

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

NOVEMBER 12TH - 13TH, 2022 // BOOK OF EPHESIANS

DARKNESS AND LIGHT (EPHESIANS 5:1-14) "BE IMITATORS OF GOD"

Chapters 1-3 establish how/why we are saved, chapter 4 tells us to live a new life, and chapter 5 takes it further by telling us to imitate God in how we live.

- In this context, **to imitate God is to walk in love. Real love denies self and is willing to sacrifice desires for God's sake.**

WE ARE TO GIVE OURSELVES UP

Like Jesus "gave Himself for us," we are to give ourselves back to Him. We do this through following, obeying, and living in a relationship with Jesus. **He became the sacrifice for us, and in turn, we become sacrifices to Him.**

- Though Jesus forgives us, **we're to live in a posture of gratitude and indebtedness.**

LIVING IN SIN IS THE OPPOSITE OF THIS

Paul says, "But sexual immorality and any impurity or greed should never even be heard of among you, as is proper for saints."

- **Christians are to live in submission to the teachings of the Word. We should also be leaning into the power of the Spirit to help us overcome sinful lifestyles.**

RAMIFICATIONS FOR DISOBEDIENCE

A life of greed, sexual sin, idolatry, or any other impurity and sin will nullify the inheritance God wants for us.

- **Our eternity is an extension of what we wanted to invest in during this life.** If we choose our path over God's, He simply honors that wish in the afterlife.

WE ARE ANTI-DARKNESS

Since we were once in darkness but were shown the light, we should want others to experience salvation and God's eternal promises.

- Once educated on what is right and wrong through the Word, **we are called to "walk as children of light." This means we demonstrate righteousness and truth.**

DARKNESS MUST BE EXPOSED

We're not to "participate in the fruitless works of darkness, but instead expose them." This means **it's not enough to live truth; we must speak truth to those who need to be set free.**

- This is applicable to both professing Christians and non-Christians. **We are to love people enough to identify evil.**

"GET UP, SLEEPER, AND RISE UP FROM THE DEAD"

This quote from an old Jewish hymn reinforces Paul's statement, "for what makes everything visible is light."

- **Light turns dark things light. If we will wake up and help others to wake up, people will see truth that will transform their lives and save their souls!**

FILLED UP (EPHESIANS 5:15-21)

"BECAUSE THE DAYS ARE EVIL"

If we are to live in the light, we must "Pay careful attention...to how [we] walk." Like the Ephesian Christians, we have temptations and distractions at every turn.

- **We must be aware and sober-minded if we are to avoid the traps** (lust, greed, division, selfishness) **of our culture.**

WE MUST INTENTIONALLY AVOID EVIL

Because the "days are evil," we must intentionally take steps to avoid falling into temptation.

- Jesus implies that **we need to go to whatever length we must to avoid sin** (Matthew 5:30). Though we often rationalize it in our minds, **there is never an excuse to sin.**

WE MUST ALSO BE "FILLED BY THE SPIRIT"

Instead of getting drunk on the things of this world, we are to be filled by God's Spirit. This means **directed, influenced, and led** by God.

- **We're filled by prayer, reading the Word (Colossians 3), and asking God to fill us. In order to be filled, sinful desire has to be emptied out (Matthew 6:24).**

BEING FILLED SHOULD HAVE EVIDENCE

Not only will we see the gifts (Ephesians 4; 1 Corinthians 12; Romans 12) and the fruit (Galatians 5), but we will also **speak truth** (Word), **worship through song**, **give thanks**, and **submit** to Jesus.

- **Christians should adopt a spirit of humility, not just to God, but also to others.** This will be talked about in detail by Paul.

LOVE AND RESPECT (EPHESIANS 5:22-33)

SUBMISSION IS A PART OF THE CHRISTIAN WALK

Paul has already made it clear that we are to submit to God, but he also tells us that we are to submit to each other. There are three types of submissive relationships: marriage, parenthood, and master-slave/business.

- All of these involve **mutual submission** birthed from humility and love.

AN OFTEN TENSE PASSAGE (V22-25)

Both genders are created equal, but social order demands that people be willing to serve each other in different roles.

- **Wives are to respect their husbands and allow them to ultimately lead. Husbands are to dedicate their lives to their wife's physical, emotional, and spiritual welfare.**

BALANCE AND RESPECT

Wives are to be subject to the authority of the husband, but the husband is also to be subject to the needs of the wife. In this, the wife should never live in oppression, and the husband should never live in insecurity.

- **In mutual love and respect, the couple comes together and points toward God.**

OUR SOCIETY IS TERRIBLE AT THIS!

Because we're an increasingly godless society, we have villainized masculinity, twisted femininity, and devalued marriage, and the ramifications are atrocious.

- **When we don't live in our proper identity, things fall apart and people get hurt.** If one looks objectively, our culture is proof.

THE ANSWER IS SUBMISSION TO GOD

Jesus modeled submission while in bodily form on earth. When we fall in love with Jesus, we understand more fully how valuable other people are. We're also given the Spirit who enables us to live in humility, wisdom, and love.

- **A relationship with Jesus is always the answer to marital or societal problems.**

BECOMING MORE LIKE GOD

- Without a relationship with Jesus, we are in the darkness, and that darkness will eventually destroy us.
- **We must accept Jesus' sacrifice for us and then become a living sacrifice for Him.** In this, we become "imitators of God" who walk in **truth, love, sacrifice, and wisdom.**

WE MUST ADDRESS DARKNESS

- We are only able to address sin if we know what the Word identifies as sin.
- **After we first address the sin in ourselves, we are to then speak the truth in love so others can be set free (Matthew 7).** When we love others and speak truth, the light will transform darkness to light.

WE AREN'T MEANT TO WALK ALONE

- Because "**the days are evil**" and temptations and distractions are everywhere, we must be filled by the Holy Spirit. This means **we must pray, read the Word, and strive to be directed by God.**
- We're also to walk with each other. We need a church community and accountability.

LIVING IN SUBMISSION

- **Freedom is birthed from submission.** When we fail to submit to Jesus first, we live imbalanced or selfish lives. In this, we damage ourselves and our relationships.
- **When we know who we are in God, we live in humility and don't feel the pressure to prove ourselves or adapt to a broken model.**
- If we will just let go and trust God with everything, He will not only transform us, but do great things in our lives for us. **We can become balanced, wise, and loving people who not only serve God well, but also serve each other well.**