

# EPHESIANS

ALIVE IN CHRIST

## WALK IN LOVE AND LIGHT

Ephesians 5:1–21

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### RELATED SCRIPTURES

Colossians 1:15–23 | Matthew 23:1–36 | Philippians 2:5–8

### STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 08.10.25

### SUMMARY

Paul has some specific instruction for the Church. And once again, as he provides instruction, it's important to remember it is with the understanding of who you are now in Christ. He's labored to tell the Church of our new identity: our status as chosen people of God who have been filled with the Holy Spirit. Because of this, our patterns of behavior will necessarily and naturally be different. However, it still requires deliberate action on the believer's part; we continue to learn to die to sin and obey God's law because we are different now. Paul's first instruction is to be imitators of God (v. 1). As image bearers, God gave humanity the responsibility to mirror and reflect the character of God. Christ was the perfect image of God (Hebrews 1:3), so as followers of Jesus who are "in Christ" (Ephesians 2:10), we should follow Christ and "walk in love" (v. 2). What follows this broad instruction to imitate God are some precise descriptions of what it means to do that and walk in love. Paul then lists specifics such as the absence of sexual immorality, covetousness, and foolish talk among the followers of Jesus (vv. 3-5). Paul then warns the Church about the damage foolish and empty words have (vv. 6-10). During his ministry on earth, Jesus reserved his strongest rebukes for the experts of the law who would speak the words of the law yet display behavior contrary to what they said—he called them hypocrites (Matthew 23). Paul then tells the Church to not only avoid all these patterns of behavior, but to expose them. In expunging evil in the Church, we reveal the light of Christ (vv. 11-14). Paul concludes this section of remarks by instructing the Church to be wise; the pursuit of wisdom, as Paul classifies it, involves not being filled with wine—or *anything* that would inhibit your being filled with the Spirit (v. 18). Among the means of grace the Lord has given us to be filled with the Spirit includes singing spiritual songs with one another (v. 19), giving thanks (v. 20), and submitting to one another (v. 21) just as Christ gave himself in service to the Church (Philippians 2:5-8).

### GROUP QUESTIONS

Share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you from the sermon or your direct reading of Ephesians 5:1-21.

How does one practically imitate Christ? What are some specific things you can do in the pursuit of imitating Christ, and how can you do this without it starting to feel like a religious checklist?

When Paul instructs the Church to "expose works of darkness" (v. 11), how do we do this in grace and truth? Does this process look the same both inside and outside the Church?

If there's one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

### CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today's themes in what you bring before God.