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## **“Walk in Love” - Ephesians Chapter 5 v 1-21**

*5 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. <sup>2</sup> And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*

*<sup>3</sup> But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. <sup>4</sup> Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. <sup>5</sup> For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. <sup>6</sup> Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. <sup>7</sup> Therefore do not become partners with them; <sup>8</sup> for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light <sup>9</sup> (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), <sup>10</sup> and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness but instead expose them. <sup>12</sup> For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. <sup>13</sup> But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, <sup>14</sup> for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore, it says,*

*“Awake, O sleeper,  
and arise from the dead,  
and Christ will shine on you.”*

*<sup>15</sup> Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be foolish but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup> And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, <sup>20</sup> giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.*

God's purpose in creation and salvation is to lead people to imitate His life in ours. We should live in the same pure, self-giving manner that God does, practising a totally self-sacrificing love for one another. We learn this love from Christ's example on the cross.

The Christian should present a lifestyle to the world which projects a stark contrast to the world's ways. A life that exhibits thanksgiving and peace is desired. An inclination to find and share the truth, as opposed to the world's ways which lead to darkness of mind and soul, is a natural part of the Christian's way.

Also, an important overarching principle for interpersonal relationships is that of mutual submission. This ideal runs throughout the New Testament. Inherent in this idea are the virtues of humility, forgiveness, and servanthood. Christ's love is our example, a love which led Him to sacrifice His life for us on the cross.

Christ sacrificed Himself for the church because he loves her and wants to make her holy and blameless. Believing husbands and wives and all Christians are to love each other with the same kind of sacrificial love.

Language and speech are good gifts of God. Rather than foolish use of these gifts or using our speech to injure others, Christians are admonished to use their speech as a means of communicating their gratitude to God for His gifts of life to us. We never have reason to use obscene language or jokes. We must find better ways to satisfy our egotistical needs for importance. Being righteous is much more important than being coarsely funny.

Christians should consider carefully the content of their talk. Thanksgiving credits God and is a proper topic of conversation. God stands totally opposed to sin. His willingness to forgive sin does not at all mean His laxity towards those who practice sinning. His forgiveness only follows our repentance, our turning from the practice of sin. If we do not turn from our sins, we will face God's wrath. No trickery with words by any preacher or teacher can change that!

Instructions and descriptions of worship in the New Testament are few and somewhat vague. Simplicity is the best word to describe early church worship services. Those services featured praise, singing, thanksgiving, prayer, scripture reading, exposition, instruction in Christ's teaching, the Lord's Supper, and fellowship. The passage we are looking at today is unique in calling for people to cooperate with the Spirit to be filled. Paul addressed the entire community, not merely individuals. The command is plural. The filling of the spirit is contrasted with drunkenness (Acts 2 v 13). They affect people below the level of consciousness down at the foundations of personality. The spirit is not merely with God's people but in them.

The meaning of our study passage is therefore: let all the church, cooperate with the Spirit who lives deep down in their hearts with orderly and joyous worship of God.

A recurring theme for Paul was to avoid drunkenness for all sorts of other evils could follow. Rather than being deceived about the euphoric through wine, Paul exhorts us to know the true euphoria through a life fulfilled by the Holy Spirit.

Music played a strong role in the worship of the early church. Praise and thanksgiving were expressed through music. The early church learned to worship God with thanksgiving for everything. A grateful heart is necessary for true worship.

Not all prayer is spoken, singing is a high communication to the Lord and should be done from the heart. Verse 20 is the first of two of Paul's injunctions to thank God in all things.

Mutual submission based upon shared reverence for Christ as Lord is one of three evidences of the Spirit-filled life in verses 18 to 21. The others are joyful singing, and thanksgiving for God's blessings. The scene of mutual submission introduced Paul's discussion both of family and master slave relationships. Christians in Ephesus were concerned how Christians were to deal with authority in these social institutions. Paul's position was that authentic faith in Christ will enable believers to be in submission to one another even though social custom expected submission only of women, children and slaves.

*Transcript of the presentation given by Deacon Rodney Burge and discussed at the church-based, morning home group on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> January 20254. All scripture is from the ESV Translation.*

