

Imitator

A person who copies the behavior of another

The vast majority of people do not want a marriage like their parents marriage. Yet, where do we get our example of marriage? From our parents! The tendency of human beings is to become what they have seen growing up, whether they like it or not. Those who abuse their spouse have seen abuse in their parents relationship - childhood exposure to domestic abuse is a significant risk factor for becoming an abuser in adulthood. But it doesn't have to be to the extreme of domestic abuse. We tend to communicate in the way we learned in our families of origin and we tend to act in the ways we experienced growing up. Sin tends to follow generational lines. We usually *imitate* what we have seen throughout our childhood.

As Christians, we are new creations when we accept Christ into our lives. While the Bible tells us that in Christ, the old is gone and the new has come (2 Corinthians 5:17), too often that flesh sticks around and provokes us to those old habits. There is a saying that *practice doesn't make perfect, practice make permanent*. It is why Paul laments; "What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?" Like Paul, we tend to do what we don't want to do and don't do what we want to do (Romans 7). Too often, a couple's marriage reflects the dysfunction of their parents marriage.

But as Christians, we have *the* answer. Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:1 that we should follow God's example as dearly loved children. We have a better, no a *perfect* example we can imitate in our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Jesus commanded us to love each other as He has loved us and gave Himself up for us. We are to *imitate* Christ's sacrificial love for others - especially for our spouse. Imitating Christ's humility and great love for mankind is something we can and should do! Is that your desire? Your aim? To imitate Christ; to copy His behavior, His example of giving of Himself for us? Be an imitator of Christ - remember practice makes permanent!

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page: www.fortifiedmarriages.com*