupos - (Gk. n.) - type, model, pattern, example - (Titus 2:7; 1 Tim. 4:12; 1 Pet. 5:3)
- g. רָדַף - radaph - (Hebrew verb) - pursue or follow after earnestly (Psa. 34:14; 119:150; Prov. 12:11; 15:9; 21:21; 28:19)

3. We are commanded to **imitate God** as beloved children, being obedient to His word, by appropriating salvation, confessing sins consistently, pursuing spiritual maturity, and being kind to one another and forgiving each other. (Prov. 21:21; Gal. 3:26; Eph. 4:32; 5:1, 2; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16, 17; 1 John 1:9)
4. We are to **imitate the Lord Jesus Christ** in love by means of the filling of the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor. 11:1; 1 Thess. 1:6; with Eph. 5:1, 2) Christ left us examples to follow, namely: (1) **serving one another** (John 13:15), and (2) **suffering on behalf of others**. (1 Pet. 2:21; cf. Col. 1:24)
5. It is the pastor-teacher's job to cause his congregation to move toward spiritual maturity by encouraging them to **imitate the faith and patience** (stability) of the Old Testament saints. (Heb. 6:11, 12) We are not to follow the bad examples of the Old Testament saints but to learn from them. (1 Cor. 10:6-11)

6. It is fitting, proper, and necessary to **imitate believers** who receive the word of God with joy in adversity and who have self discipline. (1 Thess. 1:7, 8; 2 Thess. 3:7-9)
7. We are exhorted and commanded to **imitate the faith** of those who teach us the word of God. (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1a; Heb. 13:7)
8. We are commanded to **imitate the good** (divine policy) not the evil (Satanic policy). (Psalms 34:14; 1 Pet. 3:13; 3 John 11)
9. We are to grow to spiritual maturity and beyond in order to **become examples** or models for others to follow or imitate. (2 Thess. 3:9; Titus 2:6, 7; Phil. 3:17; 1 Pet. 5:3 (Note: the pastor- teacher is to become an example to his congregation cf. Titus 1:7; 1 Tim. 4:12))
10. **Those who are negative** to the word of God (Bible doctrine) inevitably pursue or **imitate the evil**. (Psalms 119:150; Prov. 12:11; 28:19)
11. Local church congregations are **encouraged to imitate** other local churches which are collectively more mature (1 Thess. 1:6; 2:14); and then in turn to **become examples** to other local churches. (1 Thess. 1:7)