

Eph. 5:1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

Eph. 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Again, “therefore” instructs us to consider all that has been presented to this point. Considering God’s love for us and all that is ours in Christ, we should follow Him by imitating the life of Christ. God the Father identified Jesus as His beloved or dear Son. In Christ, we too are His beloved children and should strive to show that in our lives just as surely as did Jesus. THE defining characteristic of our life should be love. The Lord was very clear in defining love as a willingness to deny self and serve others sacrificially as Christ so vividly exemplified during His earthly ministry. The key to being successful is in having the right motive—a desire to offer these acts of love and sacrifice as a “sweetsmelling savor” or gift to God. If we could but define all our words and actions in context of loving and serving God rather than people, we would be less likely to be influenced by perceived benefit to self or perceived worthiness of the one to whom our words and/or actions are directed.

Eph. 5:3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

Eph. 5:4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

If we are choosing to imitate Christ, it therefore follows that our lives should not exhibit worldly characteristics. Every child of God should live as befitting one who has been consecrated and declared pure and holy in Christ. Paul’s instruction is strong and clear—not once should the child of God take part in these types of actions.

- Fornication – This is a reference to adultery and/or idolatry, which covers both physical and spiritual infidelity.
- All uncleanness – This is a reference to physical and/or spiritual impurity of any kind.
- Covetousness – This is a reference to greed or desire that would lead one to use fraud or extortion to fulfill their desire.
- Filthiness – This is a reference to actions that are shameful or obscene.
- Foolish talking – This is a reference to vulgar talk that evidences poor judgment.
- Jestings – Again this is a reference to vulgarity expressed in jokes or wit usually at the expense of someone else.

The more I get into the word and come face to face with the express instruction regarding things that we have learned to accept as normal I am convicted more and more. I come from a family that is quick to poke fun at the expense of others—not with vulgarity, but clearly with insensitivity. In fact, the more I have begun to measure my activities and choices against the heart of God as expressed in His word, the more amazed I am at His unconditional love, mercy and grace toward me. Yes, I am growing and continuing to make changes, but to my shame, these are changes that should have been made oh so long ago.

The phrase “not convenient” means “not appropriate” for the child of God. The actions and words of the child of God should reflect a heart of thankfulness evidenced by imitation of Jesus and obedience to His word.

Eph. 5:5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

In this verse Paul is basically stating that those whose lives are characterized by fornication (whoremonger), uncleanness (filthiness, foolish talking, jesting) or covetousness cannot claim inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. The truth is that anyone whose life is characterized by such sin is an idolater; he/she has placed self on the throne and rejected God and His Son.

“in the kingdom of Christ and of God” – It jumped out to me that this seemed to be a unique reference to the kingdom. Much to my surprise after doing several types of searches, I found that this verse, Luke 1:33 and 2Peter 1:11 were the only specific references to the kingdom of Jesus Christ I could find. There are other scriptures that make reference to the Son and His eternal Kingdom (i.e., Isaiah 9 and Daniel 2), but this verse seems unique in identifying the kingdom with Christ and God, Son and Father. The most common reference to the kingdom in scripture is as the kingdom of God. The closest counterpart to this verse I could find in scripture was in Revelation.

Rev. 22:1-5 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of **the throne of God and of the Lamb**. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, *was there* the tree of life, which bare twelve *manner of* fruits, *and* yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree *were* for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but **the throne of God and of the Lamb** shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name *shall be* in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

The truth again reflects the triune nature of God—something I’ll never be able to truly understand this side of heaven for sure. I do know that there is only one kingdom—not two.

Eph. 5:6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

Eph. 5:7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

Paul warns the believers in Ephesus not to fall for the deceit of men using empty words, words that are not true. Again, the truth is driven home that we are responsible to recognize and discern truth (cf comments at 4:17-19). The truth is that God’s wrath will be directed towards the children of disobedience because they have rejected Him as Lord as evidenced by their actions. Those who have embraced Jesus as Savior should be known as children of obedience. We should diligently make choices that identify us as obedient and as those who accept God as the supreme authority in our lives. We are to be “in the world, but not of it,” as Steve Green sings in “Higher Ground.”

Eph. 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

Eph. 5:9 (For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

Eph. 5:10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

“sometimes” – I believe would have been better translated “in time past” or “once.”

Before accepting Christ as Savior we were all children of darkness, but we are now children of light in the Lord.

John 8:12 Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Our lives should testify to our position in Christ. We have been sealed with the indwelling Holy Spirit. Proof of His indwelling presence is the fruit that is produced in our life that is good, righteous and truthful, the things that others see in us that identify us as belonging to God’s family.

Again, the implication is either/or. We are either walking as children of the light or darkness. Our actions define us. The Spirit will only lead us to walk in light.

Eph. 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*.

Eph. 5:12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

Paul is clear in stating that the child of God is not to have *fellowship* or take part in “the unfruitful works of darkness,” works that are associated with the world—the lust of the eyes, the flesh, and the pride of life. We are to boldly *reprove* or rebuke others concerning these works by exposing these deeds both in word and by how we live.

Verse 12 is a clear indicator of how much society has degenerated. Paul is telling the Ephesians that it is shameful to even talk about what people are doing in private that is sinful. Not only do we talk openly about what was previously recognized as “secret” sins, we embrace them as part of our entertainment and accommodate them through our government and judiciary system.

Eph. 5:13 But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

Light gives illumination. Just as the life of Christ exposed the sin of the spiritual leaders of His day, the life of the child of God should expose the sin of the world in which he/she lives.

Eph. 5:14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

This appears to be another reference to the words of the prophet Isaiah.

Is. 60:1-2 Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross

darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.

It's a statement of recognizing that you are spiritually dead and waking up to spiritual life in Christ. It seems significant that Paul references the state of being spiritually dead as accompanying a state of sleep or being unaware. Once one recognizes their sin, it's like they are waking up to their need and the life that is available in Christ.

Eph. 5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

Eph. 5:16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Because we are privileged to be part of God's family in Christ, we should be exacting and diligent (from the Greek for *circumspectly*) in how we live. In fact, the root word for *circumspectly* is in the superlative form—most exact and straightest. Most of the translations use the word careful, but I don't think that conveys the strength of Paul's admonition. To be diligent and exacting in staying on a straight path conveys putting forth strenuous effort not to deviate from obedience to the Lord in the slightest degree. In fact, the word for *strait* in the Old Testament usually conveys a sense of being hemmed in and narrow. Scripture declares that entrance to eternal life through the strait gate is from a narrow path not found by many.

Matt. 7:14 Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

When we choose to exercise diligence in obeying God's word, we identify ourselves as wise—not foolish. When we make wise choices, we are redeeming the time, making the most of our opportunities. I liked the Greek for *redeem*—"to rescue from loss."

I think the last phrase of verse 16 is a reference to a general characterization of the days in which we live and in which all have lived since the time of Christ in which most of the world has rejected God's authority.

Eph. 5:17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

Paul continues to drive home his point—Don't be unwise or foolish. Choose to understand the will of the Lord. He would not make this statement unless the means were available through which we can obtain understanding of God's will. The most obvious means is through familiarity with His Word. The psalmist states it clearly.

Psa. 111:10 The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do *his commandments*: his praise endureth for ever.

Psa. 119:104 Through thy precepts I get understanding: therefore I hate every false way.

Eph. 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

Eph. 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

I think Paul singled out drunkenness as a specific contrast to encouraging the Ephesians to be filled with the Spirit. Drunkenness is characterized by being out of control and the domination of the flesh in one's life. Being filled with the Holy Spirit is characterized by being in control and having the love of God dominate your life. The Greek for *excess* is a reference to being profligate or having an immoral lifestyle. A life controlled by the Spirit will exemplify a life of morals and purity.

When one is filled with the Spirit, he/she exhibits a joyful heart. One of the expressions of a joyful heart often comes through singing or humming psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Although the Greek did not help me differentiate greatly between these three categories, it was clear that these would be songs that were spiritual or religious vs. carnal; it even emphasized ethereal or heavenly vs. demonic. I thought of the psalms as scripture set to music, hymns as man's worshipful thoughts set to music, and spiritual songs as the general category of all music that glorifies God and enhances the worship of the child of God.

Eph. 5:20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

The child of God should be ever in an attitude of thanksgiving for "all things" that are his/hers in Christ; I think that is the proper reference in the context of Paul's letter and in connection with being filled with the Spirit. The Holy Spirit will always lead the child of God to glorify and worship God and His Son Jesus.

John 15:26 But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, **he shall testify of me:**

John 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for **he shall not speak of himself**; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

John 16:14 **He shall glorify me:** for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew *it* unto you.

Eph. 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

When we act wisely and are filled with the Spirit, our lives will be characterized by a humility that submits to one another in the fear of God. The scripture defines the fear of God as the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 111:10). It's another way of describing a heart that is yielded to the authority of God. I think it is an admonition to recognize and honor the God-established authorities in one's life—beginning in the home.

Eph. 5:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Eph. 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

Eph. 5:24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.

Christian wives are instructed to submit to their husbands "as unto the Lord." Not because he is necessarily wiser than you or even more spiritually mature

than you, but just because you desire to obey God. By submitting to your husband you are submitting to God. When two people are married, they become one in the eyes of God.

Gen. 2:24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

A body can only have one head, and God has designated that position to the husband. Paul uses that comparison to picture the relationship between the church (the bride) and Christ as its head. If we accept Jesus as Savior and Lord, a Christian wife is to obey Him by submitting to her husband.

Eph. 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Christian husbands are to love their wives in the same way that Christ has shown His love for the church through giving His life in sacrifice to provide for her salvation. My contention is that the husband has the far harder responsibility, and that no woman will have a problem yielding to a husband who loves her in accordance with that instruction. The harder test is yielding to the authority of a husband who does not love you according to the love of Christ, but the will of God is clear that the Christian is to yield to authority as established by Him. (See journal on 1Peter 2-3 for further teaching.)

Eph. 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Eph. 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

In these verses we are told why Christ was willing to give Himself for the church—to make us clean and pure and present Himself with a glorious perfect bride. God the Father and His Son Jesus do everything with a pure love for us and for each other. Though we have been declared righteous in Christ, He continues to sanctify and cleanse us through the ministry of the Word. The Word has long been recognized as a life-changing agent. The Psalms, and especially Psalm 119, contain many references to its power in the life of men of faith.

Psa. 119:9 BETH. Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed *thereto* according to thy word.

Psa. 119:11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Psa. 119:50 ¶ This *is* my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me.

Psa. 119:105 ¶ NUN. Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

And God Himself declares its power through the prophet Isaiah.

Is. 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper *in the thing* whereto I sent it.

Eph. 5:28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

Christ is the head of the church, the body of Christ.

Col. 1:13&18 Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated *us* into the kingdom of his dear Son.... And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all *things* he might have the preeminence.

Just as Christ in love sacrificed Himself and provided for His body, the church, the Christian husband is to love his body, his wife. A person who loves himself will take care of his body. A Christian man who wants to take care of his body will love his wife.

Eph. 5:29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

Eph. 5:30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Paul could not conceive of a man who hated his own flesh and would fail to nourish and take care of it. According to the nature with which we are created, this is true. In context with the Christian audience to whom he was writing this is true. Sad to say, that outside Christ and through the deceit and influence of the enemy, many learn to treat their bodies shamefully and neglectfully.

Under normal circumstances most men are concerned about providing for the needs of their body. It is in the very nature of God's Son to love and care for His body, the church, as part of His very being. The fact that he uses the language of caring for flesh and bones vs. flesh and blood gives emphasis to the fact that Paul is speaking spiritual truth. Scripture is clear that the life of the body of flesh is in the blood. In Christ, we are looking forward to a body of flesh and bones whose life is in the Spirit.

(4/12/) *1 Corinthians 15:50 "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."*

Eph. 5:31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

This is a powerful verse that is basically ignored in our society today—even among Christians. A man is to leave his father and mother for the purpose of joining his life to a woman to become one flesh for life.

Divorce has become the rule more than the exception. Even among "Christians" the divorce rate is no different than that among those who aren't. It is God's will that marriage be a "til death do you part" partnership.

Matt. 19:5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?

Matt. 19:6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. **What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.**

Every Christian divorce in particular is an act of decapitation and destruction. What was established as a life partnership meant to fulfill the needs of both man and woman is now regarded as a temporary arrangement to fulfill selfish needs until the grass looks greener elsewhere and with total lack of commitment.

Eph. 5:32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Contrary to how man has made a mockery of the commitment God intended for marriage, Christ is totally committed to His bride. I think the mystery Paul is referencing is how Christ views His relationship to His church as pictured in God's established relationship for marriage between man and woman. Though man may pervert the picture, he can't change the truth that it was intended to represent as first established by God.

Eph. 5:33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife *see* that she reverence *her* husband.

Again emphasizing the practical application of the truth he is teaching, Paul summarizes the role of the Christian husband and wife. The husband is to love his wife as part of his own being, and the wife is to reverence (show respect through submission) her husband.