

1
Rules for Christian Living
Eph 5:1-2
Pastor C.E. Bowden

Text: Eph. 5:1–2 “Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.”

Intro: Paul continues the theme started in **Chapter 4:1** “Walk/live worthy”. The word translated “walk/live” is the Greek περιπατέω peripateō meaning to walk about, live life publicly; it is daily conduct. This theme is picked up here in **Chapter 5**.

—**Eph. 5:2** “And walk in love”—love is the overall guiding principle for all of Christian living (**1Cor 13**).

—**Eph. 5:8** “Walk as children of light”—the guiding principle is the fruit of the Spirit—**Eph. 5:9** “for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.” (**Gal. 5:22-23**)

—**Eph. 5:15** “walk circumspectly/carefully”—the guiding principle is Godly wisdom—**Eph. 5:15** “not as fools but as wise”. The Greek word translated “circumspectly” (KJV), very careful (NIV most modern translations) is ἀκριβῶς akribōs means a norm or standard, involving both detail and completeness.

—**Imitate God** (**5:1**)

—**Eph. 5:1** “Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.”—Children grow up and model their parents, both good and bad traits.

—The adjective added to the word “children” is ἀγαπητός agapētos meaning “loving”, we love and respect our Father God, the natural desire is to be just like Him.

—John writes “God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God.” (**1John 4:16**)—The main way we understand God’s love is in redemption or salvation.

—**Rom. 5:8** “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

—As God is love, so believers should be people who “walk/live” in love—the model of love is Jesus—“as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us,”

—The word “**given**” (παράδιδωμι paradidōmi) here means to hand over, to deliver up—**John 10:18** “No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.”

—Paul adds that it Jesus’ giving of His life was a “**fragrant**”—“**an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.**” (**Eph. 5:2**)

—The first time “**smell**” was associated with the sacrifice was **Gen. 8:21** “And the LORD **smelled a soothing aroma**. Then the LORD said in His heart, “I will never again curse the ground for man’s sake” (**Lev. 26:31** “**smell**” is used in the negative).

—The Hebrew word translated “**soothing/pleasing**” (נִיְהוֹאֵה nîhōah) means to quiet or give rest; God’s anger at human sin was satisfied.

—The self-giving of Jesus’ life was pleasing to the Father and accepted as a means of reconciliation; Jesus, the Son of God, was the only One who could provide the eternally pleasing sacrifice.

—**What does a life walking in love look like?**

—Paul describes “**walking**” in **negative terms**; given the culture of Ephesus that is understandable.

—**Refusing to live a life of self-gratification**—**Eph. 5:3** “Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you.” (NLT-SE)

—The Greek word πορνεία porneia is translated “**sexual immorality**”.

—“**Immorality**” (ἀκαθαρσία akatharsia) anything impure or immoral.

—The third behavior is “**covetousness/greed**” (πλεονεξία pleonexia) which willingness to do anything to get more.

—Paul adds “**let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints**,” (**Eph. 5:3**); literally this means not to give these elements a name to describe such behaviors.

—Paul is appalled that it openly existed in the Corinthian Church—**1Cor. 5:1** “It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality **among you**, and

3
Rules for Christian Living
Eph 5:1-2
Pastor C.E. Bowden

such sexual immorality as is not even named among the Gentiles—that a man has his father’s wife!”

—There should not be a hint of such activity in the believing community.

—**Refusing to speak crude words**— *Eph. 5:4* “neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.”

—The NLT is more clear—“**Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes**” (*Eph. 5:4 NLT*).

—Such talk reveals what is in the heart; Jesus said—*Matt. 15:11* “Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but **what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man.**”

—The same mouth that confesses the Lordship of Jesus, cannot speak the filth of the world—“**Instead, let there be thankfulness to God.**” (*Eph 5:4*)

—Then Paul adds this warning—“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.” (*Eph. 5:5 NIV*)

—John makes it clear that such people will not be in the New Jerusalem—*Rev. 22:15* “But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.”

—*Eph. 5:6* “Let no one deceive (literally **seduce**) you with empty words, for because of such things God’s wrath comes on those who are disobedient.”

—Not only did the Judaizers try to bring Gentile Christians under the Law, but many in the Church taught that Christian freedom from the Law was license to indulge in the darkness of the world around them.

—God’s wrath is on its way against the immorality of those “**who are disobedient**”; those who will not receive, believe or be transformed by the Gospel.

—**Walk/live as Children of the light**—*Eph. 5:8* “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.”

Rules for Christian Living
Eph 5:1-2
Pastor C.E. Bowden

—John writes in his Gospel—**3:19** “And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and **men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.**”

—“**Darkness**” means the immoral godless culture; this was the world the first century Church was birthed in.

—Paul earlier described this as the way we were before salvation—**Eph. 2:2–3** “in which you once **walked according to the course of this world**, according to **the prince of the power of the air**, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in **the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind**, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.”

—We are not those people anymore, we are called to “**Walk as Children of the light**”.

—Which means that the Holy Spirit is creating His “**fruit**” in our lives—**Eph. 5:9** “(for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),”

—**Walk/live circumspectly (very carefully)**—**Eph. 5:15–16** “See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

—Live the life of a Christian with distinction as the Holy Spirit inwardly guides you.

—Let the fruit of the Spirit be obvious in your life.