

## Ephesians 5:1-21 Imitators of God

### Introduction

The final two chapters of Ephesians are concerned with explaining the responsibilities of election. For the purposes of our study we will divide Ephesians 5 into two sections: 5:1-21 which is an exposition of the command given in *Eph. 5:1*, "be imitators of God." And 5:22-33 which explains the responsibilities of marriage for God's elect. This set of notes covers 5:1-21

### Ephesians 5:1-33

#### I. Being Imitators of God (5:1-14)

##### A. The essence of imitation (5:1, 2)

1. Imitators and image – this command makes perfect sense given that with new life we have been renewed in the likeness of God, the image of God is restored in and through Christ; therefore, we must and can imitate God.
2. Paul continues by giving us a picture explaining what imitation is like – we imitate as beloved children.
  - a. This is important because it reminds us that we are beloved children.
  - b. It also gives us a picture of imitation. Think of a small boy who wants to be like and please his dad. Better yet think of Christ and his submission to the Father's will.
3. Walk in love (5:2) – the word here is agape, which refers to self sacrificial love.
  - a. Our model of love is Christ and the love He had for us.
  - b. This love was manifested in the fact that He gave of Himself.
  - c. His love was done as a sacrifice to God – while our sacrifice is not of the same kind as Christ, when we walk in love we likewise offer a sacrifice to God that is pleasing to Him.

##### B. The antithesis of imitation (5:3-10)

1. What is not to be named among the saints (5:3-5) – Paul says that there are certain actions that should not even be named among the saints. This does not mean that we are to ignore them, as if speaking of them would result in judgment. What he is saying is that these actions must not be practiced or taken lightly by the church.
  - a. The actions named (5:3)

- b. Speech that must be avoided (5:4) – the actions of verses 4 must not be spoken of in a flippant manner and there must be a level of seriousness that accompanies believer’s speech. This does not mean that we can never laugh or have fun; but it does mean that we must be wise about that which produces our laughter.
  - c. What is to be named among the church (5:4) – giving of thanks
  - 2. Warning to the church (5:6-10)
    - a. Do not be deceived (5:6, 7) – there are repeated warnings in Scripture about those who would seek to destroy the truth of Scripture and substitute that truth with immorality under the guise of godliness (2 Timothy 3:1-5; 2 Timothy 4:3, 4; 2 Peter 2:1, 2). We must not be deceived by those who deny the truth of Scripture.
    - b. Transformation which enables one to be transformed (5:8-10)
  - C. Exposing deeds of darkness (5:11-14) – this is one of my favorite section in Ephesians as it gives a battle plan for the church. Not only is the church to avoid the deeds of darkness mentioned above, but the church is to expose the deeds of darkness.
    - 1. Exposing the deeds of darkness is not done by explanation of them (5:12)
    - 2. The means by which the deeds of darkness are exposed is the church living righteously (5:13, 14). Every time darkness is exposed to light, the darkness goes away.
- II. Be careful how you walk (5:15-21)
- A. General command (5:15)
  - B. Specific applications of the command (5:15b-21)
    - 1. Walk as a wise man
    - 2. Make the most of your time (5:16)
    - 3. Understand the will of God and don’t be foolish (5:17)
    - 4. Be filled with the Spirit (5:18)
    - 5. Possess an attitude of joy (5:19, 20)
    - 6. Be subject to one another in the church (5:21)