

**Refuge City Church — October 8, 2023**  
**“Walk in Love, Light, & Wisdom.” (Ephesians 5:1-21)**

***Introduction***

- **TODAY:** Having looked at what it is to walk in holiness, we now turn our attention to walking in love, light, and wisdom.

**“What is love?” [Verses 1-2]**

“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”

- *Therefore:* It’s almost like Paul has been saying some stuff... pay attention! [“As I’ve been saying”... but let me say it again this way.]
- Imitate your Heavenly Father
  - **Matthew 5:48**, “You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”
  - **Luke 6:36**, “Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.”
  - **1 John 4:7, 8**, “Beloved, let us love one another... because God is love”.
  - **Reminder: Ephesians 4:32**, “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.”
- As loved children, God gave His only Son to *demonstrate* agape love to the world. [what is an example without action?]
  - So we ought to walk in love.
    - **John 13:34**, “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another.”
    - You know why this is such a dramatic example to the rest of the world??
      - It involves something mere humans find impossible to do on a regular basis... self-denial.
      - We can do it momentarily, when it will benefit us in some way.
      - Long term selfless love is shocking to the human soul.
        - **Luke 9:23**, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.”
  - Our service, sacrifice, and love for others is a fragrant aroma to God.
    - **Genesis 8:20-21**, “Then Noah built an altar to the Lord and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And when the Lord smelled the pleasing aroma...”
    - **Leviticus:** we see multiple offerings (animal, grain, peace, sin); when completed, the offering was a sweet smelling aroma to the Lord.
      - Throughout the OT/old covenant, the law required sacrifices of animals or harvest. If done in *praise, repentance, & obedience*, it was a sweet smelling aroma to the Lord.
      - Since Jesus initiated the new covenant through His sacrifice, our obedience in how we operate in this world is a sweet aroma to the Lord.
    - **Romans 12:1**, “I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.”

### **“What love is not” [Verses 3-7]**

“But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. 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. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not become partners with them;”

- Sometimes we have to see what something is *not*, to truly appreciate & understand what it is.
  - **EXAMPLE:** the Gospel is good news. But in order to understand why it’s good, we have to understand the bad.
- Love *is* sacrificial service. It gives.
- Love is *not* self-serving. [“It is better to give than to receive.”]
  - **Luke 6:31**, “And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.”
- Sexual immorality, impurity, coveting = the sole purpose is self-fulfillment.
  - Greek: porneia; fornication.
    - The dopamine hit from constantly trying to satisfy your flesh/selfish desires will only multiply time after time, and it will never get satisfied.
    - Thus, addiction. After addiction, death. It’s an endless spiral of degradation trying to satisfy the dead.
  - **Psalms 16:4**, “Troubles multiply for those who chase after other gods. I will not take part in their sacrifices of blood or even speak the names of their gods.”
  - **1 Corinthians 6:13-15, 18**, “...The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!...*Flee sexual immorality.*”
- Filthy, foolish talk, crude joking = the sole purpose is degrading..
  - Inappropriate speech can demean and depreciate what God meant for beauty, encouragement, and thanksgiving.
  - **Psalm 19:13-14**, “Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me! Then I shall be blameless, and innocent of great transgression. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.”

### **“Shine to expose” [Verses 8-10]**

“for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

- **QUOTE:** “It is inconsistent for the objects of God’s love to become partakers with the objects of God’s wrath.” [unknown]
- “**The fruit of light**”: What is the proof that you are walking in the light of God?

- **Philippians 4:8**, “Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”
- You either say, “Well at least I’m not doing that!” [ignoring your sanctification]
- Or you do your best to *discover and learn* the will of God for your life.
  - **I Thessalonians 4:3**, “For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality;”
  - **I Thessalonians 5:18**, “give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”
  - **I Peter 2:15-16**, “For this is the will of God, that by doing good you should put to silence the ignorance of foolish people. Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.”

**[Verses 11-14]** “Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

- **QUESTION:** So how are we to *expose* the darkness, yet not to speak of the things they do??
- One of the biggest claims the world has against Christians is that they are judgmental! [“Don’t judge me!”]
  1. God is the ultimate Judge. He alone holds the gavel of justice.
  2. A Christian will speak to the person committing the evil that is done outside of the will of God. [we are to love]
  3. A Christian will provide warnings to those headed for danger. [we are to be discerning]
  4. A Christian will provide accountability to those in Christ that they are stepping out of the will of God by their words and actions. [we are family]
- You know why those outside of Christ get so annoyed [paranoid] by those walking as children of light??
  - Because their sins, darkness, immorality, and impurity are exposed to the light of God... and the Truth can be offensive to those living a lie!
- **Isaiah 60:1-3**, “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.”

**“Be wise. Be filled.” [verses 15-21]**

“Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.”

- The wisdom of God shows us the value of His love and the benefits of it in us and others.
- The wisdom of God shows us that we are to walk as His children, as we represent Him, His character, love, and purity.
  - *Want to be practical?* Walk with your spiritual eyes & ears open!
- So there is a strong admonition to constantly *be filled* the Holy Spirit.
  - This is not something we do on our own.
  - We avail ourselves to be filled when we submit to the Lordship of Christ.
  - It is the work of God in us that transforms our thinking, words, and actions to bring Him glory.
- The *result* of constantly being filled with the Spirit is joy, praise, and gratitude, regardless of our circumstances.
  - Yes, we go through difficult seasons. Yet our humble willingness to be filled by the Spirit will transform those rough patches with praise because we know who is in control of all things.
  - **Romans 8:28**, “And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”

### ***Conclusion***

- Walking in unity, holiness, love, light, and wisdom will produce in us hearts and lives of praise, gratitude, and joy.
- It connects us to a loving God who desires nothing more than for His children to exemplify His attributes to those around them.
- Because we submit ourselves to God as living sacrifices, we then ought to submit to each other.
  - Outside Christ = division, impurity, hatred, and domineering control.
  - In Christ = unity, holiness, love, and submission.
- We’ll look at these comparisons lived out in marriage, family, and work as we get into the later stages of our study of Ephesians.