

Ephesians: Good News of the Church

[Ephesians 5:3-14](#)

“Walk as Children of Light” – November 6, 2022



Introduction

How much sin, would you say, is ok? You may have already answered that question without realizing it. As you walk the road of the Christian life, on one side there is the “holier than thou” ditch and on the other there is debauchery. We steer clear of both, but we do draw a line so we won't be labeled as a “Jesus freak” by the world.

Does knowing God has freely bestowed His grace upon us lead to moral carelessness? Does it lead to a watered down standard of holiness? Or do we trade in God's grace for legalism, hammering God's law down people's throats?

It can be very hard to know how to relate to the world. We don't want isolate ourselves and only hang out with Christians. We also don't want to become like the world and lose our saltiness or light to the world. How do we as Christians relate to the world?

Sermon Outline

1. Don't settle for selfishness that destroys you. Vs. 3-7
2. Walk in the light that rescues others. Vs. 8-14

Read & Discuss

1) Read vs. 3-7

After Paul calls the church to walk in love, he calls them to walk in the light and put off certain sins.

Paul begins by telling us about God's design for sex. ([Ephesians 5:31](#)) Sexual intimacy is reserved for the covenant bonds of marriage. Paul goes further to add “all impurity.” He goes beyond the bedroom to our thoughts. Do you tolerate, play with, or flirt with the line on sexual sin? Have you convinced yourself that it isn't that bad? God's command is crystal clear – there should not be any hint of sexual immorality.

Paul continues by including covetousness. When we look at what others have and want it so much that we think we can't be happy without, we are coveting. We have to look at God's design for what we desire. God created us. He knows what is best for us. His good design, revealed to us in His Word, is to maximize our joy. God is committed to our good, but we often have to wait on God.

Waiting is hard. So Paul offers three motivations to help us to distance ourselves from the world.

- In verse 3, Paul tells believers that these things are out of place for the believer. He doesn't say this to ruin our fun, but to encourage us to not settle for less than what God has for us.
- In verse 5, Paul tells us that the one who is characterized by these sins shows the world that Christ is not their King. If Christ is not your King, you will be denied access to the kingdom.
- In verse 6, Paul gives a warning. The wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. The wrath of God is His righteous response toward sinful rebellion.

Sin is a big deal – it is not trivial. Our sin grieves the Holy Spirit. ([Ephesians 4:30](#)) We are commanded not to become partners with the world. We should have friendships with unbelievers to be salt and light to them, but in these relationships, we have to ask, “who is influencing whom?” If that friendship leads you to make sin look normal and approve of what God condemns, Paul says we must distance ourselves before our hearts become hardened. How would you characterize your relationships with unbelievers?

The young church in Ephesus was outnumbered. There was pressure to conform. Paul is giving them a loving warning. Our world is not so far from Ephesus. There is pressure everywhere to conform. We are being deceived, and the danger in being deceived is that you don't know you are being deceived. This is why we need each other. The church is a body who speaks the truth to each other in love. If we do that, we will not be deceived. Have you wrestled with whose opinion of you matters most to you? Is it God's or is it other people's? We must “be killing sin, or it will be killing you.” (John Owen)

2) Read vs. 8-14

Back in chapter 4, we are called to live out what God has called us to be. What does that mean to do that?

We can discern what pleases God by looking at God's word. ([Romans 12:2](#)) What are some things that we can do to renew our minds? The growth may be slow, but we are learning to walk as children of light. In our desire for instant Christian growth, we can be tempted to take shortcuts that offer immediate pleasure and a mirage as control. Fear and anxiety lead to that desire for control. We are called to trust God. It is hard to put sin to death. How can we change from our addiction to covetousness, sexual immorality, etc.? Thanksgiving. ([Vs. 4](#))

Thanksgiving comes from seeing what God has done for us from Ephesians 1 -3. Even though we deserve Hell, God has saved us. When you really look at and meditate on that, thanksgiving erupts. A heart of thanksgiving will help keep you from the sins Paul is warning about. But doubting God will imprison you in your selfishness. To help cultivate thankfulness, commit to memorize chapters 1 -3. Are you in awe of what God has done for you in Christ? Does that lead you to thanksgiving? What things are you doing to renew your mind?

The call to walk as children of light is not merely darkness avoidance, it is darkness exposing which helps to rescue those around us. Light exposes the true nature of things. The world operates in the dark because of their rejection of God. When we, as the people of God, refuse to take part in the things of the world, our light will expose the darkness. This can happen within the church as well as outside of the church. A godly example brings conviction and encouragement to other believers. It also exposes the sin of those who do not believe. We need to remember that our righteous lives matter. Are there things that you need to turn away from in order for your light to shine bright? When you look at the members of this church, you should see something different, not perfection, but something different than the world. You should also see growth. That is the power of the Gospel.

People responded to Jesus in two ways. Some hated Him for shining the light on their sin. Some saw a Good Physician who came to rescue them. God exposes our sin to show us that the wages of sin is death. ([Romans 6:23](#)) We can't pay that debt. God wants us to know that He paid that debt in full. Stepping into the light can feel terrifying. You could be tempted to run back to the darkness. When you come to Jesus in faith, He will forgive your sin. He will take your shame. He will welcome you into His family.

The light of Christ not only exposes, it also transforms. Those who have abandoned sin and come to Christ, become light. As we walk with Him, He helps us to be the light that He declares that you are. Don't run from the light. Trust Christ. Step into the light. As you look back on your journey with Christ, do you see slow and steady growth? What steps can you take to continue that growth?

Additional reading:

Prayer of Response

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to confess? From what do I need to repent?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I understand, believe, desire, or do?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come. If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

Next week's sermon text: we turn to [Ephesians 5:15-21](#) "Walk in Wisdom"