

Be Imitators of God

Ephesians (Part 6) – Eph. 5:1-21

Michael L. Riddle

Introduction:

1. Continuation of Ephesians Sermon Series
 - a. All Spiritual Blessings In Christ – Eph. 1
 - b. Our Walk – Eph. 1-5
 - c. A Portrait of the Church – Eph. 2:19-22
 - d. Revelation of the Mystery – Eph. 3
 - e. Spiritual Maturity – Eph. 4:11-32
 - f. Be Imitators of God – Eph. 5:1-21**
 - g. Christ and the Church // Husbands and Wives – Eph. 5:22-33
 - h. Children, Servants, Masters – Eph. 6:1-9
 - i. The Christian Warfare – Eph. 6:10-20
2. Chapter 4/5 begins the ‘practical’ application of the letter
 - a. **4:17** – Don’t be like the Gentiles
 - b. **4:20** – Ye have NOT so learned Christ
 - c. **4:24** – Put on the new man, created after God
 - d. **5:1** – Imitate God → it’s what I do being created in righteousness & true holiness
3. Exhortations to love (:1-7); to Light (:8-14); to Wisdom (:15-21)

Discussion:

I. Followers of God

A. Eph. 5:1

B. *Be Ye therefore*

- a. In light of **4:31-32** – Kind, tenderhearted, forgiving

C. *Followers of God*

- a. Followers – imitators (NASB)
- b. Be like God
 - i. New man, created after God in righteousness (**4:24**), NOT like the Gentiles (**4:17**)
 - ii. Be perfect (**Mt. 5:48**, even as your father in heaven is perfect)
 - iii. Be without sin (**1 Jn. 2:1; 3:6-10**)

D. |-> As *Dear Children*

- a. Children often imitate their parents
- b. This is the expectation of us upon receiving adoption as children (**Eph. 1:5, 11**)
- c. As obedient children (**1 Pt. 1:13-16**)

_____ 3 exhortations to imitators of God _____

II. Walk In Love

A. Eph. 5:1-7

B. *Walk in love (:2)*

- a. First exhortation, walk = live

C. |-> as *Christ hath loved us*

- a. The ultimate example of love that we should imitate
- b. |-> *and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God*
 - i. This is the love Christ had for us
 - ii. He took our place in death as an offering and sacrifice to God – to give us forgiveness (**Rom. 5:8; Jn. 15:9, 12-13; 1 Jn. 3:16-18**)

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- iii. |-> *for a sweetsmelling savour (aroma)* – the result of that love = pleasing God
- D. *But Fornication (:3)* – if you truly love (God, self, spouse, *future spouse*), you will not defile the marriage bed (either before or during marriage) (**Heb. 13:4**)
- E. *All uncleanness* – any moral impurity
- F. *Or covetousness* – greedy desire to have more, especially of that belonging to others (**Heb. 13:5; Luke 12:15**)
- G. |-> *let it not once be named among you*
- a. Not only should these not be the ‘norm’, they shouldn’t even be present at all (not once named = no mention made!)
- b. These things are to have been put to death! (**Col. 3:5-7**)
- H. |-> *as becometh saints*
- a. This is the expectation of the Christian; there is a standard to be upheld as imitators of God.
- I. *Neither Filthiness (:4)* – obscenity, shamefulness
- J. *Nor foolish talking* – silly talking, buffoonery (//Titus 3:9)
- K. *Nor Jestings-* coarse jesting (NKJV,NASB), inappropriate humour
- L. |-> *Which Are Not Convenient* – not fitting or proper for those imitating God!
- M. *But rather giving of thanks-* grateful language to God should be what proceeds from the mouth of a Christian, not the three preceding things!
- N. *For this you know (:5)* – rationale for vv. 3-4, should have known
- O. *That no whoremonger* – one engaged in unlawful sexual intercourse
- P. *Nor unclean person* – unclean in thought & life; foul person
- Q. *Nor covetous man* – eager for gain (esp. what belongs to others); avaricious
- R. |-> *who is an idolater* – covetous men worship mammon (wealth)
- S. *Hath any inheritance in the kingdom of God and Christ*
- a. If this describes us, we are ineligible for the blessings in Christ – not an imitator / true follower
- b. **1 Cor. 6:9-11** – the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God!
- T. *Let no man deceive you (:6)-* men will try to beguile us into denying this
- U. |-> *with vain words* – words devoid of truth
- V. *:for because of these things* – those things mentioned in vv. 3&4
- W. *Cometh the wrath of God* – these will not be overlooked/ are not small things to God
- X. *Upon the children of disobedience* – in contrast to what becometh saints, dear children
- Y. *Be not therefore partakers with them (:7)* – How to avoid the wrath of God

III. Walk In Light

- A. Eph. 5:8-14
- B. In the Lord, we are no longer in darkness, we are light
- C. Walk as children of light
- a. As dear children - :1
- b. As becometh saints - :3
- D. As such we should have the fruit of the spirit (Light – NASB) (:9)
- a. Galatians 5:22-25
- b. // Eph. 4:32
- E. To walk in the light, we need to know what the light is! (:10)
- a. Rom. 12:1-2

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- F. Have no fellowship with darkness (:11)
 - a. Don't take part in their sins (1 Cor. 5:9-11; 2 Cor. 6:14)
 - b. Rather reprove (correct) them (:11b)
 - i. Will be made manifest by the light (:13) – [John 3:20-21]

IV. Walk In Wisdom

- A. Eph. 5:15-21
- B. *See then that you walk* (:15)– in light of the context, see to it that you walk in wisdom
- C. *Redeem the time* (:16) – you don't know when your time will end
- D. Know the will of God (:17) - // 1 Thess. 4:1-7
- E. Be not drunk with wine
 - a. Vine's Expository Dictionary – *methusko* - signifies "to make drunk, or to grow drunk" (an inceptive verb, marking the process of the state expressed), "to become intoxicated," ---- Don't even BEGIN the process which leads to drunkenness = don't drink!
 - b. Wherein is excess – in the process which leads to excess/dissipation
 - c. Those deceived by wine are not wise – Prov. 20:1
 - d. Warning against it – Prov. 23:29-35
 - e. The whole process is condemned – 1 Pt. 4:1-3
 - i. Excess of wine (oi-no-flu-ge-a) – pass out, slobbering, drunk
 - ii. Revelries (komas) – ½ drunken party
 - iii. Banquetings (pot'-os) – simply a drinking
- F. Rather, be filled with the spirit... (:18b-20)
- G. Submitting to one another in the fear of God (:21)

Conclusion:

1. As we have noted, it is a high calling to be imitators of God
 - a. Be perfect, be without sin
 - b. Walking in Love, In Light, and In Wisdom
2. If you have yet to become a dear child, a follower of God, there is no better time than now – redeem the time.
3. If you haven't been following God properly by imitating him and living in love, in light, in wisdom, without sin, you have opportunity to make correction of that and begin anew.