

Ephesians, Part 10 – Ephesians 5

In the previous section, believers were instructed to put on the new nature and get rid of the old types of evil behavior. Now we are called to be imitators of God.

Walk in Love

Ephesians 5:1-2 NIV84 Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Love is the predominate attribute and characteristic of God. His great love is the motivation behind God sending His Son to provide salvation.

1 John 4:8-9 NIV84 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.

1 John 4:16 NIV84 And so we know and rely on the love God has for us. God is love. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him.

As God's children, we should imitate our Father.

God is love, and we should walk in love. Christ's love should be our example and pattern. Listen to Jesus and then watch His example.

John 15:9 NIV84 As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love.

Jesus wants everyone to experience, know and live in love in the same degree that He loves and knows the Father's love. This is the greatest degree of love that can be known.

1 John 3:16 NIV84 This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us.

John 15:12 NIV84 My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.

We are being called into the same type of self-sacrificial love that God has demonstrated. When we walk in love as Christ did, our lives will also become a sweet-smelling aroma to God.

Once again the text shows the opposite of what God expects from His dear children.

The Ephesians had a temple dedicated to the goddess Diana where sexual immorality and greed were rampant.

Ephesians 5:3-6 NIV84 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual

immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient.

These kinds of actions and behaviors are the opposite of Christ's example. They portray a self-absorbed and indulgent lifestyle and lack of concern and true love for others. God's holy people should not have a hint of sexual immorality, impurity, greed, obscenity, foolish talk, and vulgar jesting. We were "*children of disobedience*" (2:1–3); now we are God's children of light, and we should walk in love.

Walk in the Light

Ephesians 5:7 NKJV Therefore do not be partakers with them.

2 Corinthians 6:17 NKJV Therefore "Come out from among them And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you."

What we partake and partner with is important. In the past, we were partakers of the world and evil. The word translated "**partakers**" implies "*having in common*" and is often translated "*fellowship*" or "*partnership*." We have been made partakers of Christ.

Being made partakers with Christ shows the depth of the change that has occurred in us.

- 2 Peter 1:4 — partakers of the divine nature
- Ephesians 3:6 — partakers of His promise in Christ
- 1 Peter 4:13 — partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.
- Hebrews 12:10 — partakers of His holiness.
- Hebrews 3:1 — partakers of the heavenly calling
- 1 Peter 5:1 — partaker of the glory that will be revealed

We are partakers of Christ: the Vine, Body and Temple.

Since we are children of the Light, we have no fellowship with darkness, (2 Corinthians 6:14).

John 8:12 NKJV Then Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

Matthew 5:14 You are the light of the world.

1 Thessalonians 5:5 You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.

Ephesians 5:8-9 AMP For once you were darkness, but now you are light in the

Lord; walk as children of Light [lead the lives of those native-born to the Light]. For the fruit (the effect, the product) of the Light or the Spirit [consists] in every form of kindly goodness, uprightness of heart, and trueness of life.

The believer's behavior should correspond with their position in Christ.

The fruit of the Light is **goodness, righteousness, and truth**. This is exactly opposite of the fruit of darkness. When we become partakers of Christ, we have nothing in common with the darkness of our previous life. Our behavior demonstrates the difference of light and darkness.

1 John 1:7 NASB95 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.

Our lifestyle is a testimony of our participation with Christ.

Walk carefully as the wise

Ephesians 5:15-17 NIV Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

What does it mean to be careful how you live?

God wants us to be wise and understand His will for our lives. We should have a purpose driven life and make the most of our time, because the days are evil. Lost opportunities may never be regained.

How can we understand and know the Lord's will in every situation and opportunity?

Galatians 5:16 AMP But I say, walk and live [habitually] in the [Holy] Spirit [responsive to and controlled and guided by the Spirit]; then you will certainly not gratify the cravings and desires of the flesh (of human nature without God).

The only way to truly walk carefully as the wise is by the control and guidance of the Holy Spirit. As we are yielded to the Lord and controlled by His Spirit, we will increasingly manifest the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22–23). The text in Ephesians shows the Spirit-filled and controlled life.

We are to walk or live continually filled with the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18-21 HCSB And don't get drunk with wine, which leads to reckless actions, but be filled by the Spirit: speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music from your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of Christ. While we are commanded to not be drunk with wine, we are encouraged to be

filled with the Spirit. These two are opposite of one another. Drunkenness leads to reckless actions and a lifestyle that loses purpose and aim. Being filled with the Spirit brings the direct opposite effect on believer's lives. The original language for *"be filled with the Spirit"* is better translated *"be continuously filled with the Spirit."* We should continuously be in a state of being filled and under the Spirit's control. Being filled with the Spirit causes certain things to happen. Godly character is demonstrated when a person is filled with the Spirit. Fruit is only produced by constant feeding from the sap and connection with the root.

What are the characteristics of the Holy Spirit-filled person?

The Holy Spirit-filled person demonstrates certain characteristics, (Ephesians 5:19-21). The Spirit-filled person has a song and is filled with thankfulness. The Spirit-filled person is submissive and respectful to God and one another. A Spirit-filled person is not critical, envious, divisive, or selfishness. A Spirit-filled church is full of people who are submissive to one another, fulfilling the law of love and serving one another.

Christ and the Church model

The second half of Ephesians discusses the unity of the Body of Christ. To help illustrate this, the Apostle Paul first discussed the body and its interaction. Then he instructed believers to be imitators of God and to forsake the ways of darkness. Now he describes the relationship of Christ and the church by looking at the family unit. We may also gain specific directions for husband and wife relationships.

Ephesians 5:22-31 NIV84 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church — for we are members of his body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.

Christ's relationship with the church is like the husband and wife relationship.

The church is pictured as the bride of Christ. Christ is the Head and Savior of the Church, which is His body. He loved the church so much that He gave Himself for her to make her holy and cleansed through His word. By that cleansing, He presents the church to Himself as a glorious church, without stain, wrinkle, or blemish, but holy and blameless. He has loved the church as He

loves Himself and takes care of her, because we are members of His body and flesh. These are principles of relationship between Christ and His church.

The church is to respond and submit to Christ.

This shows the proper response of believers to Jesus Christ. He is the head of the body and when we submit to His leadership through love, many benefits abound. Christ will not arbitrarily or coercively cause the Church to be submissive.

Husband and wife relationships

The principle of headship helps bring harmony to the home. Wives are to submit to their husbands as unto Christ. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loves the church. These things do not work independently. Submission works when there is self-sacrificing love. For the family to work properly, there must be order, respect, and partnership. God has set this thing in this order, but it will only work under the control of love and the influence of the Holy Spirit. When this relationship is functioning properly, it emulates the relationship of Christ and the Church. Each partner in the relationship gains benefit of the other.

Parent-Child relationships

Ephesians 6:14 NIV84 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother” — which is the first commandment with a promise — “that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

This is the model for a Spirit-filled family and these principles work in any home. The fundamental duty of children is to obey their parents as unto the Lord. When family members are right with the Lord, they will be right with each other. Parental leadership in the home should have the one goal to train or raise up children in the Lord.

Employee and employer relationships

The text speaks of slaves and earthly masters. This also relates to all work relationships.

Ephesians 6:5-8 NIV84 Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.

We are to work as servants of Jesus Christ, doing God’s will as we work. Employers should treat their workers with respect and honesty, (vs 9).