

The Book of Ephesians – Part 7

Introduction:

This morning we're going to return to our series on the Book of Ephesians. When we last left off, back in May, we covered the last half of Chapter 4.

So we're gonna pick it up where we left off and cover the first part of Chapter 5.

The first part of Chapter 5 is very similar to the last half of Chapter 4. Paul exhorts the believers at Ephesus to follow after God and not to follow after the sinful ways of this world.

In verses 3 through 13 he gets specific about the types of sin that they are to avoid. They may seem obvious to us but remember that the city of Ephesus was a city driven by the pursuit of pleasure.

What we would consider shocking behavior was tolerated and even considered normal by many of the Ephesians before they were born again.

Verses 14 through 17 tell the believer that is still walking in darkness to repent and to awake to once again walk in the light of God.

Verses 18 through 21 express the importance of being continually filled with the Spirit of God.

Follow after God (Ephesians 5:1-21)

¹Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

- The word translated followers is the Greek word *mimites* from which we get our English word mimic. To mimic means to imitate or to try and be just like someone else.

- Earthly children, at least when they are young, many times try to imitate their parents. In the same way, as children of God, we should imitate our heavenly Father.
- The best way to do that is to imitate what God was like when he came to earth as a man. In other words, we should imitate Jesus.

²And 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.

- When the priests offered a sacrifice according to the pattern commanded by the Law of God, it was a sweet smelling savor in the nostrils of God. It means that he was satisfied with the offering that had been given.
- When Jesus came and offered himself up as the perfect sacrifice, God was completely satisfied. The demands of his justice had been met.
- It was also the ultimate example of walking in love.
- **Romans 12:1** tells us we should offer our bodies to God as a living sacrifice.
- If Jesus gave himself to God as a sacrifice for us, then we should follow his example and offer our lives as a sacrifice to God because of what Jesus did for us. And we should walk in love as he did.

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

- The word translated fornication is from the Greek word *porneia* and it means any sexual activity outside of the

bounds of marriage. And that means marriage between a man and a woman!

- Uncleaness is anything having to do with improper sexual activity, and covetousness is the desire for these kinds of things in your life.
- Let it not be named among you is not referring to talking about immoral activity. Sometimes we have to do that so we can minister to people effectively. It is another way of saying that Christians should not do these things.

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

- Filthiness refers to obscenity, specifically sexually obscene words or phrases that the world uses.
- Foolish talking refers to any type of coarse language that does not lift up the Lord.
- Jestings refers to rude, sexual remarks that people use to draw attention to themselves. Usually, they do this to see the shocked expressions on people's faces.
- Bottom line, Christians should not talk in this way because it "is not convenient". This phrase means it is not up to God's standard of conduct.
- This does not mean that you cannot have fun and that you can't have a sense of humor or that you have to be "super spiritual" all the time.
- If you are in tune with the Holy Ghost, you'll know when you've crossed the line. There won't be any doubt.

⁵For 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.

- The word whoremonger is from the Greek word *pornos* from which we get the English word pornography. It actually refers to a male prostitute. To be unclean in the sense of this verse is to be dominated by sexually immoral thoughts.
- Even though these sins could be committed by Christians, these verses are actually referring to those who are idolaters and not worshippers of God.

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

- If these people are going to receive the wrath of God one day, why should a believer desire to live like one of them?
- Don't be deceived by smooth talking individuals who tell you its O.K. It's not O.K. This kind of behavior will destroy your life.

⁷Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

- The word partakers actually means participants. Don't participate in these kinds of activities with the sinner but flee from them as the Bible tells us to do.
- **I Corinthians 6:18** says we are to flee fornication.

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

- **I Corinthians 1:13** says that Christ has delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:
- Paul is telling the Ephesians that if they have been delivered from the power of darkness into the kingdom of light, then they need to walk in that light.
- Many times throughout scripture the contrast between saint and sinner is referred to as light and darkness, life and death, and even Christ and Satan.
- What many Christians don't realize is that even after you get born again it is possible to walk in darkness.

⁹(For the fruit of the Spirit (light) is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

- The word Spirit here is actually mistranslated. It is actually the word "light".
- This verse means that the fruit produced when we walk in the light is up to God's standard of goodness, righteousness and truth.

¹⁰Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

- The light of God will prove or reveal what is acceptable unto him.
- Believers may do "good things" but if they are not walking in the light, they will not be acceptable to God.
- There will be no rewards for these kinds of works. They will end up being burned up as wood, hay and stubble.

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

- Don't hang around with the people of the world if the scenario or the environment is such that you are tempted to partake in their ungodly deeds.
- As attractive as the things of the world may appear at times, they are filled with darkness.
- Jesus spent time with sinners but never in a scenario or an environment where he partook of their ungodly deeds.
- He always managed to put himself in a position to speak light and truth into the lives of the sinners he came in contact with.
- Jesus said that believers are the light of the world. We should be who we are.
- We are not called to produce light, but *we are light*. That light will reprove or expose the works of darkness.

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

- It is a shame that we as believers have to speak of some of things discussed in this chapter. If it is a shame to speak of them, then surely it is a shame to do them.

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

- If you are walking in the light of God, your life will expose the sin and darkness in other people lives.

- If you are walking in darkness, your light will not shine and the lives of those around you will not be drawn to the gospel.
- Jesus also referred to believers as salt but said that if salt loses its savor it is worthless (**Luke 14:34**).

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

- Remember that these words were written to believers not to unbelievers. So when he refers here to those that are asleep, he is referring to believers who are walking in darkness. He says they are asleep and are among the dead.
- The dead refers to those who do not know Jesus as their lord. This reminds us that when a believer walks in darkness, he looks and acts just like the children of darkness even though he is not one of them.

Proverbs 21

16 The man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead.

- The call is to *wake up* out of this sleep and to come out from among the dead.

Romans 13

¹¹ And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.

¹² The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.

¹⁵See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

- To walk circumspectly means to walk accurately and to be aware of your walk every minute of every day.
- The only way to do this is to be consistent in your study of the Word and in developing your ability to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit.

¹⁶Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

- The days are evil because we live in the church age. Although, the church is filled with the Spirit of God here on earth, Satan is still the god of this world.
- One day soon though, he and his demons will be cast into the bottomless pit for a thousand years.
- To redeem the time means to buy it back. Many believers have fallen into sin and darkness.
- When you do this it takes you off the course that God has for you.
- When you repent and awake out of your sleep, he can get you back on track and accelerate you toward your divine destiny.
- In **Joel 2:25** God says through the prophet that he will restore the years that the locust have eaten.
- He is able to restore those lost years of fruitfulness if you will straighten up and fly right.

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

- This verse sums up the gist of the previous verses. To be wise and to understand the will of the Lord is to awake from darkness and to habitually walk in the light of God.

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

- Here Paul is making a clear contrast between the excesses of the flesh and the spirit filled life that we believers are called to live.
- Drinking too much wine will make you physically drunk and will take you places you don't need to go.
- However, if you fill yourselves to excess with the Holy Spirit, that excess will flow out of you and touch the lives of other people. This is a good thing.
- The phrase "be filled with the Spirit" is a continuous action phrase in the Greek which means to *be continually filled with the spirit*.

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

- The word translated psalms comes from the Greek word *psalmos* which refers to the book of Psalms. Remember the Psalms were the song book that they used in Old Testament times during their worship services.
- The word hymns is from the word *humnos* which means songs of celebration.

- The word spiritual is from the word *pneumatikos* which means of a spiritual, non-carnal origin. So spiritual songs are songs that come to us directly from the Spirit of God.
- We are to sing all these types of songs together in a corporate setting but also in our personal times with the Lord.

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

- The spirit filled life should be a life of continual thanksgiving to God the Father because of what he has done for us in Jesus our Lord.
- Continually having a song in your heart will fill your heart with thanksgiving.
- Verses 18 through 20 have companion verses that are found in the book of Colossians. Notice how amazingly similar these passages are.
- The only difference is that these verses refer to the importance of the Word of God in our lives. We must be filled with the Spirit but we must also be filled with the Word of God.

Colossians 3

¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

¹⁷ And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

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

- As we continually praise him, we submit to God's leadership in our lives. As we submit to him, it becomes easy to submit to those around us in the Lord.

Summary:

OK, so let's summarize what we've learned in the first part of Chapter 5, in Paul's letter to the Ephesians.

Mature believers should follow after God and turn away from their former lifestyles. Christians are not called to live in darkness but to live and walk in the light of God.

Being continually filled with the Spirit of God and being filled with the Word of God are fundamental ingredients in fulfilling the call of God on your life.

Next week we'll finish the last part of Chapter 5 which talks about the marriage relationship and how it models the relationship between Christ and the Church.

Amen? Amen!