

**IMITATORS OF GOD**  
**Ephesians 5:1-17**  
**6/20/10**

**Ephesians 1-3** delineated the nature of what God has done for us in saving us calling us to Himself.

Our passage this morning calls upon us to live in a manner consistent with who we are in Christ.

1 beloved children of God

3 saints

8 children of light

Ephesians 5:1-17 tells us three things about the type of life God wants us to live.

God is love (1 John 4:8), therefore walk in love

God is light (1 John 1:5), therefore walk as children of light.

God is truth (1 John 5:6), therefore walk in wisdom.

**1. Walk In Love. 5:1-7**

**a. Imitate God. v. 1**

As beloved children, use God as your role model.

**b. Imitate Christ's love for you. v. 2**

Christ's love for us was a self-sacrificing love.

To walk in love means to give yourself for others.

There is a lot of talk about love these days

But little has to do with sacrifice and commitment.

"Self-love" is being promoted as the most important thing.

We are being told that our happiness and feelings should come first.

However, our example as Christians is to be Christ's unselfish sacrifice for us.

Christ's selfless sacrifice was a fragrant aroma to God.

The point is that we too can bring joy to God by giving ourselves for others.

c. **Don't imitate the sinful selfishness of the sons of disobedience. vv. 3-7**

**Immorality** is not love even though we try to dignify them by calling them love. ("making love")

Immorality is self-interest disguised as love.

Immorality seeks self-gratification without making a commitment.

True love doesn't exploit, it protects.

Immorality uses others and then disposes of them when they no longer please you.

"I don't love him/her any more."

"I don't think God would want me to be unhappy."

**Greed-** is all about getting rather than lovingly giving.

A **covetous** person is an idolater because he puts things before God. cf v. 5

**Filthiness and silly talk-** dirty stories and suggestive jokes

They are demeaning, not loving

**Course jesting-** ridicules and tears others down. It's not about love.

This is the stuff of late night talk-shows and most movies

Filthiness, silly talk, and course jesting **are not fitting**

It is not fitting for us as Christians to read, watch, or talk about the immoral escapades of others.

Rather we should engage in **thanksgiving** for what God has given us.

**5** This verdict is in sharp contrast to the world's current attitude toward what God calls sin.

**Galatians 5:19-21** Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality,<sup>20</sup> idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions,<sup>21</sup> envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things *will not inherit the kingdom of God.*

**6** Because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

**1 Corinthians 6:9-11** Or do you not know that the unrighteous *will not inherit the kingdom of God*? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals,<sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor *the* covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.<sup>11</sup> Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

**7** Therefore do not be partakers with them

They things they do are inconsistent with who you are in Christ.

As beloved children of God (1), saints (3), children of light (8) we should not live like those who don't know Christ.

**2. Walk As Children Of Light. 5:8-14**

**a. God has made you a child of light, now live like it. vv. 8-10**

**9** The fruit of light consists of goodness, righteousness, and truth.

The fruit of darkness is evil, wickedness, and falsehood.

10 Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

- b. **Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. 11-14**

Don't speak, joke or entertain yourself with the deeds of darkness.

Alexander Pope wrote:

Vice is a monster of such frightful mien,

That to be hated needs but to be seen.

But seen too often, familiar with his face,

We first endure, then pity, then embrace.

If you are in the habit of watching soap operas or reading the tabloids about the dirt in the lives of the "stars" you are playing with fire and revealing an area of your character that needs to be dealt with.

Rather expose darkness for what it really is.

This is where the going gets rough in our culture where tolerance is considered the greatest virtue.

Exposing sin helps others to see the destructive, evil, and unfruitful nature of sin.

At the same time be careful not to gossip or slander another person.

Help others to see that they are sinful and unfruitful.

**Matthew 5:16** "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

3. **Walk In Wisdom. 5:15-17**

- a. **Wisdom is careful. 15**

A wise person carefully considers how God's word relates to what he/she is thinking about doing.

**Proverbs 14:15** The naive believes everything, But the sensible man considers his steps.

**Proverbs 27:12** A prudent man sees evil *and* hides himself, The naive proceed *and* pay the penalty.

**b. Wisdom makes the most of your time. 16**

**Because the days are evil**

We are here to be lights in the world and our time on earth is short.

The average person will only spend 25,000 days on earth.

Is the way you are spending your time eternally significant?

If I am average, I have only 10 more summers to enjoy and to serve God.

When my days on earth are gone, so are my money and possessions.

Wise people make the most of their time.

**Colossians 4:5** Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.

**Galatians 6:9** Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

**Psalm 90:12** So teach us to number our days, That we may present to You a heart of wisdom.

**c. Wisdom understands the will of God. 17**

God gives us His moral will in the Scriptures

The Bible tells us His will in most areas of life.

In areas not specifically mentioned in the Bible, the scriptures give us principles for making wise decisions.

Wisdom discerns how to apply God's word to life.

**Enlightenment**

**John 1:9-12** There was the true Light which, coming into the world, enlightens every man.<sup>10</sup> He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.<sup>11</sup> He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.<sup>12</sup> But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name

**John 8:12** Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, "I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life."

**John 12:46** "I have come *as* Light into the world, so that everyone who believes in Me will not remain in darkness.

**Colossians 1:13-14** For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,<sup>14</sup> in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

**1 John 1:5-9** This is the message we have heard from Him and announce to you, that God is Light, and in Him there is no darkness at all.<sup>6</sup> If we say that we have fellowship with Him and *yet* walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth;<sup>7</sup> but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.<sup>8</sup> If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.<sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.