

The Lakeview Lamp

"Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." -Psalm 119:105

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"Be Imitators of God"

Troy Nicholson

The fifth chapter of **Ephesians** begins by saying, *Therefore be imitators of God...* (**5:1**). In what ways are we to be imitators of God?

Forgiveness. One verse earlier Paul says, *"...forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you"* (**4:32; Col 3:13**). God is willing to forgive us so abundantly, and so are we to imitate Him in our forgiveness of one another. In fact, Jesus says that God's forgiveness of us is conditional upon our forgiveness of others (**Matthew 6:12, 14-15**).

Love. Right after saying that we are to *"be imitators of God,"* Paul says, *"And walk in love, as Christ also has love us and given Himself for us"* (**Eph 5:2**). A few verses later he says to husbands, *"...love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her"* (**5:25**). Among some of His final words, Jesus said, *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another"* (**John 13:34**).

Acceptance. Paul says, *"Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you"* (**Romans 15:7**). God shows no partiality and is willing to accept everyone (**Acts 10:34-35**), and we must be the same in our acceptance of others.

Perfection. Jesus says, *"Therefore you shall be perfect, just as your Father in heaven is perfect"* (**Matthew 5:48**). Paul preached the perfect word of God *"that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus"* (**Colossians 1:28**).

Purity. John says, *"And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure"* (**1 John 3:3**). Christ *"committed no sin, nor*

was deceit found in His mouth” (1 Peter 2:22), and we “should follow in His steps” (:21).

Our challenge in all things is to live as John says of God when he says, *“As He is, so are we in this world” (1 John 4:17).* When we do, he says *“that we may have boldness in the day of judgment.”*

“Let my mouth be filled with Your praise and with Your glory all the day.”— Psalm 71:8

So You Talked with an Angel

Norman Midgette

We are living in an age of amazing claims. Some have been kidnapped by beings from another planet and whisked away in a UFO, or so they claim. Some claim their spirit left their body in death, drifted around the ceiling of the operating room, and then re-entered their body and they lived again. Some claim to have spoken directly to God and Christ or to have seen Mary or an angel from heaven. Some claim they were at the point of death and were miraculously healed or had some dread disease and upon attending the services of a faith healer were completely cured.

Claims are a dime a dozen but proofs are another matter. Furthermore, there are some things people claim that you have no way to “disprove.” Let none of these things bother you. Just keep your eye on what really matters, and here it is.

So you talked with an angel or saw Jesus Christ! Is that going to change the demands of the gospel or prove you are a Christian? Cornelius had a vision and saw an angel but he was far from being a saved man (**Acts 10:4; 11:14**). While Saul was still persecuting the church he “saw” Christ and *“heard a voice from his mouth” (Acts 22:14)*. At this time in his life Paul later said he was the “chief” of sinners (**I Tim. 1:15**).

Now suppose you really believed you were healed miraculously by being touched by a “faith healer.” Is that going to change one command of Christ? Let us suppose you have been taught, and you believe, you were saved by faith only. Is the fact you think you were healed with or without a

faith healer going to change the command of Christ to “*repent and be baptized for remission of sins*” (**Acts 2:38**)? Is anything that you do in this life or that happens to you in this life going to change one word in the Bible? When you look in the Bible at people that really were healed, that healing had nothing to do with whether they were in the family of God or saved. Take as examples Naaman (**2 Kings 5:8-14**) or Jeroboam (**1 Kings 13:1-6**). Naaman was a Gentile and Jeroboam a renegade Jew filled with wickedness. They were both healed, one of leprosy and the other of a withered hand. Neither these cases nor any in the New Testament made anyone closer to God nor proved they had his fellowship.

No matter what you claim you have seen or has happened to you nothing effects what God said you must do to be saved. If you believe you had a barbecue feast with a thousand angels or played handball with Moses, you would still have to repent and be baptized to be saved (**Mark 16:15, 16**). You would then need to live a faithful life, according to the gospel, to go to heaven (**Phil. 1:27; Rev. 2:10**).

Interestingly, it is usually those people who are not following the Bible who try to give credence to their spiritual lives by these claims of external experiences. Your concern should not be about seeing angels but about obeying the gospel because that is the only thing that can save you and give you fellowship with God (Rom. 1:16).

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"This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it"
(Psalm 118:24).