

Sermon Supplement

Ephesians 5:1-14 – *Imitators of God*

UNDERSTANDING THE PASSAGE

1. **Main Idea of the Passage:** Be imitators of God by walking in self-sacrificial love and Christ-glorifying light. First, with each other. Second, to the world. But before you can walk in love you have to believe you are a beloved child of God. And before you can walk in light you have to understand what is and isn't love. Love is the fuel that makes the light of Christ burn brightly in our lives. Paul picks up the theme of "walking" (cf. 4:1) and gives us new lanes to get moving. And flowing from the end of ch. 4 is the continuation of the theme of "put off the old self and put on the new" but now re-explained as "no longer walk in darkness but instead walk in light."
2. **Melodic Line of the Letter:** The two become one for His glory. God the Father, through God the Son, by the power and presence of God the Spirit, is making a multi-ethnic people for the purpose of His glory, based in his eternal plan, in this final age.

KEY WORDS/THEMES

1. **Imitator** (*mimētēs*) – we imitate God as we walk as Christ did in love and light; see also, 1 Cor. 4:16; Heb. 6:12.
2. **Walk** (*peripateō*) – how you behave or live your life, live as a habit of conduct, a key metaphor for a disciple throughout the Bible; see also, Eph. 2:10, 4:1; Col. 1:10.
3. **Light** (*phōs*) – in contrast to darkness; the element and sphere of God; illuminates the spirit and soul of humans; the fruit of which is goodness, righteousness, and truth; see also, Jn. 12:36; Rom. 2:19.

STRUCTURE/OUTLINE OF THE PASSAGE

1. Be imitators of God (v. 1)
2. Walk in love (vv. 2-7)
3. Walk in light (vv. 8-14)

GOSPEL CENTRALITY

As a new creation in Christ and as the created offspring of the Creator, believers can reflect His unity and the unity which should characterize family members. Jesus took on our sin and shame that we might walk in love and light with one another. Because of Jesus, we can be characterized by the ethics of the new creation and not of the old Gentile world and, thus, maintain this unity and witness to the unbelieving world.

KNOWING AND BEING KNOWN

- What are some modern day cultural ethics that are in tension with the Christian ethics Paul is calling the Ephesians and therefore us to live by?
- Share a story when you brought something out of the darkness into the light.
- Is there anything the Spirit has put on your heart to bring out of the darkness into the light in order to be known?

RESPONDING IN PRAYER

- Thank God that He has made us a new creation through the person and work of His Son by the power of the Spirit.
- Pray that we would be able to walk in love and light.
- Pray that many would be transferred from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of the beloved Son through the witness of your group and our church.