



EPHESIANS 5:1-20

IN HIM  
I AM

# EPHESIANS

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**Know:** Read Ephesians 5:1-20

**Note:** Read slowly, carefully marking keywords- continue to mark the words from previous lessons—Mark keywords with a different color or with a symbol to differentiate them.

- Imitators of God
- Walk in love
- Saints
- Underline negative words: filthiness and silly talk, etc.
- Empty words
- Light/dark
- Unwise/ wise
- Give thanks

**Observation:** Study notes below for context. Journal your thoughts or questions.

**What:** How are you being wise with the time God has given you?

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***“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.***

We become what we love. When we know we are securely loved, we rest in that love. We become self-protective when we fear someone will punish us. Having fear in a relationship causes us not to trust that person, so we do things that eventually cause the relationship to self-destruct. Fear has to do with punishment.

There is no fear in love. God is perfect love.

When we have awakened to the love of God, a love that moves toward us when we sin, a love that lifts us and empowers us, a love that has no manipulation, control, or anger in it, we live at rest because we know that we are safe in Him. That safety empowers us to live the way we have been loved.

***“There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love.” (1 John 4:18)***

***3 But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; 4 and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.”***

Again, Paul clarifies ways that no longer befit a son/ daughter of God; if it is not in God's character, it should not be ours. Sometimes, when we do stupid things and fall back into these "old man" ways, we feel shame and we hide.

Adam and Eve did the same thing. They covered over their shame with fig leaves. The fig leaves were their attempt to make themselves right, but it did nothing but cause them to hide from the One who moved toward them.

God does not shame us when we sin. He moves toward us; when we move past our shame and self-defenses and allow ourselves to be embraced by Him, we see how foolish we have been for believing that the old way could give us what we thought we needed.

Making excuses for sin or returning to any of the lifestyles Paul warns against changes us. It changes how we view God. God never changes His mind about us. We change how we view God, and His love loses its appeal when we believe sin can fulfill any part of us we feel lacks something.

If I want to do something that makes me feel good and think we love God, what is happening is that we love ourselves more, and it actually creates distance from God- the distance is always on our end.

Grace empowers us to live *from* love. How Jesus is is how we should look, but it should be effortless, not work. It only works when we are working to be righteous on our strength. God is not interested in taking joy from us. When we lay down our desires, we lose nothing except the thing that controls us. We gain a thousand times more than what we laid down.

When my son Joshua was a little boy, he used to have fits of rage. He would wake up in the middle of the night angry, scream, and wake up the house. Speaking to him gently only caused him to get angrier; holding him down would give us black eyes. When he was fully awake, we would ask him why he would get so angry. He truly did not know. One day, when he was about five years old, he woke up in one of his fits, and I went into his room and said, "Josh! This is not who you are. You are a son of God. You are kind, gentle, and full of joy! Act like it." He immediately stopped his fit and went back to sleep. He's never had a fit of rage again.

Acting in ways that are out of character with our "new man" is not who we are.

If you find yourself doing something that you know is out of character, remind yourself of who you are: righteous, holy, trustworthy, full of joy, etc.

**Sarcasm, being mean, slander, and gossip** are all rooted in witchcraft because it is done at the expense of the one they speak against.

Proverbs 26:28 says, “A lying tongue hates those it crushes, and a flattering tongue works ruin.” Gossip separates close friends. Gossip shares secrets meant to be protected by a true friend.

Slander ruins reputations because it plants seeds of distrust, disunity, and the soil for lies to be believed within another. God called the sin of witchcraft because it divides the church, divides friends, and is the work of the devil.

Gratitude fills your heart with thankfulness; it chases away the false sense of lack that produces speech of destruction.

***“5 For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.”***

The book of Genesis tells us the story of two brothers, Esau and Jacob. As the older brother, Esau was set to inherit all of his father’s wealth. One day, his younger brother bribed him. If Esau gave Jacob his birthright, he would be fed a meal to satisfy his hunger. Therefore, Esau gave it up and abdicated his inheritance to his brother.

Esau despised his birthright by putting his need of the moment before what was intended for him. Selfishness becomes the stumbling block that causes us to despise what is our inheritance. God never disqualifies us from our spiritual inheritance. We reject the treasure through selfishness.

Cherish the inheritance given to you.

You will never stop being a son/ daughter of God. God will never stop being a Father. Even if we have not cherished our inheritance, God desires to care for it until we are mature enough to handle the treasure well.

***“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;”***

The “sons of disobedience” Paul speaks of were those who, in that day, were teaching the old system of the law. Before the temple was destroyed in AD 70, the Jews were still sacrificing animals and performing Jewish traditions for righteousness.

For a Jew to stop doing those things was considered heretical. The gospel was so anti-law that it seemed too good to be true. Many claimed to be of Christ but still performed works of righteousness according to the Mosaic law.

To teach Jesus plus something felt safer, so there became a teaching that minimized the blood of Jesus. To teach a mixture is to cause people to stumble because it devalues grace.

A mixture teaches that it is Jesus, plus: reading your Bible, praying, fasting, giving, etc. It is maintaining YOUR righteousness based on YOUR performance.

Grace is Jesus plus nothing. Your righteousness is based on Jesus' performance; you can do nothing to improve it. He is holding on to you, not the other way around. Your Bible reading, fasting and praying, and giving are byproducts of intimacy with the Father and an overflow of the love you have received. It is to move your unbelief out of the way and be saturated like God so that the world never looks appealing again.

*8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light 9 (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), 10 trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. 11 Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; 12 for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. 13 But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. 14 For this reason it says,*

*“Awake, sleeper,  
And arise from the dead,  
And Christ will shine on you.”*

**Walk as children of light:**

What is the fastest thing in the world?

It is darkness fleeing when light enters the room.

Jesus is the light of the world. Now that you are joined to Him, You are the light of the world.

Where there was darkness, light cast it away. Where there was unholiness, holiness made it clean. Where there was sin, now there is purity. Where once you were unrighteous, now you are righteous.

***15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil. 17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;***”

Paul admonishes that our mouths be filled with life, with songs, praise, and encouragement instead of wine, gossip, slander, and foolish things. Make the most of your time by being intentional with what you have.

Before my grandmother, Stella Mea King, died, I went to visit her in the hospital. She had a stroke that crippled her. She could not communicate her heart to me, so I took the time to thank her for her investment in me. I remember telling her that I wanted to be just like her and that I would write her story one day. She became agitated and tried to tell me something urgent to her.

With much effort, she mumbled, “You be who God made you to be. Write your own story.”

My grandmother was an incredible woman in my eyes, but she wanted her ceiling to be my floor.

Sometimes we can wear ourselves out trying to impress God and others, but God wants us to take what He has given and cherish it.

Are you a Mother of small children? Don’t spend your life regretting the time you feel you are losing, changing diapers, and breaking up little scuffles. Thank God for those babies and sit with them; sing to them, read, tickle them, and show them Jesus through your love.

Are you a Father overwhelmed by the responsibility of providing and protecting your family? Don’t let fear cause you to drown your family in oppressive control. Be present. Listen to your children and wife without offering to fix their lives.

Are you a child who is uncertain of your future? Each choice you make is an experience for tomorrow. God will always honor your choice because He does not invade our will. Choices that you make for your life based on peace are never a waste.

Are you an empty nester? God will multiply the seasons of waiting throughout your life. Your experience is invaluable to the younger generations. Don’t look at them with sorrow, look at them with hope and give them what they long for- your wisdom.