

## Ephesians 5:1-20

### Week 9 - Living out the Love of Christ in the Light

#### Learning Objectives

- Gain a knowledge of the way of love & how to walk as children of light
- Be warned of fruitless deeds, yet called to worship

#### Steps to Prepare

- Gather materials: Small pieces of paper, pens, hard surfaces, YouTube video (optional), lyric sheets (optional), and instruments (optional addition)

**Leader's Note:** This study's passage continues to build off of concepts from Ephesians 4:17-32. Specifically, it might be wise to re-read Ephesians 4:22-24, which says, "You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; 23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds; 24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness." So, Paul will continue to outline in Ephesians 5:1-20 what God's people ought to "put off" in their old self & "put on" in the new self, which is "created to be like God". Though it may seem to some that this passage is suggesting exclusion for anyone who has ever been immoral, greedy, or impure, a contextual interpretation of this passage suggests that these are things that do not belong in God's family, kingdom, etc. and are not a part of the new self but rather the old self. As verses 8-10 suggest, those who were once in darkness are being called to live as light, not doomed to exclusion, but rather invited to discover what pleases God.

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#### Being Renewed: Revisited

**Pray for your time together in God's Word!**



**What did we talk about last week?**

*Possible answers: Last week we covered Ephesians 4:17-32. We talked about being renewed in Christ. We talked specifically about what it looks like to have a renewed mind, emotions, actions, tongue, and heart.*

#### Read Ephesians 5:1-20 (NIV)

<sup>1</sup>Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children <sup>2</sup>and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

<sup>3</sup>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. <sup>4</sup>Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk, or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. <sup>5</sup>For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person -- such a person is an idolater -- has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. <sup>6</sup>Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. <sup>7</sup>Therefore do not be partners with them. <sup>8</sup>For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light <sup>9</sup>(for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) <sup>10</sup>and find out what pleases the Lord. <sup>11</sup>Have nothing to do with the

fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. <sup>12</sup> It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. <sup>13</sup> But everything exposed by the light becomes visible - and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. <sup>14</sup> This is why it is said:

“Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

<sup>15</sup> Be very careful, then, how you live - not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. <sup>18</sup> Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, <sup>20</sup> always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**?** In verse 1, Paul challenges the Ephesian church to ‘walk in the way of love’. What truths and verses from earlier chapters, Ephesians 1-4, give us motivation to ‘walk in the way of love’?

*Possible Answers: Answers may vary. He chose us. He adopted us. He promised us His Spirit. We were dead, but now are alive. He’s been utterly merciful to us. We’ve been reconciled and brought near. We have peace with God. The list could be long. Encourage the group to point to specific verses!*

### Walk as Children of the Light

**Leader’s Note:** For the following exercises, your small group should break into groups of 2-5 people.

**Option #1:** Hand every group a small piece of paper. Read Ephesians 5:1-2 again. Ask each member to write a summary of these verses in their own words. Ask the groups to share their summaries.

*Possible Answers/Examples:*

*A.) God loved us sacrificially, thus we are called to lives of love.*

*B.) We are called to follow God’s example of love because Christ loved us & died for us.*

**Option #2:** Have each group ask the following question for some of these items bullet-pointed below. Break the list down & delegate 1-3 per group depending how many groups you break into. After the groups have taken 3-4 min to discuss, ask the groups to share with the whole group.

**Q:** How does \_\_\_\_\_ not fit in with “walking in the way of love” or being God’s “holy people”?

- Sexual immorality (v. 3)
- Impurity (v. 3)
- Greed (v. 3)
- Obscenity (v. 4)
- Foolish Talk (v. 4)
- Coarse Joking (v. 4)

*Possible answers: Answers will vary. Thematically, these things are disrespectful, harmful, selfish, destructive, divisive, prideful, unloving, and do not build others up. If the group is having a tough time, then it may be helpful to consider how someone doing these things might affect them specifically.*

? Why do you think Paul wants the Ephesians to be sure (v.5) & not deceived (v.6) of these things?

*Possible answers: Paul really desires the Ephesian church to live as dearly loved children of light in Christ, so he wants to make sure the Ephesians know what doesn't belong in the kingdom & what leads to wrath. It's a lovingly concerned warning that Paul is offering to the Ephesians.*

? What are examples of how you've seen your fellow small group members live as children of light?

*Possible answers: answers will vary. Aim to have this be a brief opportunity for encouragement.*

? What do these examples teach us about what is pleasing to the Lord?

*Possible answers: answers will vary. These examples teach us that loving one another, being gracious to one another, encouraging one another, bearing with one another, and investing in one another are all pleasing to the Lord.*

### **Called to Worship**

? What hope does Paul offer in having fruitless deeds exposed? How does this encourage you?

*Possible answers: when fruitless deeds are exposed, they are no longer shamefully secret. The darkness of these deeds becomes light through Christ shining on them. How this encourages people will vary, but it should give us a greater capacity for confession and repentance. It could also give us an awe of God's powerful love to us in Christ.*

? What does it mean for us to live wisely & not foolishly during "days that are evil"?

*Possible answers: There are some things to point to in the passage, such as avoiding drunkenness or greed, however, the hope for this question is to fill out specifics with some discussion. Some examples could be the following thoughts...Taking time to make decisions wisely with self-control rather than compulsively or selfishly. Asking for & receiving input from others about dating life or about personal finances. Actively choosing to listen more often rather than dominating conversations out of a desire for power or favor. Generously seeking the well-being of impoverished, suffering, or hurting people.*

? Why does Paul offer Spirit-filled, communal worship through song & thanksgiving as a contrasting action to drunkenness, foolishness, and evil?

*Possible answers: These are two contrasting pictures: communal worship & thanksgiving versus destructive compulsivity and selfishness. This is an appropriate contrasting action because it centers us back upon Christ, who purchased us from these deadly and sinful lifestyles so that we'd follow God's example of love.*

## For Discussion And Accountability

**Leader's Note:** To finish discussion, we've provided a couple options below. As you consider which option to do, it will be good to consider the following things: What is the best fit for your group? What works well with the time you have at this point? What works well with the location that your small group meets in? Does your small group have people with giftings that could lead a worship song or two?

**Option #1:** Work through the following set of conversational questions in regards to worship:

? What is a song that leads you to worship God from the heart? What does the song say about God?

? What specific things make you feel more worshipful?

? What has private worship of God looked like for you?

**Option #2:** Sing a worship song or recite a Psalm together as a group.

We have provided a couple worship song options with a YouTube link & lyrics on the last page of this document. If you or your small group has some specific song(s) that you'd like to do, then go ahead and do those!

### Psalm 28

1 To you, LORD, I call; you are my Rock, do not turn a deaf ear to me. For if you remain silent, I will be like those who go down to the pit. 2 Hear my cry for mercy, as I call to you for help, as I lift up my hands toward your Most Holy Place. 3 Do not drag me away with the wicked, with those who do evil, who speak cordially with their neighbors but harbor malice in their hearts. 4 Repay them for their deeds and for their evil work; repay them for what their hands have done and bring back on them what they deserve. 5 Because they have no regard for the deeds of the LORD and what his hands have done, he will tear them down and never build them up again. 6 Praise be to the Lord, for he has heard my cry for mercy. 7 The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in him and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him. 8 The LORD is the strength of his people, a fortress of salvation for his anointed one. 9 Save your people and bless your inheritance; be their shepherd and carry them forever.

## Accountability Questions

? Which of the themes we discussed tonight spoke most into a growth area? How so?

? What steps of growth in your personal worship could we pray over tonight?

**In Christ Alone  
(According to Lauren Daigle)**

In Christ alone, my hope is found  
He is my light, my strength, my song

This Cornerstone, this solid ground  
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm

What heights of love, what depths of peace,  
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease

My Comforter, my all in all,  
Here in the love of Christ I'll stand

Ooh, Ooh

There in the ground, his body lay  
Light of the world by darkness slain

Then bursting forth, in glorious day  
Up from the grave, he rose again

And as He stands in victory  
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me

For I am His, and He is mine  
Bought with the precious blood of Christ

Ooh, Ooh

No guilt in life, no fear in death  
This is the power of Christ in me

From life's first cry, to final breath  
Jesus commands my destiny

No power of hell, no scheme of man  
Can ever pluck me from his hand

Till He returns, or calls me home  
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand

Till He returns, or calls me home  
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand

**The Solid Rock  
(According to Hope Hymns)**

My hope is built on nothing less than  
Jesus' blood and righteousness  
I dare not trust the sweetest frame  
But wholly lean on Jesus' name

When darkness veils his lovely face  
I rest on his unchanging grace  
In every high and stormy gale  
My anchor holds within the veil

On Christ the solid rock I stand  
All other ground is sinking sand  
All other ground is sinking sand

His oath, his covenant, his blood,  
Support me in the whelming flood  
When all around my soul gives way  
He then is all my hope and stay

On Christ the solid rock I stand  
All other ground is sinking sand  
All other ground is sinking sand

When he shall come with trumpet sound  
Oh may I then in Him be found  
Dressed in his righteousness alone  
Faultless to stand before the throne

On Christ the solid rock I stand  
All other ground is sinking sand  
On Christ the solid rock I stand  
All other ground is sinking sand  
All other ground is sinking sand