



In order to walk in a manner worthy of our calling (Eph 4:1), in order to not walk as the gentiles do (Eph 4.17), and in order to take off the old self and put on the new self (Eph. 4: 25-32) Paul tells us to be imitators of God.

As we move into Ephesians 5, Pastor Tim will show us the first of four ways we are to “walk” as we take off the old self and put on the new self. The word “walk” in this passage represents our lifestyle. We are going to learn that God’s purpose in saving us is to be glorified by conforming us to be like Christ.

As a small group, read the passage on the next page, review the questions and discuss how we can be “imitators of God”.

## Group Study Questions

### Read Ephesians 5:1-7

#### Ephesians 5:1-7 ESV

<sup>1</sup> Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. <sup>2</sup> And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. <sup>3</sup> But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. <sup>4</sup> Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. <sup>5</sup> For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. <sup>6</sup> Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. <sup>7</sup> Therefore do not become partners with them;

1. The passage begins with the word “Therefore”. What is the therefore there for? **Hint:** Remember words in scripture like “therefore” indicate cause and effect. Look back through Eph. 4 and discuss.
2. Read Romans 8:28-29 and 1 Peter 1:14-16. What do these verses tell you?
3. How do we conform to the likeness of Christ? How can we imitate God?

#### Command To Follow

4. What is the command to follow in the first part of verse 2?

5. What does it mean to walk in love? Discuss as a group.

6. Why should we walk in love?

### **Christ is the Example**

7. How do we walk in love? See the second part of Ephesians 5:2.

8. How did Christ love us? Also see 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Romans 5:8.

9. When our love is costly and sacrificial (like Jesus'), what does that look like to God?





## INTROSPECTION

- Do you love in a way that is costly and sacrificial? Ask the Spirit of God to help you to love more like Jesus.
- Are there signs of counterfeit love in your life that you need to avoid? Are there things in your life that may seem harmless but are actually tempting you to sin? Pray that the Holy Spirit might show you these things so that you might be able to avoid them.

## FOR FURTHER REFERENCE AND STUDY Commentary on Ephesians 5:1-7\*

### THE POSITIVE: TO LOVE OTHERS (5:1-2).

5:1-2. Each Christian should be an imitator of God because he is God's child. As a child imitates his parents, so ought a believer to imitate God (cf. Matt. 5:48; Luke 6:36).

The **and** should be translated "that is" in order to convey the idea that Ephesians 5:2 explains how a believer is to imitate God: by walking in love. The supreme example of this love is Christ's love for His own—He **loved us**; seen graphically in His sacrificing His life on behalf of those who would believe. He willingly **gave Himself up** (cf. v. 25; John 10:11, 15, 17-18; Gal. 1:4; Heb. 9:14). This **offering** was a fragrance pleasing (and thus acceptable) **to God** (cf. Lev. 1:17; 3:16; Isa. 53:10). (The idea of **fragrant** offerings is also spoken of in 2 Cor. 2:15-16; Phil. 4:18.) Christians can imitate God by loving others, even to the point of death if necessary (1 John 3:16).

### THE NEGATIVE: TO ABSTAIN FROM EVIL (5:3-6).

*Responsibility: to abstain from evil practices (5:3-4).*

5:3. The self-centered vices in conduct and speech (vv. 3-4) are the opposite of the self-sacrificing love spoken of in verses 1-2. Since these vices portray selfishness and unconcern for others, a believer should **not** have **even a hint** of these sins in his life. **Sexual immorality** (*porneia*), **any kind of impurity**, and greed are **improper for** (lit., "should not be named among") believers. **God's holy people** is literally, "saints" (*hagiois*; cf. 1:1, 15).

5:4. Improprieties in speech—**obscenity** (*aischrotēs*, "shameless talk and conduct"), **foolish talk** (*mōrologia*, lit., "stupid words"), and **coarse jesting** (*eutrapelia*, "vulgar, frivolous wit")—are **out of place** for Jesus' followers, because such vices often harm (cf. 4:29), whereas **thanksgiving** is appreciation for others and is helpful. Paul was not intimating that humor itself is sin, but that it is wrong when it is used to destroy or tear down others.

*Reason: no inheritance for evildoers (5:5-6).*

5:5-6. Paul sternly warned believers that the reason they are to abstain from evil deeds (specifically, immorality, impurity, and greed; cf. vv. 3 and 5) is that those who practice them are not a part of God's kingdom. Those who have **no inheritance in the kingdom** have not been "washed," "sanctified," and "justified" as 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 so clearly demonstrates. A **greedy person ... is an idolater** (cf. Col. 3:5) in the sense that greed, like idols, puts things before God.

Christians should not be deceived into thinking that this warning is merely **empty words** (*kenois*, trans. "empty" means void of content), for the **disobedient**, that is, the unregenerate (cf. Eph. 2:2) are the objects of **God's wrath** (cf. Col. 3:6). God's view of sin should be taken seriously. Believers should be imitators of God, not evildoers.

*Command: do not get involved (5:7).*

5:7. Christians, as objects of God's love (vv. 1-2), are inconsistent if they become **partners with** those who are the objects of God's wrath, those who are not "in the kingdom" (v. 5).\*

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\* Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary. (1983-). *The Bible knowledge commentary: An exposition of the scriptures*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.