

Paul's world Life in Ephesus – *Imitators of God* – 12-18 August 2018

Background information to support the weekly resources on **Ephesians 4.25-5.2** (RCL Yr B Proper 10) in print and online at www.rootsontheweb.com



Life today

Can you remember learning something, like a dance step, sports move, or how to hold a musical instrument, by copying someone?



We learn a lot of things by copying – not just actions, but also attitudes and how we behave. For example, if someone is kind to us, it is easier to copy that behaviour and be kind to someone else.

Imagine

Being a member of Paul's new church in Ephesus. Paul wants you to understand how kind God has been to you, forgiving you and loving you. This is the perfect reason for you to be kind and forgiving to other people. Paul goes one step further, and points out that Jesus died for you. The love of Jesus is so deep that it is hard to understand and harder still to copy. It reaches out to everyone, whoever they are. You don't need to show that you deserve Jesus' love, he loves you anyway. Paul says that what Jesus did in giving up his life was the greatest way he could serve God. And Paul wants you to know that when you are kind and forgiving to others, you are also serving God.

Did you know?

Making sacrifices and bringing offerings to the gods was an important part of religion in Ephesus. Worship in the temples was like a kind of swap: the worshipper gave a gift to the god, so the god gave the worshipper some kind of help in return. If you wanted the gods to help you, you had to show them respect and honour them with a gift. Paul points out that the story of Jesus works the other way around – Jesus gives the gift of his life before his followers have given him anything.



Paul's letter to the Ephesians

A nugget to explore with children:
Chapter 5, verses 1 and 2



*Therefore be imitators of God,
as beloved children, and live in
love, as Christ loved us and gave
himself up for us, a fragrant
offering and sacrifice to God.*