

Following God as Dear Children

Scripture Reading: Matthew 18:1-4; Ephesians 5:1-2

“...Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it. Prone to leave the God I love...” These words were penned by Robert Robinson. He was 22 years old when he wrote the hymn, “Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing.” How honest and transparent before God is this sentiment. To see in ourselves nothing amazing except His grace, we preemptively call upon God to keep us from wandering. Like the psalmist of old, who wrote 175 verses of dedication to the words and ways of God, ended his psalm with a cry for help: *“I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments.”* (Psalm 119:176).

In Matthew 18:1-4, we see the disciples, in training, needing a lesson on humility. In the presence of Christ’s greatness, they pulled off to the side to squabble about their own greatness and importance. Our Lord used a child to make His point. Let’s look at Paul’s simple injunction to be like dear children and follow God with humility and love.

Why should we follow God as dear Children? – Because Christ humbled Himself and followed His Heavenly Father. (Ephesians 5:1-2 cp. Philippians 2:1-8)

How should we follow God as dear Children?

– By following the example of Christ (Ephesians 5:1-2)

- Christ loved us – John 13:1-5,12-17,34-35.
- Christ gave Himself **for** us – Galatians 1:4 cp. 5:13-14.
- Christ gave Himself **to** God (The Father) – John 6:38 cp. I Corinthians 10:31; II Corinthians 5:14-15.
- Christ gave Himself as an offering.
 - A sacrifice – everything, not just a contribution – Philippians 2:6-8
 - Sweet-smelling aroma / fragrance – This expression is used to indicate an offering that is acceptable to God – I Peter 1:18-19; 2:4-5

We should offer **our bodies and our minds** to God for service (Romans 12:1-2); **our hearts** to worship God with others (Hebrews 13:15); **our time, skills, and material help** for the benefit of others (Hebrews 13:16; Philippians 4:13-18; Galatians 6:10; I John 3:16-18).