

## REVIVE CHURCH- EPHESIANS #17

### BE IMITATORS OF GOD

---

Recap-The last section of Ephesians 4 reminds us of the responsibility we have to one another in the body of Christ and **how our relationship with one another impacts our fellowship with the Holy Spirit.** **We are members of one another; therefore we have a responsibility to each other! We belong to the body of Christ.**

*Ephesians 5:1-7 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. 3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; 4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them.*

**Paul, entrusted by God brings to the forefront things that will bring health to the body of Christ as each individual does its part.** Chapter 5 starts with the word “therefore” pointing back to the previous chapter which emphasizes the expectation from God concerning how we love one another and how to live a life that doesn’t grieve the Spirit of God. **Ephesians 4 ends with:**

*Eph. 4:32- And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. Ephesians 5:1 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.*

**Jesus has not asked us to do anything that He did not do.** The power to love one another effectively flows from the power of Jesus Christ. I can love others because He loves me, I can forgive others because He forgave me, I can be generous to others because He is so generous to me. Revelation leads to transformation . **Everything about Jesus points to the beauty of the new way of life that we are called as believers to embrace.**

Eph. 5:1 exhorts us **to be imitators of God as dear children.** *The word imitators derives from the Greek word mimetai which is where we get the word mimic. We are to mimic the behavior, attitude, character, holiness of Christ Himself, empowered by the Holy Spirit.* **The motivation for such imitation is our understanding of His love for us. We are the objects of His love, so we who are loved by God want to become like Him.** Discipleship means we will become like Jesus!!!

*2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. Ephesians 5:2*

What releases the sweet aroma of incense to the Father? **A life of sacrifice.** The Word of God continually points us back to the cross of Jesus Christ as the prime example of sacrificial love.

**A beautiful picture of this is given to us in Song of Songs 1.**

**Song of Songs 1:12-13** 12While the king is at his table, My spikenard sends forth its fragrance. 13A bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me, That lies all night between my breasts.

**The bundle of myrrh is an incredible image of the cross of Christ.** Myrrh is known as the embalming spice and it is always associated with suffering. The suffering love of Jesus will be over her heart for the rest of her days, just as the sacrifice of Jesus continually impacts believers' hearts for all eternity. **It is essential for our unity with Christ to forever keep His sacrifice upon our hearts and empower us with passion to live for Him.** The cross like the bundle of myrrh upon the bride has forever impacted our heart and our hearts desire has become oneness with Him. **There is a fragrance released from our lives when our heart fully belongs to Him and the Holy Spirit rests upon us.**

**2Corinthians 2:14** *But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place. <sup>15</sup> For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; <sup>16</sup> to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things?*

**Christ's death when applied fully to our heart releases a glorious aroma of the knowledge and presence of Jesus.**

**God also enjoys the aroma of our prayer life.** It releases a sweet incense that is pleasing to the Lord.

- David said in **Psalm 141:2**-May my prayer be counted as incense before You; The lifting up of my hands as the evening offering.
- **Revelation 8:4**-<sup>4</sup> And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, went up before God out of the angel's hand.

**We set our heart on being pleasing to Him in all we do!**

*Eph. 5:3* But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; *4* neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are

*not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.*

**Paul moves from what is pleasing and acceptable to God, the sweet-smelling aroma of Christ that comes from a heart transformed by His death and resurrection to what is detestable in God's sight.** The beginning of Ephesians 5 is preparing us for the understanding of the bride of Jesus Christ.

- **The first thing mentioned that is unacceptable to God is fornication.** Fornication means any sexual intercourse outside of marriage between one man and one woman. This is thematic throughout the entirety of God's word!
- **The next is uncleanness/impurity.** The Greek word used for Uncleanness or impurity was used to describe diseases that people would contract by digging up graves. If we involve ourselves with things of death, we become polluted and impure releasing an aroma that has no similarities to Christ. A follower of Jesus Christ will not be associated with a lifestyle of sin that leads to death.
- **The list of forbidden activities we are told not to involve ourselves in are:** fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, filthiness (obscenities or things that bring shame), foolish talking (godless speech), coarse jesting (filthy conversation). **These things are not fitting for the Saint, the one saved by Jesus with a longing to please God.**
- No fornicator, unclean, covetous, idolater **has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ.** Then the Scripture states-(6-7) *let no one deceive you with empty words because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be partakers with them!* Don't let anyone who calls themselves a Christian convince you that these things don't matter to God. The wrath of God will come upon the sons of disobedience.

**Paul presents this list of vices that shows the contrast between what believers were and who they are/should be now that they are saved.** Beloved there must chasm between what we were when we were living in sin and who we are as the redeemed, the born-again beloved sons and daughters of Jesus. **If your heart is still pulled to the world rather than pulled into the arms of the Father it is time to get right with God through repentance and restore first love.** If we are not broken over sin we are not in right relationship with God.

We should be rejoicing as believers over the fact that though we were counted among those who were under His wrath, however, when we placed our faith in Jesus and received the

finished work of His death, burial and resurrection, we were justified by faith and entered into the righteousness of Jesus.

In Christ we were forgiven, covered by His blood and are counted as those who are under His blessing as long as we continue to walk in His light.

***Ephesians 5:8-12** 8For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9(for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), 10finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. 11And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. 12For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.*

**We are light in the Lord. What is true in the heavenly realms must be lived out in the physical domain.** Just as Christ has glory at the right hand of the Father, so also believers who are seated in the heavenlies with Christ shine like the sun. **We emanate light on earth just as it is in heaven.** The only claim one has to such light is through faith in Christ. Paul's greatest challenge was to encourage believers to become what God has prepared them to be.

Beloved, we must see ourselves through His eyes, this is one of the reasons fellowship with the Holy Spirit is so important-He enlightens our heart to see and understand. *Listen to this exhortation and receive it as a command "walk as children of light". Life in the Holy Spirit leads to growth in God, maturing in His fruit, walking in His gifts. The believer lives a life of transparency to those around Him and lives in the light in full view of others.*

**Paul admonishes the believer to live in such a way that the brightness of our life will expose and convict those living in darkness.** This is not to be judgmental and is not legalism. If we are walking in the beauty and holiness of the Holy Spirit conviction will fall upon those who are in darkness with the expectation they will repent in light of His glory and step out of death and into life.

*Ephesians 5:13-14* 13But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. 14Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light."

**The Holy Spirit proclaims two great truths here.**

1. The light of God's *presence* will expose evil deeds for all to see,
2. The revealing work of the light of God through the church by the Holy Spirit brings light into the darkness. The churches light illuminates for many the path of redemption. There is great power in the glorious light of Christ.