

Westwood Baptist Church *Grounded. Growing. Going.*



Worship Guide for May 15, 2022

Sermon Notes

Be Imitators of God

Ephesians 5:1-7

The central theme of Ephesians 4 and 5 is the unity and purity of Christ's church. Through Christ, God has reconciled us to himself and to one another as "one new man". Paul wants us to understand that who we are governs what we do, how we think, and what we believe, and that determines how we act – how we live. We are new and different people who think differently and therefore, live differently. This radically different way of living is the focus of this portion of Ephesians. Certain ways of living, certain kinds of behavior are 'worthy', or appropriate for God's people, while other behaviors are unworthy, inappropriate, and completely "out of place" among the people of God.

IMITATE THE LOVE OF GOD (Eph 5:1-2)

The church's unity and purity, and the individual Christian's identity and ambition, is God-ward in its focus and orientation. Like loved children who want to imitate dad and mom, God's adopted and "beloved children" are called to love in a Godlike way and live following the example of Christ "who loved us and gave himself up for us."

IMITATE THE PURITY OF GOD

Don't tolerate the world's definitions of love and self-fulfillment (Eph 5:3).

The genuine self-sacrificing love of Christ is the polar opposite of the perverted lusts of the world. The behaviors and motivations that are accepted and celebrated by the world (sexual immorality, impurity, and greed) are to be fully rejected and avoided by the followers of Christ. They have nothing in common with the way Christ loved his Father and those he came to save.

Don't take lightly about what God takes seriously (Eph 5:4).

The subject and content of our conversations matter greatly to God. What we talk about, what we find funny or amusing, is either appropriate or inappropriate within the family of God. In place of these self-centered passions and pursuits is a God-centered gratitude that is content and humbly thankful.

Don't dismiss the behaviors that bring the wrath of God (Eph 5:5-6).

Paul says, 'of this you can be certain': the sexual immorality and self-centered autonomy the world accepts and celebrates is in fact disobedience, is rejected by God, and deserving of his wrath. God's judgment on this idolatrous immoral world is certain (Rev 18). His clear warning to us is to not associate with this way of living lest we share in its punishment. The constant siren song of the world can numb us to this Biblical truth.

Don't associate with what God says is darkness (Eph 5:7).

The concept of being in this world, but not being a part of it, is being addressed here, and it's not easy. We are called to separate ourselves from the unholiness and immorality of this world while still living among those who are lost in sin and need to know the good news of God's saving, transforming grace.

APPLICATIONS FOR OUR LIVES TODAY:

Weekly Discipleship Guide

Know

**What does God intend for me to know?
In your journal, use the following prompts to write
some truths that stood out from this week's message.**

I never knew...	I was reminded...	A question I still have...
I was challenged...	I was convicted...	A truth I could share...
I was encouraged to...		I need to dig deeper into...

Be (Consider)

**What does God's Word lead me to prayerfully consider?
In your journal, use the following questions to write
some prompts to use in praying through this week's passage.**

Is there a command to obey?	Am I convicted to confess any sin?
How am I compelled to exalt God?	Is there a sin to avoid?
Is there a promise to claim?	How do I need to rest in Jesus/the gospel?
Is there a principle to follow?	How can I pray for someone else?
Is there an example to follow?	What am I compelled to love or desire?

Do (Yield)

**How does God's Word call me to yield my life? In your journal, write
your answers and thoughts in response to the following questions.**

In Jesus we see a perfect picture of God's love lived out in human form. How did Jesus reveal perfect love both horizontal and vertical ways? In what way does God's holiness relate to God's love, and how do we see that perfectly in Jesus?

Read Ephesians 5:4 together again. What is the connection between our imaginations and our hearts? How does our culture aim at imagination in order to shape the affections of the heart, and how must we be intentional about guarding against that?

Read 1 John 4:6-19 together. How does this passage work together with Ephesians 5:1-2? How does God's love perfected (matured) in us compel us to pursue Ephesians 5:3-7?

Who we are (our core identity) governs what we believe and how we think, and that belief and understanding determines how we act – how we live. How does this progression / process frame the way you apply this passage in your own life and pray for others as they seek to live it out? (Ephesians 5:1-6)

*Use this guide to help you internalize this week's message & to prepare for Life Group.

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