

THE BELIEVER IS TO WALK IMITATING GOD EPHESIANS 05:01–07

Introduction

The challenge of this passage is one of the greatest challenges in all the Word of God. Just imagine — the great Pattern for the believer is God Himself. The believer is to follow the Person of God. The believer is to walk through life imitating God.

- I. By becoming an imitator of God (v. 1).
- II. By loving as Christ loved (v. 2).
- III. By being clean-bodied, that is, morally pure (v. 3).
- IV. By being clean-mouthed (v. 4).
- V. By knowing God’s solemn warning (vv. 5-6).
- VI. By separating oneself from the unclean (v. 7).

I. Ephesians 05:01 Become an Imitator of God

The believer imitates God, first, by *becoming* a follower of God. Note the word *be* (ginomai). It means *to become* an imitator, a follower of God. The idea is that of commitment, attachment, devotion, allegiance, attention. Before a person can be a follower of God, he must commit and attach himself to God. He must surrender and devote his life to God and then begin to follow after God.

The word *imitators* (mimetai) means to follow. Some prefer the translation that we are to become followers of God. Note the phrase “as dearly loved children.” Just as children learn by imitating their parents, so we are to learn by imitating God. The very idea that we are to *be followers and imitators* of God is a bold idea. Just imagine. Scripture boldly proclaims that we are to become *like God!*

=> Christ said: “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Mt. 5:48).

=> God demanded: “Be holy because I, the Lord your God, am holy” (Lev. 19:2).

=> Paul declared: “And we.. .Are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory...” (2 Cor. 3:18).

=> Peter charged: “But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.’” (1 Pet. 1:15-16)

=> The early church saint, Clement of Alexandria said: “The Christian practices being God” (Quoted by William Barclay, *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, p. 190).

II. *Ephesians 05:02 Love as Jesus Christ Loved*

The believer imitates God, second, by loving as Christ loved. Two things about the death of Christ should be noted here.

1. The phrase “gave Himself up for us” is a simple phrase with profound meaning. It does not mean that Christ died only as an example for us, showing us how we should be willing to die for the truth or for some great cause. What it means is that Christ died in our place, in our stead, as our substitute. This meaning is unquestionably clear.
 - a. The idea of sacrifice to the Jewish and pagan mind of that day was the idea of a life given in another’s place. It was a substitutionary sacrifice.
 - b. The idea of sacrifice is often in the very context of the words, “Christ gave Himself up for us” (Eph. 5:2).

John 6:51 *“I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”*

John 10:11 *“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”*

John 11:51 *He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation.*

John 10:15 *“Just as the Father knows me and I know the Father - and I lay down my life for the sheep.”*

John 15:13 *“Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.”*

John 17:19 *“For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.”* (See Jn. 10:11; Gal. 1:4; 2:20; 1 Tim. 2:6; Tit. 2:14.)

2. The words “Christ gave Himself...a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God” gives a higher meaning to the death of Christ than just meeting our need. The word “offering” refers to the burnt offering of the Old Testament (Lev. 1: 1f). The burnt offering was given to God not merely because of sin, but because a person wished to glorify and honour God. A person wished to show his love and adoration to God. This is an aspect of Christ’s death that is often overlooked — an aspect that rises far above the mere meeting of our need. In giving Himself as an “offering to God,” Christ was looking beyond our need to the majestic responsibility of glorifying God. This means that His first purpose was to glorify God. He was concerned primarily with doing the will of God — with obeying God. God had been terribly dishonoured by the first man, Adam, and by all those who followed after him. Jesus Christ wished to honour God by showing that at least one man thought more of God’s glory than of anything else. Christ wished to show that God’s will meant more than any personal desire or ambition that He might have.

He said: “but the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. “Come now: let us leave” (John 14:31: see Lk. 2:42; Jn. 5:30).

The point is this: the believer is to walk in love, *just as Christ has loved us and has given Himself as an offering and a sacrifice to God*. The believer is to love so much that he gives himself as an offering and a sacrifice. There is to be no limit to the offerings and sacrifice of our lives to God and to men. Remember: God's love — agape love — is always an acting love.

Eph 5:2 *And live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*

John 13:35 *“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*

John 15:12 *“My command is this: ‘Love each other as I have loved you.’”*

Rom 12:9 *Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.*

1 Th 3:12 *May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.*

1 Pet 1:22 *Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.*

1 John 3:14 *We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death.*

1 John 3:16-18 *This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.*

1 John 4:7-8 *Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.*

1 John 4:20 *If anyone says, “I love God,” yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.*

III. Ephesians 05:03 Be Morally Pure

The believer imitates God, third, by being clean-bodied, that is, morally pure. If a believer is to follow and imitate God, he has to be morally pure; he has to keep his body clean. He cannot let it become dirty and spotted.

=> He has to keep his body free of sexual immorality (see Gal. 5:19-21).

=> He has to keep his body free of any kind of impurity (see Eph. 4:17-19).

=> He has to keep his body free of greed (see Eph. 4:17-19).

Note the importance of rejecting these sins: there must not even be a hint of these sins. And the command is an imperative: “there must not be even a hint” — not even a *hint*.

You, that is, your body, is never to engage in sexual immorality, any kind of impurity, or greed. Note another fact: such things are not even to be talked about. They are not to be named, talked about, or mentioned in our conversation. Immorality and indecent conversation and jokes are to be the farthest thing from the mind of the believer who follows God. God has nothing to do with such dirt and filth.

Mat 5:8 *“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”*

1 Tim 1:5 *The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.*

1 Tim 5:22 *And do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.*

1 Pet 1:22 *Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.*

2 Pet 3:14 *So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him.*

IV. Ephesians 05:04 Be Pure in Speech and Conversation

The believer imitates God, fourth, by being clean-mouthed. If a believer is to follow and imitate God, he has to be pure in speech and conversation; he has to keep his mouth or tongue clean. He cannot let his mouth become foul and polluted, filthy and vile.

1. He is never, not once, to be engaged in *obscenity* (aischrotes): using the mouth in obscene, shameful, foul, polluted, base, immoral conduct and conversation. What an indictment of our day — a day of sodomy and perversion. And note: the word refers to both conduct and speech. How polluted and foul-mouthed so many have become — so much so that society could easily be known as a second Sodom and Gomorrah.

Rom 1:26-27 *Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.*

Rom 6:19 *I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness.*

Eph 5:4 *Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.*

James 1:21 *Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.*

2 Pet 2:9-10 *If this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment.*

This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise authority. Bold and arrogant, these men are not afraid to slander celestial beings.

2. The believer is *not to hint* or engage in *foolish talk* (morologia): empty, unthoughtful, senseless, wasted, idle, aimless or purposeless talk; talk that just fritters away and wastes time, that has absolutely no purpose to it. It also means sinful, foolish, silly and corrupt talk.

1 Tim 1:10 *For adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers — and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine.*

Job 15:2-3 *“Would a wise man answer with empty notions or fill his belly with the hot east wind? Would he argue with useless words, with speeches that have no value?”*

Prov 10:19 *When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise.*

Prov 29:11 *A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control.*

Eccl 5:3 *As a dream comes when there are many cares, so the speech of a fool when there are many words.*

Eccl 10:13 *At the beginning his words are folly; at the end they are wicked madness.*

3. The believer is *not to hint* or engage in *coarse joking* (eutrapelia): to joke, talk foolishly, poke fun, act or speak without thought; to be suggestive in conversation; to make wisecracks. It also has the idea of being cunning and clever, of being polished in suggestive and off-coloured joking and using it to attract attention and win favours (Wuest. *Ephesians and Colossians*, Vol. 1, p. 121). Coarse joking is often used in off-coloured jokes or conversation, at parties or breaks in order to be suggestive.

Prov 26:18-19 *Like a madman shooting firebrands or deadly arrows is a man who deceives his neighbour and says, “I was only joking!”*

2 Tim 3:6 *They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women, who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires.*

1 Pet 3:10 *For, “Whoever would love life and see good days must keep his tongue from evil and his Ups from deceitful speech.*

Note that such talk is not fitting or becoming to believers. Believers are to be engaged in conversation that builds people up and offers thanks and praise to God.

Eph 5:18-19 *Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord.*

Col 3:17 *And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

Col 4:6 *Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*

1 Th 5:18 *Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

2 Tim 1:13 *What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus.*

Titus 2:8 *And soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us.*

Eccl 10:12 *Words from a wise man's mouth are gracious, but a fool is consumed by his own lips.*

V. **Ephesians 05:05–06 Know God's Solemn Warnings**

The believer imitates God, fifth, by knowing God's solemn warning. Note three significant points.

1. Uncleanness has no part with God, no part whatsoever. The profession of a person does not matter: if he practices these things, he will not share in the kingdom of Christ and of God. And note, *the doom* pronounced is not future; it is present. It does not say, "he shall not have," but rather, "he does not have an inheritance with God." He may have houses, lands and all kinds of possessions; but he does not have one scrap of the kingdom. He has lost all that is really worth having. Note the specific sins mentioned that doom a person.
 - => Being an *immoral person* (pomos): illicit sexual intercourse; fornication; prostitution; immoral behaviour.
 - => Being an *impure person* (akathartos): unclean, immoral, dirty thoughts or behaviour.
 - => Being a *greedy person* (see note above, Eph. 5:3).
 - => Being an *idolater* (see Gal. 5:19-21).
2. There are deceivers walking all about us. There are people who will tell us...
 - that sex is the normal and natural thing for man — that a one time affair will not hurt — that it is acceptable and will not harm us.
 - that securing possessions is normal behaviour and banking and storing up is acceptable. It builds position, ego and self-image, and that could never be wrong: and having more than what we need enables us to give to help the needy as we desire.

Rom 16:18 *For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people.*

Eph 4:14 *Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.*

2 Cor 11:13-14 *For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.*

2 Tim 3:13 *While evil men and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.*

Titus 1:10 *For there are many rebellious people, mere talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision group.*

2 John 1:7 *Many deceivers, who do not acknowledge Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, have gone out into the world. Any such person is the deceiver and the antichrist.*

3. Barclay points out that there were and still are two main deceptions about Christianity (*The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, p. 192f).
 - a. There were those who felt that they could say and do anything and still be acceptable to God. This argument came primarily from those *outside* the church, although there were some within the church who held the same argument. This idea finds its roots in the philosophy of Gnosticism. Gnosticism said that man is both body and spirit. They felt that the spirit is the only important part of man — the only part that really matters. It is the only part that really concerns God. What a man does with his body does not matter; the body is not important. It makes no difference whatsoever if a man abuses his body: gorges, dirties and fouls it.

However, Christianity counters, “Never!” Both body and soul are important. We see this in Jesus Christ. He honoured the body by taking a body upon Himself (Heb. 2:14). Today He honours the body by making it the “holy temple” for His presence in the person of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19). Jesus Christ is interested in the body of man as well as the spirit of man. He is interested in the whole man, and He saves the whole man.

- b. There were those primarily within the church who felt that sin was irrelevant. How much a person sinned just did not matter. God is love and He forgives and forgives no matter how much wrong we do. In fact, some argued that the more we sin, the more God is able to forgive and demonstrate His mercy in us. So why not live the way we want? Why not sin and let God’s mercy and love shine through us, for the more we sin the more God’s grace will be seen. But Christianity counters, “Never!” God’s love and grace are not only a gift and a privilege, but a responsibility and an obligation.

However, note what God says: “Because of such things God’s wrath comes on those who are disobedient” (v. 6; see Eph. 2:2). The *wrath* (orge) of God is a decisive anger, a deliberate anger that arises from His very nature of holiness. It is an anger that is *righteous, just and good* — that stands against the sins and evil of men — their dirt and pollution and immoralities — their injustices and neglects of a world that reels under the weight of lost, starving, diseased and dying masses. God could never overlook the whore-monger who destroys family life nor the covetous man who overlooks the needy. He would not be God; He would not be loving or just if He overlooked such evil persons.

Rom 1:18 *The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness.*

Rom 2:5 *But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.*

Eph 5:5-6 *For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person — such a man is an idolater — has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient.*

Psa 2:12 *Kiss the Son, lest he be angry and you be destroyed in your way, for his wrath can flare up in a moment. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.*

VI. Ephesians 05:07 Separation from the Unclean

The believer imitates God, sixth, by separating himself from the unclean. No believer is to take part in the sins discussed in these verses. In fact, he is to separate himself from all who do take part in such sins.

Acts 2:40 *With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."*

Rom 12:2 *Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is — his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

1 Cor 5:9 *I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people.*

2 Cor 6:14 *Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?*

2 Cor 6:17-18 *"Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you." "I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters," says the Lord Almighty.*

Eph 5:11 *Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.*

2 Th 3:6 *In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.*

1 John 2:15 *Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*

1 John 2:16 *For everything in the world — the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world. ■*

THE BELIEVER IS TO WALK AS A CHILD OF LIGHT EPHESIANS 05:08–14

Introduction

Two walks through life are available to men. There is the life and walk of darkness or the life and walk of light. There is a world of difference between the two. In fact, a person's eternity is determined by which life and walk he pursues.

- I. Light, not darkness, is the nature of believers (v. 8).
- II. Light bears the things of life — the fruit of the Spirit (v. 9).
- III. Light shows what is acceptable, pleasing (v. 10).
- IV. Light exposes the deeds of darkness (vv. 11-12).
- V. Light reveals and converts everything it touches (v. 13).
- VI. Light awakens the sleeping (v. 14).

I. *Ephesians 05:08 Believer's Nature: Light*

Light, not darkness, is the nature of believers.

1. Before a person is saved, he is not only in darkness, but he is darkness — the very embodiment of darkness. What does this mean? Think for a moment: a person who does not know God is all alone. He may have plenty of people and friends moving about him, but they — everyone of them — will soon die and be gone. In fact, so will he, and he will have died in darkness — never having known God. A person who does not know God is in darkness:
 - => He does not know where he has come from. To him everything is a result of human and natural process. It is the way of the world and of man: we are born and here we are. Man is blind — in darkness about the truth of where he and his world originated.
 - => He does not know why he is on earth — not really. He arises in the morning, goes about his daily affairs, and retires at night. Arises the next morning, goes about his daily affairs, and retires at night. Arises the next morning, and on and on. Where he is heading and why he is here — the inner core of life — is all a mystery. The real purpose, meaning and significance of life are not understood — not really. He lives in darkness as to why he and everyone else are really on earth.
 - => He does not know where he is going — not after death. Is there really a God or not, a heaven or not? How can he know and be absolutely sure? He is in darkness about the future, that inevitable day of death and eternity that rushes ever so rapidly toward every one of us.

This is what is meant about man being in darkness, about his being the very embodiment of darkness. He is wrapped up in darkness: past, present and future. Apart

from God, no man knows the truth: no man knows where he has come from, why he is here or where he is going. His whole life is shadowed and covered, permeated and filled with darkness. He is not walking as light; he is walking as darkness.

Mat 6:23 *“But if your eyes are bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!”*

John 1:5 *The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.*

John 3:19 *This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.*

Rom 13:12 *The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light.*

1 Th 5:4 *But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief.*

2. However, the truth is glorious: the believer was darkness, *but now* he is light *in the Lord*. Jesus Christ said: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life” (Jn. 8:12). It is Christ who brings light to life. He shows us the truth of life, of God, of creation, of death and of destiny. He shows us...

- the beginning and origin of all things
- the purpose, meaning and significance of all things
- the truth of death and eternity

But note: Jesus Christ has not only shown us light; He has made us light. He has changed our nature from darkness to light. The light of life has been immersed into our very nature. We are now the very embodiment of light itself; we shall live eternally. We are the light of the eternal God in the midst of a world of darkness. Therefore, we are to walk as children of light.

Mat 5:14 *“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden.”*

John 1:5 *The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.*

Eph 5:8 *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.*

Phil 2:15 *So that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe.*

Col 1:13 *For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.*

1 Th 5:5 *You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness.*

II. *Ephesians 05:09 Fruit of the Holy Spirit*

Light bears all good things — the fruit of the Spirit. (See *Holy Spirit, Fruit*, Gal. 5:22-23.)

A life that illuminates light will give off three things in particular.

1. Goodness (see *Goodness*, Gal. 5:22-23).
2. Righteousness, (see *Righteousness*, Eph. 5:9).
3. Truth, (see *Truth*, Eph. 5:9).

EPHESIANS 05: 09 RIGHTEOUSNESS (DIKAIOSUNE)

For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth.
Ephesians 05:09

Righteousness means two simple but profound things. It means both to be right and to do right. (See *Righteousness*, Mt. 5:6.)

1. There are those who *stress being righteous* and *neglect doing righteousness*. This leads to two serious errors:
 - a. False security. It causes a person to stress that he is saved and acceptable to God because he has *believed in* Jesus Christ. But he neglects doing good and living as he should. He neglects obeying God and serving man.
 - b. Loose living. It allows one to go out and do pretty much as he desires. He feels secure and comfortable in his *faith in Christ*. He knows that what he does may affect his fellowship with God and other believers, but he thinks his behaviour will not affect his salvation. He thinks that no matter what he does he is still acceptable to God.

The problem with this stress is that it is a false righteousness. Righteousness in the Bible means *being* righteous, but it also means *doing* righteousness. The Bible knows nothing about being righteous without living righteously.

2. There are those who stress *doing righteousness* and *neglect being righteous*. This also leads to two serious errors.
 - a. Self-righteousness and legalism. It causes a person to stress that he is saved and acceptable to God because he does good. He works and behaves morally and keeps certain rules and regulations. He does the things a Christian should do by obeying the main laws of God. But he neglects the basic law: the law of love and acceptance — that God does not love him and accept him because he does good, but because he loves and trusts the righteousness of Christ (see *Righteousness*, Mt. 5:6).
 - b. Being judgemental and fault-finding. A person who stresses that he is righteous (acceptable to God) because he keeps certain laws often judges and finds fault

with others. He feels that rules and regulations can be kept, *he* keeps them. Therefore, anyone who fails to keep them is judged, criticized and censored.

The problem with this stress is that it, too, is a false righteousness. Again, righteousness in the Bible is *being righteous as well as doing righteousness*. The Bible knows nothing of being acceptable to God without *being made righteous in Christ Jesus* (see *Righteousness*, Mt. 5:6; see Rom. 5:1; 2 Cor. 5:21).

Mat 5:20 *“For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.”*

1 Cor 15:34 *Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God — I say this to your shame.*

2 Cor 5:21 *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Eph 6:14 *Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place.*

Phil 1:11 *Filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ — to the glory and praise of God.*

1 Tim 6:11 *But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.*

Titus 2:12-13 *It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ. □*

EPHESIANS 05: 09 TRUTH (ALETHEIA)

For the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth.
Ephesians 05:09

Moral truth, saving truth, working truth, living truth. It is not simply something to be *known*; it is something to be *done* (Jn. 8:31). It is the knowledge and the experience of true reality as opposed to false reality. It is truth in “the inner parts” (see Psa. 51:6; Eph. 5:9). It is diametrically opposed to sham and hypocrisy. It permits no compromise with evil. It even avoids every kind of evil (1 Th. 5:22). It is a regard for truth in every respect: believing it, reverencing it, speaking it, acting it, hoping in it and rejoicing in it. Such truthful behaviour frees one from all the bondages and impediments of life.

John 7:16-17 *Jesus answered, "My teaching is not my own. It comes from him who sent me. If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.*

Phil 3:10 *I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death.*

Col 1:10 *And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in even good work, growing in the knowledge of God.*

Hosea 6:3 *"Let us acknowledge the Lord: let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth."*

God's Word is said to be the truth (Jn. 17:17). and Jesus Christ Himself claimed to be the Truth (Jn. 14:6). To distinguish between the two, God's Word is sometimes said to be the Written Truth or Word, and Jesus Christ is sometimes said to be the Living Truth or Word.

1. The truth sets man free from the shadow of doubt and despair. Man no longer has to grasp and grope about to know the truth, whether it be the truth of God or of his own world. Jesus Christ has revealed the truth: the nature, the meaning and the destiny of all things.

John 1:9, 14 *The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

2 Cor 3:17 *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

2. The truth sets men free from the bondages of sin. Man no longer has to grasp after the power to overcome; nor does he have to struggle against the weight of guilt. The search for deliverance and for the power to conquer, to overcome, to attain and to live is now over. It is all found in Jesus Christ. (See Rom. 6:1f; 8:28-39.)

John 1:12 *Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.*

John 14:6 *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*

Rom 7:23-25 *But I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of*

death? Thanks be to God — through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in the sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Rom 8:6, 15 *The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."*

3. The truth sets man free from the bondage of death. Man no longer has to be subjected to the fear of death. By His death and resurrection Jesus Christ has now conquered death. And in His death and resurrection man now has the most glorious of hopes: he can now live eternally (Heb. 2:14-15).

John 5:24-29 *"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man. Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out — those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned."*

Rom 8:2 *Because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.*

Heb 2:14-15 *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil — and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.*

4. The truth sets man free from the bondage of judgment and hell. The darkness of an unknown future and the apprehension of an impending judgment constantly faces man. At best, man can only hope for annihilation, and he shudders at the thought. At worst, he can expect torture by the gods that be, and he trembles at the possibility. But Jesus Christ has revealed the truth. He Himself has borne the judgment and the punishment of judgment for man.

John 3:16 *"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

Rom 5:6, 8-9 *You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!*

1 Pet 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

1 Pet 3:18 For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit.

5. The truth sets man free to be saved completely. Existence, love, joy, peace, satisfaction, pleasure, hope — nothing has to be incomplete any longer. No good thing ever again has to be denied man. Jesus Christ, the Truth, is able to save man to the uttermost — completely, perfectly, finally and for eternity. All a person has to do is to come to Christ for salvation, for He lives forever to intercede for every man.

Heb 7:25 Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them.

Gal 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Col 2:9-10 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority. □

III. *Ephesians 05:10 Believer Walking in the Light*

Light proves things; it shows what is acceptable, pleasing. What does this mean? As the believer walks in the light...

- he finds out what is pleasing and not pleasing to the Lord.
- he discriminates between what is pleasing and not pleasing to the Lord.
- he shows to the world what is pleasing and not pleasing to the Lord.
- he shows what path to take and what path not to take.
- he shows what a person should do and not do.

Thought 1. Everything the believer does is to be “for the Lord”; that is, he is to set his attention and energy upon pleasing the Lord. He is to strive to will and to do the pleasure of the Lord. He is to struggle to bring his will under control and to control his behaviour in order to fulfil the joy of the Lord. Why? Because the Lord loved and gave Himself for the believer; therefore, the believer is to love and give himself to please the Lord.

Eph 5:10 And find out what pleases the Lord.

1 Th 4:1 Finally, brothers, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more.

1 Th 5:21 Test everything. Hold on to the good.

Heb 11:5 *By faith Enoch was taken from this life, so that he did not experience death; he could not be found, because God had taken him away. For before he was taken, he was commended as one who pleased God.*

Heb 13:16 *And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased.*

1 John 4:1 *Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.*

IV. Ephesians 05:11–12 Light and Deeds of Darkness

Light exposes the deeds of darkness.

1. The charge is clear and forceful: believers are to have no fellowship with the fruitless deeds of darkness. Note that the deeds of darkness are...
 - dark: leaving a man stumbling and groping about in the world, lost and unable to see where he is going.
 - fruitless: bearing no lasting fruit beyond this world when death overtakes him.

The fruitful deeds of darkness are those deeds covered in the previous passage (Eph. 5:3-6) and in the acts of the flesh or sinful nature (Gal. 5:19-21). They lead to death; therefore, the believer is to have no fellowship - no fellowship whatsoever — with the fruitless deeds of darkness.

Acts 2:40 *With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.”*

1 Cor 5:9 *I have written you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people.*

2 Cor 6:14, 17-18 *Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? “Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.” “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.”*

Eph 5:11 *Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.*

2 Th 3:6 *In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.*

1 John 1:5-6 *This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.*

1 John 2:15-16 *Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world — the cravings*

of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does — comes not from the Father but from the world.

2. The believer's task on earth is striking: he is not to fellowship with the deeds of darkness; he is to live in so much light that his life *exposes* (*elegcho*, that is, reproves, rebukes and convicts) people of their sins or dark deeds.

Thought 1. Sin is never to be taken lightly. The very fact that we are charged to expose it is clear evidence. Our task is to reflect so much light that all the works of darkness around us are exposed and expelled. Remember when light appears, the darkness is always extinguished. But if the light leaves or is turned off, the darkness reappears.

Luke 17:3 *So watch yourselves. "If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him."*

Eph 5:11 *Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.*

1 Tim 5:2 *Older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.*

2 Tim 4:2 *Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage — with great patience and careful instruction.*

3. The reason why we should not have fellowship with the dark deeds of the world is this: it is a *shame* to even speak of those things which are done by them in secret. What a rebuke! We are not even to talk about dark deeds! We are not to be sharing conversation about the dark deeds of this world (see Eph. 5:8; Jn. 3:18-20; Jn. 8:12).

Mat 5:37 *"Simply let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,' and your 'No,' 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one."*

Col 4:6 *Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*

2 Tim 1:13 *What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus.*

V. Ephesians 05:13 Light Reveals and Converts

Light reveals and converts everything it touches. Note two things.

1. When light touches something it becomes light. It is lit up and to some degree the object gives off light itself. It is converted and changed. When the light of Jesus Christ touches the life of a person in darkness, that life is changed: it becomes light. The darkness is done away with and eliminated. Note another fact as well: that person begins to touch the lives of those in darkness who surround him.
2. So long as evil is done in secret it thrives, but when it is dragged out of the dark corners and closed rooms into the light, it dies. When a person confronts Christ, his dark deeds are exposed in all their hurt, damage, filth and corruption. We must always remember, this is the very reason many refuse to confront Christ. They prefer their

dark deeds (Jn. 3:20f). But when a man confronts Christ and abandons his dark sins, he becomes “light in the Lord” (Eph. 5:8). He is transformed by the person of Christ. William Barclay points out that this is seen in the *healing* that is found in the rays of the sun. The light of Jesus Christ is just like the rays of the sun. The light of Jesus Christ not only illuminates and reveals, it also cleanses. The light of Jesus Christ is not only a revealing and condemning thing, it is a healing thing as well. (*The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, p. 195f.)

VI. *Ephesians 05:14 Light Awakens the Sleeping*

Light awakens the sleeping, those who are spiritually dead. Most people in the world are as sleeping men when it comes to walking in the light of God. They are living in the darkness of spiritual sleep and spiritual death — ever rushing on to that inevitable day of eternal darkness and death. Note a most unfortunate fact: this passage is being written to believers. Too many professing believers are passing through life just like unbelievers: asleep — living in the darkness of spiritual sleep and spiritual death — fellowshipping with and too often participating in the deeds of darkness. They are unaware and ignorant of the great heritage and promises God has given us in Christ Jesus.

Rom 13:11 *And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.*

1 Cor 15:34 *Come back to your senses as you ought, and stop sinning; for there are some who are ignorant of God — I say this to your shame.*

Eph 5:14 *For it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: “Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”*

Thought 1. Note that the only Source to awakening out of spiritual sleep and death is Jesus Christ and Him alone.

John 1:4 *In him was life, and that life was the light of men.*

John 8:12 *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”*

John 12:35 *Then Jesus told them, “You are going to have the light just a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, before darkness overtakes you. The man who walks in the dark does not know where he is going.”*

John 12:46 *“I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in me should stay in darkness.”*

2 Cor 4:6 *For God, who said, “Let light shine out of darkness,” made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*

1 John 2:8 *Yet I am writing you a new command; its truth is seen in him and you, because the darkness is passing and the true light is already shining. ■*

THE BELIEVER IS TO WALK CAREFULLY AND STRICTLY

EPHESIANS 05: 15–21

Introduction

How the believer walks day by day throughout life is crucial to the cause of Christ and to the welfare of society. He either contributes to the building up of society or to the tearing down of society. He either carries the message of life to the world or he carries the message of silence and death. For this reason, it is important that the believer walk carefully and strictly throughout life.

- I. By looking around and watching every step (v. 15).
- II. By redeeming the time (v. 16).
- III. By understanding the Lord's will (v. 17).
- IV. By rejecting drunkenness (v. 18).
- V. By being filled with the Spirit (vv. 18-21).

I. *Ephesians 05:15 The Believer's Life*

Walk carefully and strictly by looking around and watching every step. Life is a walk, a path that we trod every day. When we arise in the morning, we begin to walk about. God expects us to walk very carefully (*akribos*), that is, carefully and accurately — exactly as we should. Note: there are two kinds of persons who walk throughout life.

1. There is the unwise person: this simply means the person who is unthinking, thoughtless, careless, uncaring and worldly minded.

The unwise is the person who gives little thought about where he should go and where he should not go. He just arises in the morning and goes to work or about his daily routine with little thought about God and about what happens beyond this life. If he makes a mistake here and there, it does not matter that much, not to him. Making mistakes is just the way of all human life.

He thinks that he will be acceptable to whatever God there is, if he just lives a life..

- that is fairly decent, honourable and useful
- that pays its dues to God here and there

The unwise person is not concerned about watching every step and being alert to every temptation and pitfall in life. He could care less about struggling and being exact and strict in life. Living a careful, accurate, strict, disciplined, controlled life is not that important to him.

2. There is the wise person: the thinking, thoughtful, careful, caring, spiritually minded person. This is the person on mission. He knows God personally and he knows that he
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is on earth to live a righteous and godly life and to bear testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, when he arises in the morning and goes to work or about his daily affairs, he walks in the presence and praise of God. His thoughts are upon God all day long. Mistakes matter to him. It all matters — the daily reports and talk about man's...

- sin
- cursing
- off95-coloured jokes
- obesity
- murder
- divorce
- immorality
- suffering
- drunkenness
- drugs
- war
- selfishness
- hunger
- shame
- power struggle
- neglect
- evil
- hate

The wise man is not only concerned about every step of life, but he struggles to watch every step — to make sure that he walks throughout life exact, strict, disciplined and controlled. He knows that the only answer to the evil and problems of life is Jesus Christ and His righteousness.

Gal 5:16 So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

Eph 4:1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

Eph 5:15 Be very careful, then, how you live — not as unwise but as wise.

Col 2:6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him.

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

1 John 2:6 Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.

II. *Ephesians 05:16 Redeeming Time*

Walk carefully and strictly by redeeming the time. The idea is not to buy time. Time is the gift of God; a man has time. What he is to do is to use his time to buy things of value. He is to redeem time, to turn his time in, for things of value. This means two things.

1. A person is to use his time wisely; he is not to waste time. Time is a gift of God. A man does not have to redeem or *buy* time; he already has time. When he is born into the world, he is born into time. Time exists — it is here with or without us. We do not have to do a single thing to redeem it. What we have to do is to use time — use it wisely — use it to do the best that we can.

Thought 1. The choice is ours. We can sit and waste away hours and engage in activity and conversation that is of little, if any, value or worth; or we can use time wisely, keeping our thoughts and hands busy...

- in our profession and work, contributing to the good of society.

- in our worship, and service for Christ — all day long — joining with others of God’s church in witnessing and ministering to the lost and needful of our communities and cities.
 - in meeting the needs of a world reeling under the weight of desperate masses gripped in suffering, sin and death.
2. A person is to use his time by making the most of the opportunities that arise throughout the day. This, too, is what redeeming the time means. The believer is to redeem the opportunities...
- to live righteously and godly.
 - to witness and share Christ.
 - to be diligent on the job.
 - to set an example of commitment and discipline with work, at home and at play.
 - to be faithful to God and family.
 - to speak up for Christ and righteousness.
 - To pray instead of allowing time to be wasted.

(If a believer commits himself to pray as Christ and Paul prayed, he will find that he has no time to waste.)

Note why we are to redeem the time: because the days are evil. This refers to all the evil that confronts the believer as he walks day by day — so much evil that he must stay alert to keep from falling and failing. He must be alert to live righteously and to bear testimony to Christ. The evil can range from mild temptations over to persecutions, from small money problems to a world economic collapse, from a minor family argument to war. The evil of the world is ever before us — small and great. The task of the believer is to redeem the time — to make the most use of what time he has. The opportunity will soon pass because the days are evil.

- => The opportunity to witness will pass.
- => The opportunity to show diligence will pass.
- => The opportunity to speak up will pass.
- => The opportunity to love will pass.
- => The opportunity to minister will pass.
- => The opportunity to work hard will pass.
- => The opportunity to pray will pass.
- => The opportunity to give will pass.

Thought 1. How many of us waste time? So much time is wasted by so many...

- by not really being efficient
- by watching television
- by lack of diligence at work
- by unprofitable activity on weekends
- by what we read
- in restaurants
- in the evenings at home

Each of us needs to take a moment and think through where we waste so much time and correct it. More than ever we need to give ourselves to make a significant contribution to our work and society, to our church and community, to living righteously and godly, to witnessing and helping a world of people who are discouraged and lonely, hungry and cold, hurting and suffering, needy and helpless — all lost in sin — all without the knowledge of Christ and of eternal life. The call of the hour is to redeem the time, to make the most of every opportunity.

1 Cor 7:29-31 What I mean, brothers, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none; those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

2 Cor 10:5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Phil 4:8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things.

Eph 5:15-16 Be very careful, then, how you live — not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

Col 4:5 Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders: make the most of every opportunity.

Psa 90:12 Teach us to number our days aright, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

Eccl 12:1 Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, “I find no pleasure in them.”

III. Ephesians 05:17 Understand the Will of Jesus Christ

Walk carefully and strictly by understanding the Lord’s will. Note how both the foolish man and the wise man are defined in this verse.

=> The foolish man is a man who does not understand the will of the Lord.

=> The wise man is a man who does understand the will of the Lord.

The word *understand* (suniemi) means to grasp, perceive, see with the mind and comprehend. As stated in the previous verse, the days are evil — full of all sorts of evil.

The believer must understand what God's will is in order to conquer the evil. If he does not, then he is as a fool and acting unwisely. How can a person know what the will of the Lord is?

⇒ By knowing the Word of God — by knowing it so well that he can apply it to the situations that confront him every day.

John 8:31-32 *To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

John 17:17 *"Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth."*

2 Tim 2:15 *Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.*

1 Pet 1:22 *Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart.*

Psa 40:8 *"I desire to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart."*

Psa 119:9 *How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word.*

Psa 119:11 *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*

⇒ By being sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit.

John 14:26 *"But the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."*

John 16:7-8 *"But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment."*

John 16:13-14 *"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you."*

Rom 8:4-5 *In order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit. Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires.*

Rom 8:13-14 *For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.*

Psa 143:10 *Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; may your good Spirit lead me on level ground.*

IV. Ephesians 05:18 Drunkenness

Walk carefully and strictly by not becoming drunk with wine. Drunkenness means to be intoxicated with drink or drugs (see Lk. 21:34; Rom. 13:13; Gal. 5:21; see Prov. 20:1; Isa. 28:7; Ezk. 23:32; 39:19). The word “debauchery” is excessive behaviour. The Greek means...

- the dissipation and wasting away of the body
- uncontrolled behaviour
- rioting, wild and outrageous behaviour and conduct

Drunkenness is an act of the flesh (sinful nature) and it often leads to other acts of the flesh or sinful nature: partying, loose behaviour, immodest clothing, exposure of the body, sexual thoughts, immorality, wicked or evil and unjust behaviour or violence and physical abuse, notions of grandeur, strength or power. The Bible says several things about drunkenness.

1. Drunkenness excludes a person from the kingdom of God.

1 Cor 6:10 Nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

Gal 5:21 And envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

2. Drunkenness leads to other forms of misbehaviour and sin.

Luke 15:13 “Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living.”

Eph 5:18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

3. Drunkenness makes it impossible to grasp the fleeting opportunities of time.

Eph 5:16-18 Making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the spirit.

V. Ephesians 05:18–21 Infilling of the Holy Spirit

Walk carefully and strictly by being filled with the Spirit. This command is in the present tense which means that the believer is to be constantly filled with the Spirit; he is to keep on being filled. The Holy Spirit is to infill the believer continuously (Eph. 5:18; see Acts 2:4; 4:29-31). The Spirit’s filling is the personal manifestation of Christ to the believer who walks obediently day by day (Jn. 14:21). It is a consciousness of His presence, of His leadership — moment by moment. This consciousness is the believer’s privilege. But the Spirit’s filling is not an automatic experience. The responsibility of being filled with the Spirit rests upon the shoulders of the believer. He is filled only as he walks obediently to Christ (see Acts 2:1-4).

In understanding the infilling of the Spirit, it is helpful to review what the Lord had to say about the manifestations or disclosures of the Spirit in the Gospel of John.

John 14:21-22 “Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.” Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, “But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?”

Note that the Holy Spirit is the very *special manifestation* of Christ within the believer. Apparently, this refers to very special manifestations of the Lord to the heart of the believer, those very special times when there is a deep consciousness of love between the Lord and His dear follower (see Jn. 14:21). This is bound to be what Christ means, for He has already spoken about His personal presence within the believer (Jn. 14:18-20). When believers go through terrible trials and severe crises, God knows and He loves and cares; so He moves to meet the need of His dear children. He moves within the believer’s heart, manifesting His presence and giving a deep sense of His love and care, helping and giving confidence, forgiveness and assurance — giving whatever the believer needs. The depth of the experience and the intensity of *the special manifestation* depends upon the need of the believer. God knows and loves His dear child perfectly, so He gives whatever experience and depth of emotion are needed to meet the need of His child. We must always remember that God loves each one of us so much He will do whatever is needed...

- to lift us up
- to strengthen us
- to conform us to the image of His dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ

Note that the *special manifestations* of the Lord’s presence are given only to the believer who does two things.

=> The believer who receives the commandments of Christ. To have the commandments of Christ means that the believer has searched the commandments of Jesus Christ. He has them in his heart, knows them and has made them his own (Jn. 14:21-22 above; see Psa. 119:11).

=> The believer who keeps the commandments of Jesus.

The believer who does these two things shows that he truly loves the Lord Jesus. And it is he who loves and obeys the Lord Jesus who receives the very special manifestations and infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Note an important fact: the special manifestation is questioned. Judas asked the question for the first time, but the special manifestation of Christ’s presence has been questioned and doubted by thousands ever since. Judas was thinking like all men think — in terms of a physical manifestation, a visible appearance.

The word *show* (phanerooo; emphanizo) means unveiling or revelation. It suggests that a new thing has come to light; that something never known by man before is made known. Some mystery has now been revealed. It is something that cannot be discovered by man's reason or wisdom. It is a mystery that is hidden from man and beyond his grasp. In Jn. 14:21-22 it means that Jesus' presence is revealed (brought to light), illuminated, manifested and quickened in the life of the believer. It means that He *shows* Himself to His disciples in a very special way. He discloses His person, His nature, His goodness. He illuminates Himself *within* their hearts and lives. He gives a very special consciousness within their souls. (See Jn. 14:21-22; Acts 2:1-4.)

John 7:38-39 *“Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.*

Acts 2:4 *All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.*

Acts 13:52 *And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit.*

Acts 4:31 *After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly.*

Eph 5:18 *Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.*

Now, note the three traits of a Spirit-filled person.

1. A Spirit-filled person has a singing spirit. This is in contrast to the drunken person. The mention of singing is the picture of joy and happiness. The worldly person often seeks joy and happiness in drink and partying. This is not to be the case with the true believer. He is to seek his joy and happiness by being filled with the Spirit of God and by singing to himself. Note a crucial point: singing to oneself helps a person to experience the fullness of the Spirit. What do we sing? God tells us:
 - => *Psalms*: the psalms of the Old Testament. We need to learn them — yes, by memory — so that we can sing them. Think how victoriously we could walk through life if we knew the Psalms.
 - => *Hymns*: the great hymns of the church. Again we must learn them.
 - => *Spiritual Songs*: F.F. Bruce suggests that these may refer to songs being made up by the person as he walks along singing praise to the Lord throughout the day (*The Epistle to the Ephesians*, p. 111). We have all experienced walking along making melody in our hearts to the Lord; therefore, his suggestion makes sense.
 - => It is certainly a good practice.

1 Cor 14:15 *So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind.*

Eph 5:19 *Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord.*

James 5:13 *Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise.*

Psa 81:1 *Sing for joy to God our strength; shout aloud to the God of Jacob!*

Psa 95:1 *Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.*

2. A Spirit-filled person has a thankful spirit. Note the words “always” and “for everything.” Our lives are in God’s hands. He guides and directs us through everything. Therefore, we can thank Him for everything — no matter what the things are. He controls all. Giving thanks as we walk along throughout the day — always giving thanks — helps us to experience the fullness of God’s Spirit.

Phil 4:6 *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

Col 3:17 *And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

1 Th 5:18 *Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.*

1 Chr 16:8 *Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done.*

3. A Spirit-filled person has a submissive and respectful spirit. A Spirit-filled person does not have a spirit of criticism, dissension, envy, divisiveness or selfishness. He has a spirit of submissiveness. The same is true of churches: a Spirit-filled church has a body of people who are submissive — going out of their way to minister and serve each other. There is no dissension or divisiveness, no envy or selfishness among its people. In the fear of God, they submit to each other before they break the fullness of God’s Spirit.

Mat 18:4 *“Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”*

Rom 12:3 *For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.*

1 Cor 16:16 *To submit to such as these and to everyone who joins in the work, and labours at it.*

Phil 2:3-4 *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

Heb 13:17 *Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.*

1 Pet 5:5 *Young men, in the same way be submissive to those who are older. All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” ■*