

Ephesians 5:1-14 – Walking with God

A. Introduction

- Paul reminds the Christians in Ephesus that God has saved them from the world and they must be different (4:17-19). They must put off the old nature (22), be spiritually renewed (23) and put on the new nature (24).
- He then gives a series of practical illustrations of this process (4:25-32).
- He now drives this home with two calls to walk with God (5:1-14).

B. Walk in Love (5:1-7)

- As Christians they are dearly loved children who are called to live a holy life (1-2). Holiness is characterized by following God's example and pouring out our lives in love for each other. We will walk in love.
- Paul immediately begins to apply this to our sexuality. Sex is neither sinful (God created it as a good gift) nor an entitlement (we can be fully happy and fulfilled human beings without sexual intimacy).

❖ Avoid sexual sin (3-4)

- **Sins of action or intention (3).** You are holy, therefore avoid:
 - ⇒ *Sexual immorality* – any sexual intimacy outside the strict confines of the exclusive, life long relationship of marriage.
 - ⇒ *Impurity* – anything in thought or deed that makes us unclean.
 - ⇒ *Greed* – the use of another person for my own selfish pleasure.
- **Sins of speech (4)**
 - ⇒ *Obscenity* – innuendo and filthy speech.
 - ⇒ *Foolish talk* – jokes which make light of sexual sin.
 - ⇒ *Coarse joking* – sleazy repartee or sophisticated banter.
- Paul addresses these issues in some depth because of the prevailing immorality of first century Ephesus and because of the sinfulness of the human heart.

❖ Motives for obedience (5-7)

- **You will be excluded from God's kingdom (5).** Look at 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Revelation 21:8. This refers to a lifestyle of sin in which there is no repentance. It does not refer to uncharacteristic lapses. If we fail, we can be forgiven (Ephesians 1:7; Psalms 32; 51).
- **You will be exposed to God's wrath (6).** People may scoff at the Christian's sexual ethics or at their concept of future judgment, but the wrath of God is a present reality (Romans 1:24, 26, 28) and a future danger (1 Thessalonians 1:9-10).
- We cannot avoid contact with people who see things differently (7), but we should not follow their lifestyle.

C. Walk in the Light (5:8-14)

- God has brought about a radical change in their lives (8). They were darkness, they are now light. Two things follow.

❖ Walk in the Light (8-10)

- Changing the image Paul speaks of the "fruit of light". The light made visible in our character – goodness, righteousness and truth (8-9).
- When we live like this we will please God (10).

❖ Let your light shine (11-14)

- Our lives will impact the world around us (Matthew 5:14).
- We will expose the darkness, showing up sin for what it is (11-12).
- We will illuminate the darkness, leading to transformation and some people may come into the light because of our testimony (13-14).