

What Are You Going to Be? – Oct. 27, 2021

Halloween – it's all about dressing up. Pretending. It's fun. It's 1 night.

Distinction: Our lives aren't about pretending to be what we're not.

It's to imitate what we're to become. Imitate till it is innate.

Infants – @ 21 days of age - imitate/match facial expressions

Babies imitate sound, then learn to speak.

Practice piano – 2nd nature. Muscle memory.

The Bible tells us to “be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us.” (Eph. 5:1-2)

Imitate – “to take or follow as a model; to copy or simulate.”

Children love to copy a parent. Move as dad does. Make-up like mom.

Christians - “Do as God does.” [Eph 5:1- CEV]

Christians choose...

Retaliate... choose to be merciful. Hate... choose to love.

Angry... choose to forgive. Jealous... choose see blessings.

Fight...choose peace. Mouth off/respond... choose self-control.

Walk in love – respond the way Jesus did. Act the way He acted.

He was compassionate, caring. He stopped. Made outsiders feel important.

He was kind to the bullied. He got Zacchaeus out of the sycamore tree.

(Luke 19:1-10)

People called Z a sinner, Jesus called him a child of Abraham (family)

People isolated him, Jesus included him. Jesus went to his house.

And – Z was **changed**. He stopped being a thief, became generous.

Z made his mistakes right.

“If I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

There are things we can't change: Height. Blood Type. DNA.

Mostly – we can change: weight, hair, eye color, traits, nature. **Be who we want**

“Regarding your former way of life, you were taught to strip off your old nature, which is being ruined by its deceptive desires, to be renewed in your mental attitude, and to clothe yourselves with the new nature, which was created according to God's image in righteousness and true holiness.” –

Ephesians 4:22-24 (Int'l Std Ver)

Instead of cheating/lying . . . change - be honest.
Instead of selfish . . . change - be generous.
Instead of unhappiness . . . change – have joy for what you do have.
Instead of causing discord . . . change – choose to create peace.
Instead of anger . . . change – choose to be forgiving.
Instead of doing to others as they've done to you . . . change- kindness.
Instead of hate . . . change – choose love.

Walking the Christian life is about changing. Stripping off old nature.

Renewing right attitudes. Imitating Jesus, 1 day at a time.

We clothe ourselves with a new nature. What an opportunity!

We can become who we want to be. Kind. Thoughtful. Compassionate.

We can be the people who bring out the best in others.

Christianity is about **renewing your mental attitude**. New attitude.

Precious. Beloved. Worthy. Beautiful. Gifted.

“we have the mind of Christ” – **1 Cor. 2:16**. Wise, not stupid.

Name-calling is far too common. There are people out there who do so.

They use insulting, abusive, or demeaning labels; use **labels** to hurt/control

Jesus takes the labels off of us. He sets us free.

He strips away our old nature... He makes us clean. New identity.

Rise higher. Humble, lifts us up. Strong, soar on wings like eagles.

We make choices every day about how we act & respond.

Those choices show who we are. Our choices become our identity.

We aren't our jobs, our place in the band, our hobbies, our neighborhood...

What are you going to be? Jesus was the light.

If we're imitators of God, we're the light.

Song of Week – “Be a Light” – by Thomas Rhett, Keith Urban, Reba McEntire, Hilary Scott, & Chris Tomlin

58 days to C-mas. Stay positive. Test negative. Get vaccinated.