Some Americans have gotten carried away with trying to imitate celebrities. According to Beverly Hills plastic surgeon Dr. Richard Fleming, people can have surgery to try to physically resemble those they idolize. Cosmetic surgeons are in high demand with requests from women to have Halle Barry’s cheeks, Nicole Kidman’s nose, Heather Graham’s eyes, Denise Richard’s lips, or Cate Blanchett’s jawline. But it’s not just women. Men make up half of Fleming’s patients. They want Edward Burns’ nose, Johnny Depp’s jawline, or Will Smith’s body.

A sad fact is that many are trying to imitate the look of celebrities who don’t even naturally look the way they appear. “There are a lot of people on the hot body list that were not born with the particular characteristic that is now referred to when people come through the door,” says Fleming. “Anybody older than a mouseketeer in Hollywood has had some cosmetic surgery.”

But not all celebrities are happy with the outcome. Heidi Montag, a 24-year-old reality TV star has undergone plastic surgeries since 2007. In 2009 she had 10 procedures done in one day! In an interview last summer she admitted, “Obviously I wish I didn’t do it. I would go back and not have any surgery. It doesn’t help. I got too caught up in Hollywood, being so into myself and my image.”

Imitating for the wrong motive can lead to lifelong regrets. But imitating for the right motive can lead to contentment.

Paul pleaded with the Galatians to imitate him, to “become like me.” But what did he mean? He wasn’t talking about “acting” like him, but “being” like him. Being like him in his strong belief in salvation through Jesus Christ alone—what Jesus had done for him rather than what he could do for himself through obedience to the law. This is what the Galatians struggled with. They held their behaviorism higher than what they already were in Christ: free and saved!

Paul so longed for the Galatians to know the security of their own salvation that he became like them in ways—a reverse imitation of sorts. He didn’t imitate them to the point of compromising his own beliefs about faith and confidence in the surety of his salvation through Jesus alone. Yet his methods and choice of words changed depending on whom he was preaching to.

If we’re looking for a human to imitate, who better than Paul? For he imitated Jesus. And didn’t Jesus Himself “imitate” us—becoming like us in order to reach us? Didn’t Jesus even experience our death in order to secure our salvation? It’s very doable for us to be a modern-day Paul, who said, “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” The first step is to realize through studying Scripture that we are assured salvation through Jesus alone. The second step is to go out into the world and reach others by becoming like them, so they will listen and be saved.

~ nc

1. ABC News
2. On the Red Carpet
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