
Ephesians

Chapter 5

Ephesians 5:1

Therefore, be followers of God, as dear children;

The word "therefore" indicates that this verse and the last verse of chapter 4 are closely related. The gracious forgiveness that God has provided to us is shown in 4:32, and now we are commanded to imitate it in practice.

"**followers**" is MIMETAI in the Greek, "to imitate". We have been made children of God, by grace; so we are by constant perseverance and attention to become more like the heavenly Father. Christ is our example; to become more like Christ is to imitate the Father..

1 Peter 2:21,22, "For even hereunto were you called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow his steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."

To "follow" God we must be guided by His thinking, divine viewpoint. We use the Word of God, which is lodged in our souls, to make the decisions which set the course of our lives.

The whole context of Ephesians 4 and 5 deals with how a Christian moves into the proper function of the Christian life, the "imitation of God", to perform the work which the Father has set for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them."

The Christian life is the moving away from our former manner of life, the worldly culture and lifestyle, towards a godly culture and life of production characterized by the fruit of the spirit and Christ-like behavior.

These chapters show us what the new life looks like. In the new life the Christian:

- Has an enlightened understanding; no longer alienated from God through ignorance
- Is being renewed constantly in the spirit of the mind, to create a new man

- Puts away lying and speaks truth to every man
- No longer steals but does honest work so that he can be generous to others
- Is characterized by gracious speech in the place of foolish or empty talking
- Is kind and forgiving to others, remembering God's forgiveness received at salvation.

How to acquire this kind of life is also spelled out in these chapters. Through communication of the Word of God, an academic process, and by the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, a spiritual process, a Christian replaces human viewpoint with divine viewpoint. Edification takes place and a Christian "speaking the truth in love, grows up into His in all things, who is the Head, even Christ."

Ephesians 5:2

And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us, and has given himself an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savor.

Love is to be the characteristic of the believer's life.

God commands believers to love everyone, even our enemies, even the most obnoxious, impossible-to-love people in our lives. The ability to love everyone in the world, even enemies, comes only as a result of Christian growth, the development of a structure in the soul which includes the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22 ff), and the development of a Relaxed Mental Attitude as a result of having no mental attitude sins toward other people.

Any Christian who is consistently growing in Christ will have a steady advance in the Christian Way of Life, along with the ability to love other people genuinely and have an honest concern for their spiritual well-being. The following statements are a paraphrase of the description of impersonal love found in 1 CORINTHIANS 13.

Love is slow to lose patience. It doesn't demonstrate irritations or reflect anger or have a quick

temper. It has fully accepted the character of the one loved.

Love looks for a way to be constructive. Love is actively creative. It is able to recognize needs. It discovers successful methods of improving or contributing to the other's life.

Love is not possessive. Love does not hold exclusive control where one is allowed little or no freedom to fulfill himself apart from the one who loves him.

Love is not anxious to impress. Love doesn't seek to make an impression or to create an image for personal gain.

Love does not cherish inflated ideas of its own importance. It is not self-centered. It has the ability to change and to accept change. It is flexible. It doesn't allow, or expect, life to revolved around itself.

Love has good manners. It has respect for others which results in a set of Christ-centered standards. It has discretion. It knows what is proper and when.

Love does not pursue selfish advantage. It does not have primary concern for personal appetites or for social status; but it shows concern for needs of the one loved and families and friends involved.

Love is not touchy. Love is not hyper-sensitive or easily hurt. It does not take things personally. It is not emotionally involved with personal opinions so that to reject ideas is to reject the one giving them.

Love does not keep account of evil. Love doesn't review wrongs which have been forgiven. It does not dwell on past sins. It destroys evidence of past mistakes wherever possible.

Love doesn't gloat over the wickedness of other people.

Love doesn't compare self with others for self-justification. It doesn't use others' sin to excuse personal weaknesses.

Love is glad with all godly men when truth prevails.

Love is in active fellowship with dedicated Christians. It is occupied with spiritual objectives.

Love knows no limit to its forbearance.

Love has the ability to live with the inconsistencies of others. It has empathy for the problems of others.

There is no end to Love's trust. Love believes in the person loved and in the person's worth without question. It has no reason to doubt the person's integrity.

There is no fading of Love's confidence. Love is not fickle. It has perfect peace and confidence that God is primarily responsible for introducing the right partner at the right time.

Love has unlimited endurance. Love is able to outlast anything. It is able to endure all obstacles and even love in the face of unreturned love.

These are the characteristics of Christ's love for us; and we are to imitate Him in our love for others.

"an offering and sacrifice to God"

Jesus Christ's death on the Cross for us, His work of atonement, is represented in the offerings and sacrifices made by the Jews in Old Testament times.

The sin offering, for example, presents Christ atoning for the guilt of sin (Heb. 13:11,12). It shows Christ as actually burdened with the believer's sin, standing in the sinner's place as his substitute. This offering tells of the Lord's death as presented in Isaiah 53, Psalm 22, and 1 Peter 2:24. It carefully guards the holiness of Him who "was made sin for us."

The trespass offering shows Christ's atoning for the damage caused by sin and has in view the injury of the sin as opposed to the guilt of the sin. This aspect of the trespass offering is seen in Psalm 51:4, "Against thee and thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest and be clear when thou judgest."

In the burnt offerings, the idea of sin is not as conspicuous, and sets forth Christ offering Himself without spot to God to perform God's will with joy; the offering is a sweet savour to God, so-called because it deals with Christ in His own perfections and devotion to the Father's will, as opposed to the non-sweet savour offerings which show Christ carrying the believer's sin.

The sacrificial animals symbolize Christ in some aspect of His redeeming character. The ox shows His patient endurance as Saviour (1 Cor. 9:9,10; Isa. 52:13-15; Phil. 2:5-8). The sheep or ram portrays Christ in His unresisting facing of death (Isa. 53:7). The goat typifies a sinner, and, when it is used for Christ, shows Him as the One who was

"numbered with the transgressors." The turtledove or pigeon symbolizes mourning innocence and portrays poverty. It shows forth Him who became poor that we might become rich. (Isa. 38:14; Heb. 7:26; Lev. 5:7; 2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:6-8).

As a sweet savour offering, the peace offering shows Christ as our peace. Jesus Christ made peace, He proclaims peace, and He is our peace (Col. 1:20; Eph. 2:14-18). The offering sets forth God as propitiated and the believer as reconciled - God and the sinner brought together in peace, both satisfied with the finished work of Christ.

The meal and drink offerings typify Christ in His human perfection tested by suffering. The fine flour represented His sinless humanity. The fire is the testing by suffering, even unto death. The frankincense symbolizes the aroma of His life toward the Father (Exo. 30:34). The absence of leaven, a type of evil, shows forth His spotless character. The oil mingled with the offering speaks of his conception by the Holy Spirit (Matt. 1:18-23). Oil poured on the offering speaks of his endowment with the Spirit (John 1:32; 6:27).

Some of the offerings are called "heave" or "wave" offerings because of the special manner in which they were presented. Those portions of the offerings which were "heaved", or lifted up, were regarded as gifts to God, and were understood to be handed over to the priests to be used only by them and their families (Num. 18:19; Lev. 22:10).

Phil. 4:18, "But I have all, and abound. I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odor of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God."

Ephesians 5:3

But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becomes saints;

The first, emphatic, word here is "fornication" (PORNEIA), referring to sexual misconduct. The word "uncleanness", too, refers to general conditions of immorality.

Moral absolutes exist, and their foundation is in the Word of God.

God the Father intends that sexual activity be conducted only between husband and wife. The Bible takes a categorical and unequivocal stand against non-marital sex and condemns any other sexual practice.

Exodus 20:14, "You shall not commit adultery."

Hebrews 13:4, "Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will judge."

Judges 16:6, So Delilah said to Samson, "Please tell me where your great strength is and how you may be bound to afflict you."

Proverbs 6:32, The one who commits adultery is lacking sense; he who would destroy himself does it.

Topic: Sexual Health in the Bible

"**covetousness**" is "ruthless greed", selfish indulgence at the expense of others. A natural desire, even a desire for something good or legitimate in its place, becomes greed when one is willing to hurt other people to obtain something.

"**let it not be once named among you**" - from ONAMAZW, "to be known; to be professed; to be mentioned".

Pagan vices should not exist among Christians. A Christian should not be known by these immoral characteristics.

Ephesians 5:4

Neither filthiness, foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

The apostle uses three more words to describe conduct and speech that is to have no place in the Christian's life.

"**filthiness**" is AISCHROTEIS, refers to "all that is shameless; all that would make a morally sensitive man ashamed." It must be excluded!

Then he mentions "**foolish talking**". Plutarch described this type of talk as "the kind of talk that comes from a drunken man, words without either sense or profit."

Then, "**coarse jesting**" is EUTRAPELIA, literally "a witty or clever turn of speech". This type of speech is not sinful, as such. But there are two things that can make it inappropriate. First, witty speech may fail to meet appropriate standards and play, too often, on the borderline of impropriety. Then, such speech replaces what is expected, namely praise.

"**giving of thanks**" is EUCHARISTIA, "gracious speech", parallel to the idea found in:

Eph. 4:19, "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the

use of edifying, that it may minister grace to the hearers."

Ephesians 5:5

For this you know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

"For this you know" - shows that Paul expects his readers to be aware of these facts. They have "learned Christ"; therefore, they can be expected to be aware of the consequences of following a sinful pattern of living.

These things characterize the "children of disobedience". But the Christian is not immune from these things. In fact, the urgent warning of chapter 4, verses 17 and following, is that believers must make the choice to "walk not as the other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind..."

"**whoremonger**" is PORNOS in the Greek; "fornicator". The word "whoremonger" is an archaic English term meaning "one who sells whores" or "a pimp". The Greek word, however, does not carry this meaning. PORNOS is, rather, used for a person who has a life filled with sexual sin, "fornication", a much broader classification.

The word "unclean" is used in several places in the New Testament, usually in connection with ceremonial uncleanness. In Acts 10:14, where Peter states that he has "never touched anything unclean", he refers to food that is ceremonially unclean under Jewish law.

In the Christian life, an unclean person is one who refuses to walk in the Spirit or to be occupied with Christ, a person who refuses to confess sin and acknowledge God's sovereignty in his life.

Topic: LEVITICAL PRIESTHOOD

Topic: UNCLEANNESS IN THE LEVITICAL SYSTEM

A Christian is always "in Christ". Eph. 1:3,5,7. So confession of personal sin is extremely important to the personal spiritual relationship that you have with God.

God requires confession of sin as the means of maintaining a close personal walk with Himself. He requires a continual acknowledgement of His rulership; and confession of sin is the means by which you express your yieldedness and surrender to the sovereign will of God on a moment by

moment basis. The Lord wants you to have a very useful and happy life, and part of His plan for providing this sort of life is confession of sin.

I John 1:9 tells us that God will "cleanse" a person who confesses. The person who does not confess sin does not receive cleansing and is, therefore, "unclean".

A "covetous" man is one who is a slave to the details of life; he is totally oriented toward material things. Not finding peace and happiness in a relationship with Christ, he is engaged in a continual search for happiness in the things of this world: e.g., money, recognition, friendships, social life, sex.

A person walking in sin will not enjoy the inheritance which God offers.

Topic: VOLITIONAL RESPONSIBILITY

To inherit from God, a person must possess the life of God, that is, salvation resulting in eternal life. An unbeliever will not inherit anything from God.

Titus 3:5-7, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

1 John 5:11,12 And the witness is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

Therefore, salvation is the qualification for inheriting from God. Col. 1:9-14

We have an inheritance because we share the destiny of Christ. The true doctrine of predestination is that we share Christ's destiny.

Eph. 1:11, also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will,

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is the down payment on our inheritance. Eph. 1:14

Ephesians 5:6,7

Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things comes the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Therefore, do not be partakers with them.

The judgment of God comes upon those who reject Christ, the "children of disobedience". Apart from the gift of forgiveness, men stand under the wrath of God because of sin, subject to His judgment.

Men cannot regard these sins lightly. These sins break the bonds of marriage, destroy the structure and strength of the family, and cause children to be born without parents responsible for their upbringing. The sins named here are among the most socially devastating.

But verse 7 makes it plain that Christians must choose not to partake of the sins of the unbelievers. Clean living is not an automatic feature of the Christian life. We must make a daily choice to walk with the Lord, to stay in the Word, to confess sin, and to avoid what the world offers.

Ephesians 5:8

For you were at one time darkness, but now you are light in the Lord: walk as children of light.

There is an absolute difference between the unsaved life and the life in Christ. God is light! (1 John 1:5) Light expresses God's holiness and glory.

The opposite of the wisdom and majesty of God is DARKNESS; the world that is estranged from God lives in this DARKNESS.

People who have found life in Christ have been transferred from the realm of darkness to the realm of light.

Acts 26:18, "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

Rom. 13:12, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light."

2 Cor. 4:6, "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, has shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

See also Col. 1:13 and 1 Pet. 2:9.

Note: we are "made" light in the Lord, but we must also choose to "walk" as children of light.

Ephesians 5:9

(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth.)

The discussion on this verse is from "The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians", by Francis Foulkes.

"The same thing can be described in another way as bearing the 'fruit of the light.' This reading, accepted by all the recent Versions, has better authority in the manuscripts than the KJV 'fruit of the Spirit'. Paul may not consciously be thinking of the light as the seed planted in the life, and in due course having fruit there, but rather of the natural results that should follow, the kind of character that should be seen in the life of the person who has been 'enlightened' by Christ.

"In many passages righteousness is spoken of as a fruit of the life in Christ (Rom. 6:21ff; Phi. 1:11; Heb. 12:11). All that is corrupt and unjust in man's relationship with his fellows must have no place. Then instead of 'all malice' (4:31) there is to be 'all goodness', the active seeking of good in every part of life."

Ephesians 5:10

Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

Verse 9 is parenthetical, so this statement follows closely the statement in verse 8. The person who is a child of light, and who is walking in light, will act on the will of God as a matter of choice.

To do what is acceptable to God one first has to know what is acceptable, then choose it. The light of God is given, but that does not free us from the responsibility of thought and choice. Romans 12:2 deals with the same subject, that of 'proving' what is good, acceptable, perfect of the will of God.

Ephesians 5:11,12

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.

There are times when a Christian must stand against the works of darkness, even to the extent of voicing a reproof. The Christian leader, for example, has the duty to "speak, exhort, rebuke" to "set in order the things that are wanting." (Titus 1:5 and 2:15). And the Bible speaks of people being convicted by the Law (James 2:9), by conscience

(John 8:9), and by the working of the Holy Spirit (John 16:8).

Ephesians 5:13

But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light, for that which makes manifest is light.

The meaning here, however, is predominantly that the Christian's life is to be a rebuke to those who are still living in darkness. "That which reprov's is light." There is a sense in which a very strong reproof is felt, even when there are no words spoken. Calvin said of ungodly people, "they neither see their own baseness, nor think that it is seen of God." But then the light of Christ, shining from the lives of those who have come to know Him, breaks in. [Foulkes]

Some men hate the light and try to avoid it; they do not want their works exposed. Others allow their lives to be exposed and are "made manifest by the light". (1 Cor. 14:24ff)

Ephesians 5:14

Wherefore he says, Awake you that are asleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.

"Wherefore" = "because of which". That is, "because you are an edified believer who has put aside the 'old man' and 'put on the new man', and because you are 'light in the Lord', you need to get into fellowship with the Lord and stay there, and Christ shall give you light."

This verse is speaking of practical progress in the Christian life through edification. The objective of this section is to present some of these principles. Three analogies are used in verses 14 to 16, AWAKE, ARISE, and WALK.

One of the words used in the Bible to describe Christian growth is edification. Edification is the process of spiritual growth in a Christian who is living according to the plan of God and who is fulfilling the command to "grow in grace and in the knowledge" of Jesus Christ.

The Greek word which is translated "edification" is (oikodome), a noun found in a number of New Testament passages:

Rom. 14:19; 2 Cor. 10:8; 13:10; Eph. 4:12,16,19; 2 Cor. 14:5,12

In all these passages, edification has two meanings.

- Collectively it refers to the building up of the body of Christ. In Eph. 4:16, you can see that the edification of individuals results in the building up of the church.
- For individual believers, edification refers to the spiritual growth and momentum in the Christian way of life, resulting in the glorification of God.

To grow in Christ, a Christian must be positive to God's plan and towards Bible teaching.

The word "awake" is the imperative of EGEIRW, "to arouse; to excite; to raise from the dead; to rebuild; to restore; to awaken from sleep". The verb is in the 2nd person plural, indicating that all believers are being addressed.

Now, this command is meant figuratively, not literally. The context indicates what is meant, that there are at all times adverse conditions in the world which require that Christian be awake, yet many Christians "sleep" when the danger is the greatest.

"**you that are asleep**" - present active participle of KATHEUDW. Many Christians have gone to sleep at the switch. Ephesus is a church of great potential but needs jolting awake. "Awake you that are asleep" is the equivalent of saying "have a positive attitude toward the Word of God".

This command precludes all excuses; the issue is cut and dried. There is only one way to be edified, and it requires massive intake of the Word of God and continuous walking in the Spirit.

"**arise**" is the imperative of ANISEMI, "to stand up again". This refers to the restoration to fellowship which occurs when a Christian confesses sin. (1 John 1:9)

"**from the dead**" is temporal death, the state of being out of fellowship.

Topic: CONFESSION OF SIN [Eph27b]

Topic: DEATH IN THE BIBLE [Eph09b]

"and Christ shall give you light"

This is the future active indicative of EPIFAUSKW, "to shine upon someone or something." The word was sometimes used in speaking of producing inner light, as in "A person lights up" when he is happy.

In this context, this phrase speaks of edification in the soul, the full and applied knowledge of God's Word that gives a Christian wisdom and prudence, divine viewpoint with which to make correct decisions and solve problems God's way.

John 8:12, "Then Jesus spoke again to them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that follows me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

Ephesians 5:15

See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise.

"See then" - from BLEPW, "to see; to glance". But this is in the imperative, so the meaning is "be alert; be aware".

"that you walk" - this is another imperative, of PERIPATEW, "to walk; to live".

"Walking" is the normal manner of life for a Christian.

The Greek word (peripateo) means to walk or to walk around. It is used for literal walking in Matt. 4:18. But peripateo is used primarily for the function of the plan of God in the Church Age in such passages as:

Rom. 6:4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk (peripateo) in newness of life.

Gal. 5:16,17 But I say, walk (peripateo) by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

Eph. 4:1,2 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk (peripateo) in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love,

Eph. 5:1,2 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk (peripateo) in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

"circumspectly" - AKRIBEIS, "accurately" or "with accuracy".

Walking accurately requires a certain amount of God's Word stored in our souls. The degree of

one's growth in Christ will determine the accuracy of the Christian walk. People who ignore the Bible will not walk circumspectly.

Col. 1:9,10, "For this reason, we also, from the day we heard, do not stop praying for you. In fact, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, for the purpose of pleasing Him in all things, bearing fruit in every good thing; in fact, constantly growing spiritually by means of doctrine from God."

Topic: THE CHRISTIAN WALK [Eph21b]

"not as fools, but as wise"

"fools" is ASOPHOS - "without wisdom"

"wise" is SOPHOS - "with wisdom" This person knows the Word of God and is using it.

The result of having Bible truth in the spirit is wisdom. Wisdom is divine viewpoint, God's way of looking at things. Wisdom gives a person the ability to make decisions according to the will and plan of God. Wisdom permits a person to solve his own problems according to God's viewpoint.

The "fool" is the person who is ignorant of Bible teaching. There are at least two types of fools:

1. The fool who says "No" to scripture teaching. He is either absent when the Bible is taught, or when he is present he's not paying attention.
2. There is the fool who says "No" after he has intellectual comprehension. He understands the doctrine but does not apply faith. Example: a person may understand what confession of sin is all about yet never actually confess sin.

Ephesians 5:16

Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

"Redeeming" is the present middle participle of EXAGORADZW, "purchasing; buying up; making the most of". When this refers to time it means "allowing no time to be lost".

The Greek word comes from AGORA, the central "market place" in a Greek city. EX-AGORA means to purchase something "out of" a market place.

There is money involved in this word, in its ordinary usage. To be able to redeem something, to but something "from the market place", you have to have enough resources with which to make the purchase.

God, in His grace, has provided us with the capital for living the Christian life. This "money" is the Word of God. But money can't be used when it's sitting in the bank; it has to be spent for things of value.

To "redeem the time", then, means that we must use the Word of God, applying the Word from our minds to our spirits and our lives.

"time" - KAIROS, "era; the critical moment" The meaning here is that a believer should purchase his whole lifetime on this earth, the "critical era".

"because the days are evil" - the conflict between Jesus Christ and the forces of Satan is intensified during the present church age. Evil refers to Satan's plan for this world, and the Christian must be every alert, using all available spiritual resources to make the time count during his lifetime.

A Christian lives one day at a time, and redeems the time each day.

When a Christian develops and lives an edified life, he regards every day alike. (Rom. 14:5,6)

The study of Ephesians 4 shows how the edified life is constructed, and this chapter assumes that the Christian is edified, that he is mature and spiritually self-sustaining.

Every day is a precious gift from God. Each day can be purchased:

1. By the filling of the Holy Spirit
2. By daily Bible study which brings about spiritual understanding and wisdom

The only time we have to glorify God during our lifetime is the number of individual days allotted to us. (James 4:13-17)

Psalm 90:12, "So teach us to organize our days"

God provides the operating capital to make each day count for Him. This is called "more grace" in James 4:6, and refers to spiritual intelligence, the "engrafted, engenerated Word" of James 1:21.

Every day is a special day in a Christian's lifetime. No day is holier than any other day. John 11:9,10.

Every day, a Christian must avoid mental attitude sin, which produces misery, bitterness, unhappiness, lack of joy, and chastisement. Prov. 27:1.

It is only during our lifetimes that God can demonstrate his Grace and Love to us under circumstances of suffering and pressure. Psalm 102:1-3.

Ephesians 5:17

Wherefore do not be unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

"Wherefore" = "because of this", reference to the command to live one day at a time and redeem it.

"be not" = "stop becoming!"

"unwise" - AFRON, "senseless; witless; crazy"

The word "unwise" is a reference to a Christian without doctrinal understanding. This person has a very low spiritual IQ. His applications will always be wrong. Because he doesn't know God's will, he begins to sublimate, to look for cheap substitutes, to be a slave to details of life. He falls for movements which emphasize the emotional; he may fall for any system of pseudo-spirituality.

How does a person stop becoming a fool! He enters a crash program of "understanding".

"but understanding" - the present active imperative of SUNIEIMI, "having technical and categorical knowledge; to know the objective truth about something; to have a useable frame of reference". Spiritually, this word refers to having the Word of God in the mind and in the soul. This is an edification word. Understanding is a result of growth in Christ.

Edification results in one's being oriented to grace, being occupied with Christ, having inner happiness that does not depend on people or things, having a relaxed mental attitude and the ability to love all people, being a master of the details of life.

"what the will of the Lord is" - THELEIMA, "design; purpose; will"

God's will IS God's plan from eternity past. God's will is the presentation of His plan to our thinking and volition; we respond when His will is presented.

God's will is NOT "what am I going to do?" God's will IS, "What is God doing?"

There is a cardinal principle of divine guidance. 1 John 3:23, "And this is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment."

God's will, first of all, it to believe in Jesus Christ and His work on the Cross. Then, for the believer, God's will is to "love one another".

This is the basis of divine guidance. The first part encompasses salvation; the second part is actually produced by the filling of the Holy Spirit.

The book of Ephesians is all about God's plan for your life. His whole plan for your life is laid out in the Bible. Of course you will look in vain for details about your physical life, items such as job, geographical location, marriage, and the general course of your life. But be assured, if you are operating according to God's known plan for your life, all of the details will fall into place easily.

Ephesians 5:18

And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit.

The problem that is dealt with in this verse was one which was affecting the ministries of individual believers at Ephesus, excess drinking.

Every believer is in full-time Christian service. The Bible does not distinguish between clergy and laymen. In the Bible sense, we are all laymen, with some of us having duties of service as communicators (pastors, elders, evangelists), or as servants (deacons), and so forth. But every Christian is a priest and a full-time ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ, a witness for Christ, a representative of the kingdom of Christ on this earth.

"be not drunk" - this is the Greek verb METHUSKO, from the noun METHEI, "strong drink". The English prefix "methyl" is a cognate, so we have "methyl alcohol" in English, which is a redundancy when the Greek is considered.

The believers were apparently getting drunk often enough to be causing a problem, and the command is to stop!

This negative command sets up a contrast with the second half of the verse, and it is the second command which is the primary teaching.

The idea is this, that alcohol (or drugs) in large amounts changes the mentality, character, and personality of the imbiber. And the principle is that things that we have on the inside change us, for better or for worse.

We are both activated and motivated by what is on the inside of us. On the negative side - alcohol. On the positive side - the Holy Spirit!

The Ephesus believers were probably using alcohol for the usual reasons, that is, for sublimation or as a tranquilizer. This means that alcohol was tak-

ing the place of the daily function of God's system of Christian joy and peace.

A person who has JOY does not need to sublimate. A person who has PEACE does not require a tranquilizer.

When alcohol, or any other drug, is used in this way, a believer fails to acquire edification. Edification cannot occur when the brain is not working. Since the main objective in the Christian life is to grow in grace, it is vital that nothing be done which prevents that happening. A Christian drinker fails to utilize the grace provision of the indwelling Holy Spirit, receives no edification, and fails to develop a divine frame of reference of wisdom and prudence.

"with wine" from OINOS, "by means of wine"

"wherein is excess" - ASWTIA, "whis is dissoluteness, prodigality." This word refers to the removing of inhibitions or debauchery.

"but", a conjunction of contrast which sets up the analogy between the negative and positive principle.

"be filled" present passive imperative of PLEIROW. This means: (1) to fill up a deficiency; (2) to fully possess; (3) to fully influence, (4) to fill with a certain quality.

The Holy Spirit's filling satisfies deficiencies in the Christian's life, deficiencies in knowledge and function. The Christian way of life is a supernatural life and requires supernatural execution, which only the Holy Spirit can accomplish.

The verb "be filled" is a command! But it is in the passive voice, which means that the filling is accomplished by the Lord, not by ourselves.

"of the Spirit" - "by means of the Spirit".

It is very important to distinguish between the INDWELLING and the FILLING of the HOLY SPIRIT. These terms are not synonymous, and they refer to quite different functions in the Christian life.

The INDWELLING of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit lives permanently in every Christian and is automatic at salvation. Rom. 8:9; Gal. 3:2; 4:6; 1 Cor. 6:19,20.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is called the "unction" in 1 John 2:20, and "anointing" in 1 John 2:27. These are synonyms for "indwelling."

The prophecy of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is found in John 7:37-39; John 14:16,17.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit must be distinguished from the indwelling of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ indwells the believer for the purpose of fellowship, Rom. 8:10; 2 Cor. 13:5.

The Holy Spirit indwells the believer for the purpose of function, Gal. 5:22.

The FILLING of the Holy Spirit

Maximum fellowship with Christ comes through the function of the Holy Spirit in edification and grace living.

The Filling is a function of the believer's volition and may be lost through carnality, Eph. 4:30.

The Filling is commanded, Eph. 5:18. Because it is a command, it is obvious that the Lord expects us to take some action to be filled. That action is repentance and confession.

The Filling is regained through confession of Sin, 1 John 1:9; Prov. 1:23.

The Holy Spirit's functions in the intake and application of Bible truth, John 14:26; 16:12-15; 1 Cor. 2:9-16; 1 John 2:27. This is the "how to" of edification.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is necessary because of the spiritual conflict in "high places" (spiritual warfare), John 7:37-39.

Ephesians 5:19

Speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord.

"psalms" indicates that the content of the Bible is the basis for communication among believers.

"hymns" refers to songs of victory celebration.

"spiritual songs" are songs which carry doctrinal content.

"making melody" from PSALLW, "to sing accompanied by a harp or other musical instrument" (From Vocabulary of the Greek New Testament, by Moulton and Milligan; and Greek-English Lexicon, Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich)

"to the Lord" - we communicate among ourselves by means of psalms, and the singing of songs of celebration and spiritual songs in our hearts as unto the Lord.

Ephesians 5:20

Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

[Refer to the topic of PRAYER, file Eph06b.]

Ephesians 5:21

Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

"submitting" is the present middle participle of the verb HUPOTASSW, "keep on being subordinate". HUPO means "under" and TASSW refers to military "ranks".

Hence, the idea is to continue being subordinate, and the middle voice means that the subject of the verb, the Christian, receives the benefit of the action of the verb.

Submission to authority means doing the unpleasant thing as well as the pleasant. Therefore, there is a need for self-discipline. Gal. 5:23 and 2 Thess. 3:8-15 point out that self-control is a result of Christian growth. The entire book of Proverbs deals extensively with this issue. The believer can expect that as he grows in Christ his desire to be submissive to the Lord will grow, as will his ability to be a faithful servant.

Scripture references to local church authority are found in Titus 1:4-16; 2:15 - 3:2; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Matt. 16:16-19; 18:18,19.

In becoming part of a local church, a Christian tacitly approves of the leadership structure of that church. By remaining with that congregation, he signifies that he accepts the pastoral teaching authority and the leadership of others in authority. The Bible commands submission to local church authority.

1 Peter 5:5, "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble."

To submit means to recognize the chain of command and to refrain from undermining that authority. This is a command to all believers; and nearly all trouble in local churches comes from the violation of this principle. The troublemakers in a church are those who undermine authority by criticism, by conspiracies, or by other methods. It is the duty of the pastor-teacher to guard against

this and to nip it in the bud. The early Christians willingly placed themselves under the leadership of the pastor and deacons because they were known to be ordained of God and that one could profit from their guidance and leadership.

Ephesians 5:22

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

The rest of Ephesians 5, verses 22 to 33, provide an extensive analogy between the institution of godly marriage and the relationship of the Lord Jesus Christ to His body, the church.

Verses 23 and 24 are addressed to the Christian woman who is married to God's choice for her. Verses 25 to 29 show the leadership responsibilities of the husband and extend the analogy. Verses 30 to 33 indicate the results in marriage and conclude the doctrinal analogy.

The word "**submit**" is HUPOTASSW (see vs. 21 above). It derives from a term referring to military subordination in the case of a commander and one who responds to a command. This is a word about Chain of Command.

When there is proper authority, there will be a proper response. In any chain of command there is an initiator and a responder. In a marriage, the initiator should be the husband and the responder the wife.

"**your own husband**" means "your own private husband". This has to do with a private citizen, one who keeps to himself. This simply means that a wife's response, and her subordination, is only to her husband.

These verses do not teach that a woman, in general, is expected to be subordinate to all men! These verses are not intended to make sure that women are "put in their place"! In fact, the purpose of this passage is to make sure that the Lord Jesus Christ stays in His place (in people's thinking).

Read Ezekiel 16.

Ezekiel 16 uses marriage for another analogy. In that chapter, as the Lord is to Judah, so a husband is to his wife. So - Judah becoming apostate and getting involved with false religion is analogous to a wife becoming involved with another man.

There is a direct parallel between Ezekiel 16 and Ephesians 5, except that Ephesians 5 does not discuss the "down" side of marriage, the broken rela-

tionship that occurs because of infidelity. As you read Ephesians 16, then, take careful note of the spiritual and social problems caused by Judah's apostasy, and try to infer from those facts things that would result from a broken marriage.

Ephesians 5:23

For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and he is the savior of the body.

The key to understanding this passage is the concept found in the whole biblical category of authority. And this subject must be well understood by Christians who want to grow in Christ and have productive lives of ministry.

But a great problem among many believers, in the U.S. particularly, is a disregard for all types of authority. There are many reasons for this, including mental sin, jealousy, arrogance, and other sin patterns. This disrespect derives from the Sin Nature and is an expression of one or more of the lust patterns, such as power lust, approbation lust; so that when some people receive approval or recognition, others are deeply disturbed in their souls.

There is, as well, a considerable lack of knowledge and misunderstanding of the importance of authority and discipline in human affairs. And there is a principle of scripture, that anyone who fails to recognize the function of authority in the human race, and between God and man, destroys the function of his own free will.

Of course you have the right to your own private thoughts; and as long as you do not communicate your thoughts, they remain private, between you and the Lord, that is. Privacy of thought is a freedom that everyone possesses, and it is in this area where every person has some dignity.

You have certain freedoms as long as you do not break the law. Laws are, in the best sense, restrictions on freedoms that allow other people to enjoy their own freedom of thought and person.

In the Bible, a believer is seen to be in many relationships which require a proper response to authority. Employee-employer (slave-master). Judge (police) - citizen. Teacher-student. Parent-child. Husband-wife. In each relationship there is a person who has a leadership position and one who is subordinate.

A pastor and elders of a church have the authority deriving from their spiritual gifts. A believer sub-

mits to the teaching authority of a pastor, or other Bible teacher, in order to learn Bible truth. In any teaching situation there must be respect for the one who teaches. You might have some kind of hangup with a teacher, but this is really irrelevant; the teacher is the authority in the classroom, and you have submitted to this authority by coming to the class.

Why all this authority? Because we are engaged in the most ferocious warfare imaginable, the conflict of the forces of Satan with the Lord Jesus Christ. And in any battle, obedience and discipline, and recognition of and submission to authority is vital to success.

Authority was designed for our protection and blessing.

See in this verse, "He is the savior of the body." This refers both to the Lord and to the husband. The husband is the protector and provider for the wife; Jesus Christ is the protector and provider for His body, the church.

If anyone removes himself from the sphere of Christ's protection and provision (apostasy), it is equivalent of going into battle without armor or weapons. Look ahead at Eph. 6:10-19. Now imagine that you have not obeyed the command to "Put on the whole armor of God". The battle still rages about you, but you are going out against the enemy in your underwear, and with your bare hands!

The principle of authority in marriage is that a married woman be able to carry out her own duties as wife, mother, and productive Christian, in the sphere of her husband's protection and provision.

Ephesians 5:24

Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

"**Therefore**" - lays the stress on the application of the analogy being discussed here.

"**as the church is subject**" - another use of HUPOTASSW, "to submit". The church, that is the believers in the church, submit to Christ. From the time you accepted Christ as Savior until your body is saved at the resurrection, and on into eternity, the object is to submit to Christ.

"**unto Christ**" - Christ is the Head, the Chief. The Word of God spells out the commands of Christ, and it is to His instructions that we are to submit.

"**so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing**" - this takes the analogy back to the beginning. \

This refers to the design of God in making a wife a responder to her own man. A woman responds to a man in all of the functions of her soul: self-consciousness, mentality, volition, emotion, and conscience. The woman responds in her soul and body. The man fulfills her in soul and body. This is the supreme human relationship, and marriage is designed to demonstrate to us, in a wonderful way, how great is our relationship with our matchless Savior.

Ephesians 5:25

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it.

Man is the initiator, his wife is the responder. Man is the provider, his wife benefits from what he provides. This command to men has to do with mental attitude love, the love that is the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 5:26

That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word:

The word "that" introduces a purpose clause; here is the planned result of Christ's love for the church and His sacrifice for it.

"**might sanctify**" is the aorist active subjunctive of the verb HAGIASW, "to set apart". This is a reference to sanctification that takes place during a Christian's lifetime, the development of the Christian life through edification.

The church is "set apart" by its response to the Word of God.

"**and cleanse it**"

The word "cleanse" is KATARIDZW, "to purify; to cleanse". The English word "catharsis" is a cognate. This verb is an aorist participle. In Greek grammar the action of the aorist participle precedes the action of the main verb. Therefore, the cleansing precedes the sanctifying. A Christian is cleansed, then set apart.

The word "washing" is in the instrumental case, therefore the cleansing takes place "by means of

washing of water by means of the Word." The Word goes into the believer and has a cleansing action.

We can see, then, that there are two main parts to cleansing in the Christian life. First, when we sin, we can receive cleansing when we confess our sins.

1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Then, as we walk in fellowship and are occupied with Christ, we take in the Word of God, which has a continual cleansing function in our souls.

The apostle Paul told Timothy, "Keep yourself pure...". Good advice for a young man in the ministry. And when you look at all of the passages in the Bible that have something to do with personal purity, you realize that this Christian characteristic has a prominent place in God's plan for the Christian believer.

1 Timothy 6:9-11

"But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.

"For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

"But you O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness."

Jesus Christ exalts purity to the realm of the spirit, a type of purity that is far greater than the ritual purity of ceremonial cleansing seen in Jewish and other religions. This paper is aimed at showing you what Christian purity is (and is not) and how you can grow to have this purity.

The New Testament Greek word for purity is KATHAROS. It is found in several New Testament passage, notably in Titus 1:15, "Unto the pure all things are pure..." KATHAROS is the usual Greek word for purity and was used for several types of purity in the Greek world:

- Ceremonial purity of a physical object, such as a vessel in a temple
- Ceremonial purity of a temple worshipper
- Purity in the spiritual nature of a person

In the ancient world, ceremonial cleansing would have been by some ritual. In the New Testament, there is a deeper meaning: purity refers to the result of cleansing of the soul by God. In this context, purity is a characteristic of a believer in fellowship who has experienced the "cleansing from all unrighteousness" promised in 1 John 1:9 to the one who confesses sin to God.

Titus 1:15, Unto the pure all things are pure...

Reading this phrase, a cynical person may draw the wrong conclusion, namely that a totally pure person can touch anything or think about anything and remain pure as the driven snow. But this thinking involves lifting this phrase out of the whole context of the Bible in order to make it meaningless and false.

This does not mean, "All things are pure in the judgment of the pure."

It's true that a pure-minded man will not usually put evil constructions or interpretations on things. But to say that something is pure because he judges it to be so, or because he cannot be defiled, is false. The context of Titus 1 makes it clear that the apostle Paul is referring to matters of Judaistic practice, ceremonial purifications, among other things, that have been misconstrued by false teachers.

1 Peter 1:18-23

"Forasmuch as you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

"Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,

"Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God.

"Seeing you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that you love one another with a pure heart fervently:

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which lives and abides for ever. "

Salvation is not by ceremony, but by the sacrifice of Christ. Morality is not by ceremony, but by the purification of the soul through the Word of God.

What is Christ's purpose for the Church? "...Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." (Eph. 5:25,26)

Purity is brought into the Christian's life and maintained through (1) Confession of sins which maintains fellowship with God and (2) edification, which is the basis for growth in all areas, including having victory over sin

Ephesians 5:27

That he might present it to himself, a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

"**That he might present**" - from PARISTOMI, "dedication; presentation"

This word was used in the ancient world for the man being presented to the woman in marriage. The woman's response often indicates which way the relationship will go.

In the same manner, a Christian's response to Bible truth will determine whether a person has a wonderful relationship with the Lord or a very unhappy life.

"**to himself**" - Jesus Christ is the groom. Since the Body is not yet complete, we now looking ahead to the time when the Body will be complete, at the end of the church age when the Lord returns for his Bride. The church age is the period of "courtship". How will it be determined how the relationship will go? By the response to Bible doctrine on the part of individual believers!

"**glorious**" - ENDOKSOS, "splendid; gorgeous; glorious", this is a reference to glorious clothing. **Compare Luke 7:25.**

"**not having spot**" - "not holding" any spot. "Spot" is SPILOS in Greek, meaning "stain" (English cognate: "spill"). This is a reference to moral stain, the function of the Sin Nature.

"**or wrinkle, or any such thing**" - all aspects of the former sin nature are to be removed by Jesus Christ. This refers to the future when the believer receives a resurrection body.

"**but that it should be holy and without blemish**"

The contrast is between the believer during his lifetime who is part of the Body of Christ, and that same believer at the Rapture who is part of the Bride of Christ. This verse describes the final two

of the three phases of sanctification. Phase I is salvation when we receive imputed righteousness. Phase II occurs during the course of our lifetime, during which sanctification is a process of edification. Phase III happens when we enter eternity and receive a glorious resurrection body.

Ephesians 5:28

So ought husbands to love their wives as their own bodies; he that loves his wife loves himself.

This verse brings us back to the marriage relationship, the original analogy.

"**ought**" is OPHEILW, "to owe; to be indebted; to be under obligation". The man in the marriage is responsible to make this happen, to be the initiator, the aggressor. This is a perpetual obligation.

"**husband**" is ANER, "noble man"; he is his wife's personal hero.

The man's capacity to love and to carry out any responsibility comes from the Christian growth he has experienced in his walk with the Lord. This is the love described in the previous lesson, where there is the absence of pride, bitterness, jealousy, vindictiveness, implacability, hatred, etc.

When this attitude is present in the man, he will love his wife's soul and body in his heart, so that as age comes on, she will still glow with the reflected glory of her husband. The man is the custodian of the woman's soul and body. The woman's body changes, but his mental attitude does not change. A man, growing old, does not stop loving his own body. There, his correct attitude is that he will not stop loving his wife's body.

Application: the mind of Jesus Christ is Bible truth. And truth is for the believer as long as he is on this earth. It is available all the time. There are wrinkles, there are stains, there is scar tissue and callous, there are spots, but the Lord always loves His own body. The Bible is the mental attitude love of the Lord, 1 Cor. 2:16.

Ephesians 5:29, 30

For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church.

For we are members of his body, of his flesh, of his bones.

This is a fitting analogy. When the word "body" is used to refer to the church, the idea is that the Body responds to the Lord Jesus Christ.

The believer in Christ is designed to respond to God. The human spirit, given at salvation, is designed for rapport with God through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given so that the believer can respond to God. The whole function of edification and Christian growth is aimed at improving our response to God.

Christians often ask "How can I be of service to God?"

Service to God does NOT begin by running out and doing something for God. There are good works that we are to do, but the primary service to God is not the good works. A Christian's response to the Lord, and service, begin with his attitude toward the Lord, his devotion to Him.

Devotion to the Lord is based on your position in Christ, in your status as a believer in Christ. So the first part of the plan of God for your life is "I am a member of His Body..."

In this passage, the concept of this relationship is explained by comparing it to a proper marriage relationship.

Ephesians 5:31

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

The Christian, at the time of salvation, is designed to be a responder in his soul. He is designed to respond to God's overtures of love through grace. God initiates His love through the Word of God, the mind of Christ communicated to man.

Production in the Christian life occurs ONLY after this relationship is fully and properly established, AFTER truth is present in the soul, AFTER a Christian is edified.

The Christian life is not a program of activities, it is a relationship with Christ, which will, in due

time, result in "children", just as in the proper marriage the relationship is established and stabilized well before children are brought into the world.

Ephesians 5:32

This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

The gospel was fully revealed to them, and people were saved by grace through faith in Old Testament times as they are today. They also understood the resurrection and the ascension of Christ, the tribulation and the millennium, and many other facts.

The mystery not understood by OT prophets is the relationship between Christ and the church, a doctrine which was not revealed to the Old Testament prophets.

Col. 1:25,26; Rom. 16:25,26; Eph. 3:1-6.

Another way of stating this verse is: "This doctrine is an important teaching which has, up until the church age, been unknown to man. I speak with reference to Christ and the Church."

Ephesians 5:33

Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

In this passage, a known doctrine from the past is linked up with a new (mystery) doctrine; a teaching principle.

The whole doctrine framed in this chapter is summarized and reinforced in this verse.