

# Paul's Letter to the *EPHESIANS*

## CHAPTERS 4, 5, 6: *God's Plan for the Church* (the Body of Christ) (CONTINUED)

### Principles for Faithfulness (4:17 – 5:20) (concluded)

**5:1-2** Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children 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. The Christian life is designed to transform a believer <sup>Romans 8:29, 2 Corinthians 3:18</sup> (through the power of the Holy Spirit <sup>Ephesians 3:16</sup>) into godly living <sup>Leviticus 19:2, Matthew 5:48</sup>. The key in a Christian's life is to love others (a command of Jesus <sup>John 13:34-35</sup>) with Christians loving because Christ loved man first <sup>1 John 4:19</sup>. Love involves both emotion and action <sup>1 John 3:18</sup>, modeled by Jesus <sup>1 John 3:16</sup>, chiefly when He chose to be the sacrifice for all mankind <sup>Matthew 20:28, Romans 5:6-8, Galatians 1:3-5</sup>. Sacrifices offered in love are pleasing to God <sup>Genesis 8:20-21, Leviticus 1:1-17, 2:1-16, 3:1-17, Romans 12:1</sup>.

Being children of God <sup>Deuteronomy 14:1, Romans 8:13-17, 1 John 3:1-2</sup> is unique to Judaism/Christianity, and emphasizes God's love for and desire for fellowship with His saints <sup>John 17:23, 1 Corinthians 1:9</sup>.

The first 3 sacrifices in Leviticus were each "an aroma pleasing to the Lord" <sup>Leviticus 1:9, 2:2, 3:5</sup>:

- ✧ Burnt offering <sup>Leviticus 1:1-17</sup> depicted the perfection of Christ
- ✧ Grain offering <sup>Leviticus 2:1-16</sup> depicted Christ's complete devotion to His Father
- ✧ Peace offering <sup>Leviticus 3:1-17</sup> depicted Christ's peacemaking between God and man

**5:3** But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed <sup>1</sup>, because these are improper for God's holy people. [ <sup>1</sup>*pleonexia*: covetousness]

The sin of "sexual immorality" is in contrast to the behavior God expects from His children: holiness & love <sup>1 Peter 1:15-16, 1 Corinthians 13</sup>. Immorality is a sin of body and mind <sup>Matthew 5:27-28</sup>, and must be "put to death" in the lives of the followers of Jesus <sup>Colossians 3:5-10</sup>.

Immorality is a physical <sup>Exodus 20:14, Deuteronomy 5:18</sup> & a spiritual <sup>Deuteronomy 4:23-24, 2 Corinthians 11:3</sup> sin.

**5:4** Nor should there be obscenity, (foolish talk) <sup>2</sup> or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. [ <sup>2</sup>*morologia*: foolish speech (lit)] Filthy talk is an abomination to God <sup>Psalms 34:13</sup>, and has a great effect on a person <sup>James 3:5-6</sup>, but sadly, fallen man uses his tongue to both "praise" & "curse" <sup>James 3:9-10</sup>. A saint's speech should be "helpful for building others according to their needs" <sup>Ephesians 4:29</sup> or for always 'rejoicing, praying, giving thanks' <sup>1 Thessalonians 5:16-18</sup>.

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**5:5** For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure<sup>3</sup> or greedy person – such a man is an idolater<sup>4</sup> – has any inheritance in the kingdom<sup>5</sup> of Christ and of God. [<sup>3</sup>*akathartos*: unclean (lit),<sup>4</sup>*eldololatrias*: idol servant (lit),<sup>5</sup>*basileia*: royal dominion] A lifestyle of sin is an indication that a person is unsaved<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Galatians 5:17-21, Revelation 21:8, and will not receive an inheritance<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 that is to be distributed in the kingdom of God<sup>1</sup> Luke 17:20-21.

**5:6-7** Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with them. Believers sin<sup>1</sup> Romans 7:14-25, but no one should offer the assurance of salvation to anyone who has a life pattern of sin and disobedience<sup>1</sup> Ephesians 2:1-3. Christians should be in the world, but not of the world<sup>1</sup> John 17:15-16. Saints will never deceive<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah 29:8-9, Mark 13:5-6. Deception is a tool of the devil<sup>1</sup> Revelation 20:7-10, as well as the demons<sup>1</sup> 1 Timothy 4:1, and will inevitably lead to the wrath of God<sup>1</sup> Romans 1:18. Genuine Christians must never become "yoked together with unbelievers"<sup>1</sup> 2 Corinthians 6:14-18, because if they do, they dishonor the name of Jesus Christ<sup>1</sup> Exodus 20:7.

**5:8-10** For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness<sup>6</sup> and truth<sup>7</sup>) and find out what pleases<sup>8</sup> the Lord. [<sup>6</sup>*dikaiosune*: conformity with the higher authority,<sup>7</sup>*aletheia*: reality pertaining to an appearance,<sup>8</sup>*euarestos*: well pleasing (lit)] Darkness describes the character of a life that is void of truth<sup>1</sup> 1 John 1:5-7. The unsaved love the darkness and hate the light<sup>1</sup> John 3:19-21 and are being led by the power of darkness<sup>1</sup> Luke 22:53, Colossians 1:13, as they head toward eternal darkness<sup>1</sup> Matthew 8:12, 2 Peter 2:17. However, Jesus, who is "the light"<sup>1</sup> John 8:12, wishes to deliver men from darkness to light<sup>1</sup> 2 Samuel 22:29, 1 Peter 2:9, so they can be pleasing to God<sup>1</sup> Romans 12:1-2. Those living in darkness will produce "bad fruit"; those in light: "good fruit"<sup>1</sup> Matthew 7:16-20.

**5:11** (Have)<sup>9</sup> nothing (to do with)<sup>9</sup> the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. [<sup>9</sup>*sugkoinoneo*: to partake together (lit)] Christians must live in righteousness and purity, having nothing to do with those claiming to be believers, but are living in sin<sup>1</sup> 1 Corinthians 5:9-11. It is the Christian's responsibility to expose darkness, especially in the church<sup>1</sup> Matthew 18:15-20.

**5:12-14** For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed<sup>10</sup> by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise<sup>11</sup> from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."  
[<sup>10</sup>*phaneroo*: made known,<sup>11</sup>*anistemi*: to stand again (lit)] Merely talking about despicable acts can be morally and spiritually harmful. It is better to expose darkness by claiming the pure truth in the illuminating light of the Word of God<sup>1</sup> Proverbs 6:23, Ephesians 6:17, Hebrews 4:12.

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Paul extended an invitation for salvation ("wake up" <sup>Romans 13:11</sup>) to the unsaved <sup>James 4:4-10</sup> by quoting Isaiah <sup>Isaiah 60:1</sup>. The dead must "hear the voice" of Jesus Christ <sup>John 5:25</sup> and rise to live.

**5:15-16 Be very careful, then, how you live – not as unwise but as wise <sup>12</sup>, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil <sup>13</sup>.** [ <sup>12</sup>*sophos*: watchmen, <sup>13</sup>*poneros*: moral/spiritual evil] Careful actions come from preparation <sup>Ezra 7:10</sup> and thought <sup>Philippians 4:8</sup>. To live morally and spiritually is to live wisely <sup>Psalms 1:1-6</sup>, but the fool cannot comprehend truth <sup>1 Corinthians 2:14</sup>, rejects God's Law <sup>Proverbs 1:7</sup> and even denies God exists <sup>Psalms 14:1</sup>. The follower of Christ must use every opportunity <sup>Colossians 4:5, 1 Peter 1:17</sup>, because time/life is short <sup>Psalms 39:4-5, James 4:14</sup>.

**5:17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand <sup>14</sup> what the Lord's will is.** [ <sup>14</sup>*sunieimi*: to put together (lit)] Knowing God's will for life is the heart of wisdom <sup>Romans 12:2, Colossians 1:9-12</sup>.

Christians often struggle with knowing God's will for their lives. In general, Paul taught the best way for saints to know God's will is by being "living sacrifices" <sup>Romans 12:1-2</sup>. However, the Bible reveals specific aspects of His will: people are to be saved <sup>1 Timothy 2:1-4</sup>, Spirit-filled <sup>v.18</sup>, sanctified <sup>1 Thessalonians 4:3</sup>, submissive <sup>1 Peter 2:13-15</sup>, joyful/prayerful/thankful <sup>1 Thessalonians 5:16-18</sup>.

**5:18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery <sup>15</sup>. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.**

[ <sup>15</sup>*asotia*: extravagant squandering to an extreme] Scripture consistently condemns all drunkenness <sup>Proverbs 23:29-35, 1 Corinthians 5:11</sup>, but Paul may have been referring to pagan rituals involving the "cup of demons" <sup>1 Corinthians 10:18-21</sup>. The Lord would rather His followers not be under the control of wine (alcohol) <sup>Isaiah 28:7-8</sup>, but instead His desire is for them to be filled with the Holy Spirit <sup>Luke 4:1, Galatians 5:16-23</sup> through the power of the Word <sup>Colossians 3:16</sup>.

The ministries of the Holy Spirit are: (1) baptism <sup>1 Corinthians 12:12-13</sup>, (2) indwelling <sup>John 14:15-20</sup>, (3) teaching <sup>John 14:25-26</sup>, (4) sealing/security <sup>Ephesians 1:11-14</sup> and (5) filling <sup>Ephesians 3:14-19</sup>.

People in the Bible who were "filled with (controlled by) the Spirit" were always walking close to God: Bezalel <sup>Exodus 35:30-33</sup>; Joshua <sup>Deuteronomy 34:9</sup>; Micah <sup>Micah 3:8</sup>; John the Baptist <sup>Luke 1:11-17</sup>; Elizabeth <sup>Luke 1:41</sup>; Zechariah <sup>Luke 1:67</sup>; the apostles <sup>Acts 2:1-4</sup>; Peter <sup>Acts 4:8</sup>, Peter, John & friends <sup>Acts 4:31</sup>; and Saul/Paul <sup>Acts 9:17, 13:52</sup>.

**5:19-20 Speak to one another with psalms <sup>16</sup>, hymns <sup>17</sup> and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.** [ <sup>16</sup>*psalmos*: songs sung with musical accompaniment, <sup>17</sup>*hymnos*: songs in honor of God] God, through Paul, encourages His followers to communicate with others publicly <sup>Hebrews 2:12</sup> and privately using music <sup>Psalms 27:6, Acts 16:25</sup>. These acts of praise <sup>Psalms 34:1</sup> and worship <sup>Revelation 15:4</sup> should always be offered 'in His name' <sup>Colossians 3:17</sup> and accompanied by an attitude of gratitude <sup>Psalms 95:2, 2 Corinthians 4:15, Colossians 2:6-7, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18</sup>.

Please forward questions/comments about these notes to ron price, ron@hopeinchristnm.com, 505-294-4743.