

Small Group Guide: Walking in Love and Light

Ephesians 5:1-21

Sermon Overview

Pastor Jerry taught from Ephesians 5:1-21, emphasizing three key walks for believers:

1. **Walk in Love** (v. 1-2)
2. **Walk as Children of Light** (v. 8-14)
3. **Walk Circumspectly/Wisely** (v. 15-21)

The central message: Being filled with the Holy Spirit is the key to living a transformed life that reflects Christ.

Key Takeaways

1. We Are Called to Imitate God as Dear Children

- Agape love is unconditional AND sacrificial
- Jesus didn't just pronounce us saved—He gave His life for us
- We should be "dear children"—obedient, tender-hearted, eager to please our Father

2. Walking in Love Is a Lifestyle, Not an Event

- It's not just about Sunday morning; it's about Monday through Saturday
- Walking in love means engaging with people who are different from us
- We serve because of what Christ has done, not to earn brownie points

3. We Were Once Darkness; Now We Are Light

- Not just "in" darkness—we WERE darkness before Christ
- Now we have the nature of Christ and reflect His light
- Our transformed life should draw others to Jesus

4. Being Filled with the Spirit Requires Intentional Effort

- We can't coast and expect spiritual growth
- We must actively pursue God through His Word, prayer, and fellowship
- The Holy Spirit reveals areas that need change—we must respond

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Text

1. **Read Ephesians 5:1-2.** What does it mean to be an "imitator of God"? Why does Paul specifically say "as dear children"?
2. **Look at verses 3-7.** Why does Paul list these specific sins? What do they all have in common? How do these contrast with walking in love?
3. ****In verse 8,** Paul says we "were once darkness" (not just in darkness). What's the difference? How does this change how we view our identity in Christ?

Personal Reflection

4. **The sermon asked: "Do I walk in love?"** Be honest with yourself—where do you struggle most?
 - Being critical vs. accepting of others
 - Listening to respond vs. listening to understand
 - Having empathy vs. being cynical
5. **Verse 18 is the key verse: "Be filled with the Spirit."** On a scale of 1-10, how actively are you pursuing being filled with the Spirit? What's holding you back from a higher number?
6. **The pastor mentioned we can "quench" or "put out the light of the Spirit" in our lives.** Have you experienced this? What behaviors or attitudes led to that?

Application and Action

7. **Read verses 15-16 about walking "circumspectly" (carefully, intentionally) and "redeeming the time."** What does this look like practically in your daily life? Where are you wasting time that could be redeemed?

8. The sermon emphasized that spiritual growth takes effort—it's not accidental. What specific steps can you take this week to:

- Study God's Word more intentionally?
- Allow the Holy Spirit more room in your life?
- Walk in love toward someone difficult?

9. Verse 19-21 describes what happens when we're filled with the Spirit:

- Speaking godly words to one another
- Having melody/joy in our hearts
- Being thankful always
- Submitting to one another

10. Which of these is most challenging for you? Why?

11. The pastor said, "We should be serving one another: How can I help you? How can I pray for you?" Take time right now to ask each person in your group: "How can I pray for you this week?"

Practical Applications

This Week's Challenge: Choose ONE

Option 1: Daily Spirit-Filling

- Each morning this week, pray specifically: "Lord, fill me with Your Holy Spirit today. Help me walk in love and light."
- Journal one way you saw the Spirit work through you each day.

Option 2: Intentional Encouragement

- Identify someone at church or in your life who needs encouragement.
- Speak godly words to them—call, text, or meet for coffee.
- Practice "speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (v. 19).

Option 3: Sin Inventory

- Review verses 3-7 prayerfully.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any area where you're compromising.
- Confess it (1 John 1:9) and take one practical step to "put it off" this week.

Option 4: Gratitude Practice

- Following verse 20 ("giving thanks always for all things"), start a daily gratitude list.
- Write down 3-5 things you're thankful for each day.
- Notice how this shifts your perspective and creates "melody in your heart."

Memory Verse

Ephesians 5:18 - "And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit."

Closing Discussion

1. What was your biggest takeaway from today's discussion?
2. How will you be different this week because of what we've studied?
3. How can we pray for each other as we seek to walk in love and light?

Closing Prayer

- Pray for each person's specific needs shared during discussion
- Ask God to fill each person with His Holy Spirit
- Pray for strength to walk worthy of our calling this week
- Thank God for His unconditional, sacrificial love