

Ephesians 5:1-14

Author: Paul

Audience: Church at Ephesus

Theme: The Body of Christ is Blessed

v. 1-2

An imitator of God

- The idea is that, as children imitate their parents and caregivers, we are to imitate God.
- Scripture repeatedly refers to us as God's children. This is not a random occurrence.
- Because we have been adopted into the family of God, (Eph. 1), we are now His children and as His children we are to imitate our Father.

Walk in love

- We are to walk in the same manner of love that Christ did when He gave Himself up for us.
- How did Christ show us His love?
- How are we to show love to others?
- We are to sacrifice ourselves for one another.
- Dying to our own desires we are to care for others.
- We are called to lay our lives down for the sake of the Gospel.
- This may be literal or it may be metaphorical but the command remains that we should lay ourselves down for our brothers and sisters in Christ.

v. 3

Say goodbye to impurity

- We are called to live upright lives. Some people have taken that to a point where their hope is in that style of living.
- This is called *legalism*.
- We are not saved BY that life but we are saved TO that life.
- The 2 sins that are listed here are: sexual immorality and covetousness.

Sexual immorality

- Sex is a wonderful thing. It was created by God for us to enjoy within the bonds of marriage.
- Biblical marriage is between one man and one woman for life.
- What would be some examples of sexual immorality?
 - 1) Sex before or outside of the marriage covenant (Fornication & Adultery)
 - 2) Homosexuality
 - 3) Pornography
 - 4) Even lusting after someone in our heart makes us guilty of adultery. (Matt. 5:28)
- Fire within the confines of the fireplace or woodstove is a good thing. Sex within the confines of the marriage bed is a good thing. Take fire or sex out of their proper place and it will burn you.

Covetousness

- Covetousness is desiring something that someone else has that you do not.
- Paul lumps sexual immorality and covetousness together
- 2 Samuel 11
- David coveted what he did not have and committed sexual immorality as a result.

v. 4

Taming the tongue

- James 3
- Our mouths should be a wellspring of praise but instead we often use it for crude joking, immoral comments, tearing others down, and immaturity.
- There is nothing wrong with a joke. It's the content of the joke that makes it sinful.
- Paul says that our mouths should be used for thanksgiving and glorifying the Lord.

v. 5

No inheritance

- What is our inheritance as children of God? Eternal life.
- According to Scripture, everyone who is sexually immoral or covetous has no inheritance in the kingdom of God.
- Is there forgiveness for these sins?
- Yes, there is, however, we cannot remain in those sins.
- If we *remain* in those sins, or any sin for that matter, we are revealing that our hearts have not been changed and we are not saved.

Idolatry

- Paul equates covetousness and sexual immorality with idolatry.
- The idea is that if there is something that we are willing to defy the command of God over, then that thing has become an idol in the place of God.
- God demands holiness. We cannot match up to His command, which is why we need a Savior, but that is no excuse to remain in sin.
- If we truly belong to Him then we will put away those desires and submit to His authority.

v. 6

Let no one deceive you.

- It is vital that we walk in a manner that we will not be deceived.
- How is that? We must know Scripture and the God of it.
- Think about the prominent voices of today. What are some of the things they are saying regarding morality?
- Paul says do not be deceived because these sins bring wrath

These things bring the wrath of God.

- Paul alludes back to the sins that he had just discussed to indicate that because of these sins people will face the wrath of God
- Sexual immorality and covetousness
- The judgment of God is severe for anyone that continues in unrepentant sin.

v. 7-10

Be different

- The call to be different from the world is seen in multiple places in Scripture
- Paul says to not become partners with them. What does that mean? We are not to become partners with them in their sin. If we isolate ourselves from them completely then how are they to hear of the Gospel?
- We cannot be a part of their sinful lifestyles. We were once there but we have been called out by God to walk in light.
- We are to pray for and exercise discernment.
- *Dokimazo*- to test, to approve, to analyze, to examine
- We are called to test, approve, analyze, examine, and apply what is pleasing to God.

v. 11-14

Bring darkness to light

- We are not to take part in the works of darkness, rather we are to expose them with the light of the Gospel.
- The Gospel is very confrontational. It exposes the wickedness in people and we do not like that kind of exposure.
- Many people are hostile to this but it must be done.
- We must do this gently, kindly, yet boldly.

- The Scripture refers to lost people as “blind” or walking in “darkness”. They cannot see that the things they are doing are evil until they are confronted by the Holy Spirit with the Gospel. You and I were once the same way until the day that the Holy Spirit made you aware of your sin.

Will we ever sin?

- Just because we have been made alive in Christ, and aware of our sin, that doesn't mean that we too will not be caught in unGodly behavior.
- This is why the truth of the Gospel needs to be preached to believers daily.
- We need to:
 - 1) Preach it to ourselves
 - 2) Preach it to other believers
 - 3) Surround ourselves with others that will preach it to us
- This will sometimes create tension between people but this is an absolute necessity if we are to live the lives that we have been called to.

A few things by way of daily life application:

- 1) We must immerse ourselves in the Word
- 2) We must daily approach God in prayer and repentance
- 3) We must surround ourselves with Godly influences
- 4) We must live out the light that has been given to us

Small Group Questions

- 1) In verse 1 it says that we are to be imitators of God. What does that look like? (Allow for answers)
 - God, at His core, is selfless, giving, merciful, just, and holy. We, at our core, are selfish, angry, jealous, unholy. If we are to imitate God then we are to repent of those sinful attributes and strive to look more like Him.
- 2) We are called to walk in love as Christ did? How did He show us love? What does that mean for us as we interact with others?
 - Jesus showed His love for us by dying for us while we were His enemy. We are called to lay our lives down, not only for the sake of the Gospel, but for the good of our brothers and sisters in Christ.
- 3) When is sex good?
 - In the bonds of marriage
- 4) When is sex bad?
 - Outside of the bonds of marriage.
 - (Discuss the dangers of sexual immorality. Lives can be ruined. Reputations can be ruined. Families can be broken apart)
 - Go over the examples of sexual immorality listed above.

- 5) Who was guilty of covetousness and sexual immorality in the Old Testament?
- David
 - Is there forgiveness for that? Yes.
- 6) What does Paul say about those that remain in the sin of covetousness and sexual immorality?
- He says that we have no inheritance with God. The eternal life that we are hoping for will not be there. That isn't because of the sin that we are in but the sin we are living in reveals that our hearts have not been changed by the Holy Spirit, i.e. not really saved. Paul also equates covetousness with idolatry. Anything that we desire so strongly that we defy the command of God is putting the object of our desire in the place of God.
- 7) What is the best defense against being deceived by those of the world?
- To daily be in Scripture, actively studying it and applying it to our lives.
 - Read 1 Peter 3:15
 - In order to give a defense we must know what God has said in Scripture.
- 8) What were the two sins that Paul was talking about in the previous set of verses?
- Sexual immorality and covetousness
- 9) What does it mean that we are not to “partner” with those in darkness?
- We can't partner with them in their *sin*. We cannot isolate ourselves from the world to the point that we lose the ability to be salt and light but we cannot be a part of their sinful lifestyles.
- 10) How are we to confront people with the Gospel?
- Kindly, yet boldly.

