

"The Practice of the Believer"

Ephesians 4-6

Part 12

Introduction: Last week in our study of Ephesians we consider how we/the church are engaged to Jesus Christ and as we wait for His return we are to live lives of purity. As we wait for our Lord we are to live just as the Lord would if He were here.

➤ **The Engagement of the Church**

Notice Ephesians 5:1

We also considered how we are to live sacrificial lives as we love others the way the Lord loves us.

Notice Ephesians 5:2

Paul then continued to present a list of negative practices that should NEVER be found in the life of the believer.

Notice Ephesians 5:3-4

This is a terrible list of sins.

- ✓ **Fornication** - Any sexual relations apart from marriage.
- ✓ **Uncleanness** - This is a broad term for immoral behavior.
- ✓ **Covetousness** - Desiring what is not yours.
- ✓ **Filthiness** - Same idea as uncleanness.
- ✓ **Foolish talking** - Immoral talking.
- ✓ **Jesting** - vulgar humor.

Allow me to read again the words of an unknown writer:

"Remember that in Paul's day the ancient pagan world in general and Corinth in particular was like much of modern-day post-Christian, anti-God, relative values ruled America is today, for people were strongly intent on having their own ways and doing what was right in their own eye. And what they did that seemed "right" to them was particularly manifest in fulfilling their lust in illicit sexual activities, even under the guise of "religious worship." Corinth in fact was so conspicuous for its practice of sexual immorality that to corinthianize meant to participate in reckless debauchery."

Paul then goes on to give a stern warning.

Notice Ephesians 5:5-6

Paul was not saying that a believer cannot fall into these sins because they can. He was saying that a person who lives in these sins as a way of life is NOT saved.

Matthew 7:21-23

²¹ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

²² Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

There was one more thought we considered last week, and it needs to be repeated. Sexual sins are different than non-sexual sins.

1 Corinthians 6:18

¹⁸ Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body.

Proverbs 5:22

²² His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.

Sexual sin alters the pleasure sensors of the brain and when repeated it can sear the conscience. Sexual encounters release endorphins and that means it leads to addiction.

This brings us to where we are today.

- **The Engagement of the Church**
- **Part 2**

Notice Ephesians 5:8

As we look back on our unsaved life we understand now that we walked in darkness, but this verse takes our unsaved condition to an even lower depth. We not only walked in darkness, but we WERE darkness. Before salvation we not only lived in spiritual darkness, but we contributed to that darkness.

If you are not saved this is where you are right now. You are darkness. Now you may protest and say, "I am not like others who live lives of terrible sin." But God says you are darkness.

You are like the fish in the aquarium who does not feel wet because he is so used to the water. You are so used to your sin that you do not "FEEL" that sinful.

In Romans 1 there is the rational sinner and in Romans 2 there is the reformed sinner. If you do not believe that you are as sinful as others, then you are a reformed sinner. Let me show you what the Bible says about the reformed sinner.

Romans 2:1-5

Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things.

² But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things.

³ And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God?

⁴ Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

⁵ But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;

Notice Ephesians 5:8 again.

Let me show you a small glimpse of what it means to be darkness.

Romans 3:10-14

¹⁰ As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:

¹¹ There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.

¹² They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.

¹³ Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips:

¹⁴ Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness:

Notice Ephesians 4:17-19

¹⁷ *This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,*

¹⁸ *Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:*

¹⁹ *Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.*

Notice what Jesus said:

John 3:19-20

¹⁹ *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.*

²⁰ *For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd.*

Now let us notice the contrast.

Notice Ephesians 5:8 again.

Now we are light in the Lord. In other words, we have been saved from the darkness.

John 8:12

¹² *Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*

John 12:46

⁴⁶ *I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness.*

Colossians 1:12-13

¹² *Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:*

¹³ *Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:*

IN THE LORD speaks of our position IN CHRIST. We have been saved to walk in the light. It is not normal nor is it Biblical for a believer to live in darkness any longer. This is what Paul was writing to the Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 6:9-11

⁹ Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind,

¹⁰ Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God.

¹¹ And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.

A believer cannot live a life submerged in the darkness of sin. God will not permit it.

Matthew 7:13-14

¹³ Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:

¹⁴ Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

What does it mean to "WALK IN THE LIGHT"?

If we keep the context that is before us, we can understand that it means to live lives of purity and to live contrary to the flow of society.

1 Corinthians 6:14-18

¹⁴ Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?

¹⁵ And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?

¹⁶ And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you.

18 And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.

To live in the light means to walk in close fellowship with our Lord.

1 John 1:6-7

6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth:

7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.

Notice Ephesians 5:9

- ✓ **Goodness** - This is behavior that benefits others instead of self. A good person is concerned for the well-being of others, spiritually and in every way.
- ✓ **Righteousness** - This is moral uprightness. It is conforming to the claims of Jesus Christ on our lives.
- ✓ **Truth** - This means all honesty, reliability, and integrity. There is something about being around somebody who has the right garment on. There is something about being around somebody who has the light and walks as a child of light because you can trust them. They are reliable. They are honest. They are filled with integrity.

Notice Ephesians 5:10

This verse connects with verse 8. We are to live as children of light PROVING/LEARNING what is pleasing to the Lord. What is Paul saying here?

If we walk in the light, then God teaches us as we go from experience to experience what is pleasing to Him.

Proverbs 16:1-3

The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD.

2 All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits.

3 Commit thy works unto the LORD, and thy thoughts shall be established.

Psalms 37:4-5

⁴ Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

⁵ Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

Conclusion:

Let us remember something that we considered a while back. God's main purpose today is to be glorified and so we are here to glorify Him. That means we are here to make Him known to the world. We can only do this by walking in the light. It does not happen if we are not separated from the world.