

## **“Be Imitators Of God”**

### **EPH 5:1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children;**

1. “Therefore be imitators of God”
  - a. “mimetes” [mee may **tays**] means “imitators.” We are to be like God, that is, follow and copy His example in the ways we are exhorted to be like Him.
  - b. We can never reach His infinite perfection [or come even close to it], but we should still seek to be like Him. See also Matt. 5:43-48; Lk. 6:36; 1 Pet. 1:16.
  - c. Paul does not have in mind the omnipotence, the omnipresence, the omniscience of God. Finite man can never become like God in regard to these attributes. God is far above man and man can never have the infinite attributes of God.
  - d. We can never have His authority or the same rights.
2. “as beloved children” - Paul’s Christian readers are God’s “beloved children.” NIV has “dearly loved children”
  - a. They had become God’s children by responding to God’s grace “through faith.” (Eph. 2:5, 8,9).
  - b. They are been baptized [immersed] with the “one baptism” and had been cleansed “by the washing of water with the word.” (Eph. 4:5; 5:26).
  - c. It is actually Jesus’ blood that cleanses those baptized “for the remission of sins.” (Eph. 1:7; Acts 2:38; 22:16).
  - d. The “beloved children” are to imitate their heavenly Father.
3. It is interesting that the word “beloved” was used by God of His Son (Matt. 17:5), and it is used here of Gentile Christians. Paul also used “beloved” of Jesus. (Eph. 1:6; Col. 1:13).
  - a. They are God’s “beloved children.”
  - b. EPH 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household [family].
  - c. Jews who had obeyed the gospel were also “beloved children” of God.
  - d. There is no distinction of persons with God. (Rom. 10:12).

### **EPH 5:2 and walk [live] in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for [in place of, on behalf of] us [believing Jews and Gentiles], an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.**

- “walk in love” has the idea of “live a life of love.” NIV
- “you” is in the best Greek manuscripts [N\* B A P] and is thought to be the correct reading, but some manuscripts have “us.”

1. “and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you”

- a. Christians are to live a life of love following the example of Christ.
- b. One is reminded of the words of Jesus in John 13:34,35.

JOH 13:34 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, **even as I have loved you**, that you also love one another.

JOH 13:35 "By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

2. “ and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma”

- a. “offering” is from “prospora” [prahs fah **rah**] - “offering, sacrificing, sacrifice, gift.” NIV has “a fragrant offering.”
- b. “sacrifice” is from “thusia” [thoo **see** ah] - “act of offering, sacrifice, offering.”
- c. It is very difficult to separate the meaning of these two words in this context.
- d. Both “offering” and “sacrifice” emphasize the vicarious death of Jesus on the cross for the sins of mankind.
- e. Lit. “for an odor of sweet smell.” McCord “an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.”
  - 1) “osme” [ahs **may**] - “fragrance, odor, smell.”
  - 2) “euodia” [yoo oh **dee** ah] - “fragrance.”
  - 3) The odor of Christ’s sacrifice was sweet incense [a fragrant aroma] to God.

**EPH 5:3 But do not let immorality or any impurity [uncleanness] or greed even be named [exist, mentioned as existing] among you, as is proper [fitting, becoming] among saints;**

1. “But do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named [exist] among you” - These things exist in the world, but should never exist in the church. (1 Cor. 5:9-11).

1CO 5:9 I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people;

1CO 5:10 I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters; for then you would have to go out of the world.

1CO 5:11 But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler-- not even to eat with such a one.

- a. “immorality” is from “porneia” [pahr **nay** ah] denoting immorality in general. See 1 Cor. 6:18; Acts 15:20
  - 1) This word includes “homosexuality.” (Rom 1:26, 27; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; Lev. 18:22; 20:13; 1 Tim. 1:10).
  - 2) This word includes couples merely living together without marriage.
- b. “impurity” is from “akatharsia” [ah kah thar **see** ah] - “impurity, uncleanness.”
  - 1) It refers to unnatural and perverse indulgences of the lust of the flesh.
  - 2) See Gen. 19:5-8; Rom. 1:27-32.

- c. “covetousness” is from “pleoneksia” [pleh oh nehk see ah] - “greed, covetousness, desire to have more.”
2. “as is proper [fitting, becoming] among saints”
    - a. It is proper [essential] that these things do not exist among God’s saints.
    - b. It is not fit that these things be practiced “among saints.”
    - c. “Saints” are believers - those who have obey Christ.
    - d. Paul used the word “saint” several times in this epistle. (Eph. 1:1, 15, 18; 2:19; 3:8, 18; 4:12; 5:3; 6:18).

**EPH 5:4 and there must be no filthiness [wickedness, baseness] and silly [foolish] talk, or coarse jesting [vulgar, dirty talk], which are not fitting [becoming], but rather giving of thanks.**

1. “and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting”
  - a. “filthiness” is from “aischrotes” [i skrah tays] - “filthiness, baseness.”
  - b. “silly talk” is from “morologia” [mah rah lah gee ah] - “foolish talking”
  - c. “coarse jesting” is from “eutrapelia” [yoo trah peh lee ah] - “coarse joking, vulgar talk, suggestive talk.”
2. “which are not fitting [proper]” - This is another way of saying disgraceful. They are not to be even a small part of the life of the Christian.
3. “but rather giving of thanks” - Instead of uttering improper, sinful speech, they should give thanks. (Col. 3:17; 1 Thess. 5:18).

**EPH 5:5 For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure [unclean, lewd] person or covetous [greedy] man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.**

1. “For this you know with certainty” - You can be absolutely sure. There is no question or doubt.
2. “that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater”
  - a. “covetousness” is a form of idolatry.
  - b. Material things are most often the real god of the covetous person. (Matt. 19:16-22).
3. “has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God”
  - a. “has an inheritance” - There is no place in heaven [God’s heavenly kingdom] for those described in this verse. See “inherit” in Galatians 5:21.

**GAL 5:21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.**

- b. The “kingdom” is called “the kingdom of God” and “the kingdom of Christ,” but here “the kingdom of Christ and God.”
  - 1) “kingdom of Christ” (Eph. 5:5). See Col. 1:13.

2) “kingdom of God” (Rom. 14:17; Gal. 5:21).

3) It is also called “the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 3:2; 4:17), and “kingdom.” (Heb. 12:28; Jas. 2:5).

4) “The kingdom of heaven” is used to denote “heaven” in Galatians 5:21. The words “has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God” is also a reference to heaven.

**EPH 5:6 Let no one deceive you with empty [vain, groundless] words [arguments, false promises], for because of these [evil]things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience [disobedient sons].**

1. “Let no one deceive you with empty words” - Christians are warned against being deceived.

a. Some use “empty words” [false, vain promises, arguments] to deceive God’s children into pursuing a sinful course.

1) “It is not so bad”	5) We have always done it that way”	9) “No one will know”	13) “God wants us to be happy”
2) “It feels good”	6) “It is a lot of fun”	10) “There is no harm in it”	14) “It is good for us”
3) “It is part of our culture”	7) “The Bible does not say not to do it.”	11) “You can always ask for forgiveness”	15) “It is legal”
4) “Everyone is doing it”	8) “It is for a good cause”	12) “We cannot be sure it is wrong”	16) “I am an adult”

b. The word “empty” comes from “kenos” [keh **nahs**] - meaning “empty, without content, vain.”

c. The “empty [vain] words” are likely words [arguments, false users] used to entice them to sin and destroy faith.

d. One will reap what he/she has sown. (Gal. 6:7,8).

2. “for because of these things [evil conduct] the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.”

a. “The wrath of God” will come upon disobedient sons.

b. God is a God of love and grace, but He is also a God of wrath. (Jn. 3:36; Rom. 1:18; Heb. 10:31).

**JOH 3:36 "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."**

**ROM 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,**

**HEB 10:31 It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**

c. “sons of disobedience” is a Hebraism calling a person having a certain quality as a son of it.

**EPH 5:7 Therefore do not be partakers with them [the sons of disobedience];**

1. “partakers” is from “summetochos” [soom **meh** tah kahs] meaning “sharing with, partakers.”

2. “with them” - “them” refers to “the sons of disobedience.”

a. They are not to act like them.

b. Evil conduct brings disgrace to Christ and will result in their condemnation.

**EPH 5:8 for you were formerly [before conversion] darkness, but now [as saints, Christians, God’s children] you are light in the Lord; walk [live] as children of light**

1. “for you were formerly darkness” - “darkness” refers to their evil, sinful lives they lived before conversion.

2. “but now you are light in the Lord” - It is through the Lord that they have become “children of light.”

a. They had been delivered from the “domain of darkness” into Christ’s kingdom.

COL 1:13 For He delivered us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,

b. Christians must walk in the light because God, their Father, is light. (1 Jn. 1:5-7).

c. Christians are “the light of the world” “in the Lord.” (Matt. 5:14-16; Eph. 5:8; Phil. 2:15).

3. “walk as children of light” - They are to live “as children of light,” that is, they are to do the things that please the Lord. (Eph. 5:10).

**EPH 5:9 (for the fruit [harvest, product] of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth),**

1. “(for the fruit of the light consists”

a. “The fruit [harvest] of light” is demonstrated by the characteristics listed.

b. The best Greek manuscripts have “phos” [foce] “light,” but some manuscripts have “Spirit.”

c. There is no real difference between “the fruit of the light” and “the fruit of the Spirit.” (Gal. 5:22,23).

2. “in all goodness and righteousness and truth)”

a. “goodness” - “agathosune” [ah gah tah **soo** nay] - “goodness, uprightness, generosity.”

b. “righteousness” - “dikaiosune” [dee ki ah **soo** nay] - “righteousness, uprightness, justification.”

c. “truth” - “aletheia” - [a **lay** thay ah] - “truth”

**EPH 5:10 trying to learn [demonstrating] what is pleasing to the Lord.**

1. “trying to learn” is from “dokimazo” [dah kee **mah** zoh] - “I put to the test, examine, prove by testing, approve.”

2. It is used here in the sense of demonstrating.

3. They demonstrated what is pleasing to the Lord when they practiced “goodness, righteousness, truth.”

4. They demonstrated what is pleasing to the Lord when they refused to “participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness.” (Eph. 5:11).

5. The Christian's conduct is to be well-pleasing to the Lord. (Rom. 12:2; 1 Jn. 2:17; Matt. 7:21).

6. We are not to be men pleasers. (Gal. 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:4).

GAL 1:10 For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

1TH 2:4 but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not as pleasing men but God, who examines our hearts.

**EPH 5:11 And do not participate [take part] in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose [reprove, rebuke] them;**

1. "And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness"

a. They were to have nothing to do with "the unfruitful deeds of darkness."

1) "akarpos" [**ah** kahr pahs] - "unfruitful, fruitless, useless."

2) Many of these evil deeds were listed in Ephesians 4, and many others are found in Romans 1:18-31.

b. They would be blessed if they followed the first psalm. (Psa. 1:1).

PSA 1:1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!

c. They would be blessed if they avoided "the works of the flesh" and practiced "the fruit of the Spirit." (Gal. 5:19-23). See also 1 Cor. 6:9, 10.

d. They would be blessed if they obeyed 2 Corinthians 6:14-18.

2CO 6:14 ¶ Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?

2CO 6:15 Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?

2CO 6:16 Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

2CO 6:17 "Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," says the Lord. "And do not touch what is unclean; And I will welcome you.

2CO 6:18 "And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty.

2. "but instead even expose them" - The mandate is to "expose" evil - not to participate in it.

a. The word "expose" is from "elegcho" [eh **leg** koh] - "bring to light, expose, convince, reprove, rebuke."

b. This exposing would come from their words of truth and conduct.

c. It is not giving permission for violence.

**EPH 5:12 for it is disgraceful [shameful] even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.**

• The infinitive "legein" [**leh** gayn] - "to be speaking"

- Literally “the hidden things being done by them”
1. “for it is disgraceful” - It is not proper to discuss [much less practice] the horrible, abominable things done “in secret.” “airchros” [i **skrahs**] - “ugly, shameful, disgraceful.”
  2. “ even to speak of [about] the things which are done by them in secret”
    - a. Some things are so bad that to discuss them or view them can be harmful and destructive.
    - b. It is dangerous to have exposure to the things done “in secret.”
    - c. Many a person has been destroyed by getting too close to evil.
    - d. Exposure to the things done “in secret” can create a tolerance or an addiction for these things.

**EPH 5:13 But all things become visible when they are exposed [reproved] by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.**

1. “But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light” - Light manifests the true character of their actions - good or bad.]
2. “ for everything that becomes visible is light” - For that which makes everything manifest [clear, visible] is light may be the idea of this difficult expression.

**EPH 5:14 For this reason it says, "Awake, sleeper [in sin], And arise from the dead [ones], And Christ will shine on you."**

- “lego” [leh goh] - 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular meaning “he she or it says”
- This may be a primitive baptismal hymn used by the congregation to greet the new convert.
- It does not match very closely to Old Testament scriptures. (Isa. 26:19; 60:1; Jon 1:6).

ISA 26:19 Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, For your dew is as the dew of the dawn, And the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.

ISA 60:1 "Arise, shine; for your light has come, And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.

JON 1:6 So the captain approached him and said, "How is it that you are sleeping? Get up, call on your god. Perhaps your god will be concerned about us so that we will not perish."

1. For this reason it says, "Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead”
  - a. The word “sleeper” refers to one sleeping or dead in sin.
  - b. The word “dead” has reference to spiritual death.
    - 1) “Dead” is plural “dead ones.”
    - 2) It refers to those spiritually dead. See John 5:24,25.

JOH 5:24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does

not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life.

JOH 5:25 "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear shall live.

3) Jesus is speaking of those dead in sin as passing "out of death into life."

4) He later speaks of those who were physically dead being raised from the dead. (Jn. 5:28-29).

JOH 5:28 "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs shall hear His voice, JOH 5:29 and shall come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

2. "And Christ will shine on you" - "epiphausko" [eh pee **fow** skoh] - "I shine on, illuminate."

a. Lit. "the Christ will shine upon you" or "the Christ shall give you light."

b. Christ will bless you.

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