

Ephesians 5:1-2 Walk in Love

In 1965 Jackie DeShannon made this song famous

– What the world needs now is love sweet love – it's the only that there's just too little of.

A) That song peaked at #7 on the Billboards Charts and resonated with people all over the world – Height of the Vietnam War.

B) Well I think Paul the Apostle – 2000 years prior would have agreed wholeheartedly – **The World needs love**

1) But not just any love – a specific Kind of love – A love modeled by the People of God

C) Ephesians 5:1-2 our text this morning

Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. ² 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.

The Christians in Ephesus faced the same Challenge living in their City as we face as believers in 2019 living in North County SD

A) They were people who had a dual residence

B) Their primary place of residence was that they were IN CHRIST - Paul introduces us to that idea in Chapter 1 he declared that he was writing to **the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:**

C) They were in Christ – Paul would spend the first 3 chapters talking about what it meant for them to be in Christ

1) Blessings, benefits, the very marks of their IDENTITY IN JESUS

So they were in Christ – but they were also in Ephesus

A) That was their earthly place of residence

B) That is where they worked, lived, bought groceries and interacted with other people who were living in Ephesus

1) Challenge – how do we live as people in Christ – In Ephesus

C) Ephesus was a large Metropolitan City – major city in the Roman empire – Popular city

1) Tourist destination – The Temple of the goddess Diana –

D) Later known as one of the 7 wonders of the world.

1) Today people come to California visit Disneyland – or San Diego to visit Sea world

E) People were coming to Ephesus – visit this temple

And Ephesus was an immoral place

A) The goddess Diana was this multi breasted woman – the temple employed 1,000 temple prostitutes

B) Who every night went out into the city – looking to recruit new worshippers – by engaging them in sexually immoral practices

C) You could say that Ephesus had a very distorted view of love

So the Challenge for the followers of Jesus living in Ephesus was How are people who are in Christ – supposed to live in this immoral city.

A) That is our Challenge today as well – How do we who are in Christ/ supposed to live in NCSD

B) That is the question that Paul began to answer as we hit chapter 4 of the book of Ephesians

1) Chapter 1-3 Identity – Who we are in Christ

C) Chapter 4 new section – How are people who are in Christ supposed to Live

Noted that Paul Began that discussion 4:1 with this Exhortation: Big idea Walk in a manner that is worthy of your calling

A) Walk = manner of life Worthy - Weights and balances –

B) Having a manner of life that is equal to your identity!

C) And in The rest of chapter 4-6:9 He describing – what it look like to **walk in a manner worthy of your calling –**

1) Having a manner of life that matches your Identity

1st Mark – Unity – Be seen in their interpersonal relationships with one another – Walk in Unity

2nd Mark – Different from their former way of living – the rest of the gentiles – different from the World

Today 3rd mark – Walk in Love

A) Paul begins this discussion – with this exhortation – **Therefore Be imitators of God as dear Children.**

B) The word therefore takes us back to the previous discussion in Chapter 4 concerning- putting off the old man – old tendencies

1) Putting on the new man in Christ

C) Paul climaxes that discussion with these words:

V.30 ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

³¹ Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.

Interesting idea: Do not grieve the Holy Spirit – he can be grieved!

A) The Holy Spirit is not **an IT** or a force or a power – He is a person

Aa) **The 3rd person of the triune Godhead – 3 persons one being**

B) What grieves the Holy Spirit? When the people of God don't act like the people of God.

1) When people who have been blessed by God – don't use the blessings that they have been given

C) Paul says part of our Identity... We have been sealed with the Spirit of God –

1) **You have been marked by God – you belong to Him!**

2) **You have the very life of God inside of you – the Holy Spirit**

D) **So live like it – Put away bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor – Loud angry speech –**

1) **Evil speaking – Slanderous – gossip**

E) **Put that away and replace it with** ³² **And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.**

1) That is what the word THEREFORE is looking back at

Now understand – what we call the book of Ephesians is really a letter that Paul wrote to the Christ followers in that city.

A) Ephesus was a Church that Paul Pastored for three years – writes this letter – no chapter breaks

B) **What we call Chapter 5 is merely the continuation of the previous thought – Therefore – for this reason**

C) **Because you have been sealed with the Holy Spirit – because you are in Christ –**

1) **because you are different from the world**

D) **Because of who is now living inside of you. – ACT LIKE Him**

1) **Be imitators of God as dear or beloved Children**

The word that Paul uses here “imitate” in the NKJV is translated as MIMIC

A) **Mimic in our minds can have a negative connotation right ?**

B) **All parents have been there – Long ride with the kids – hear in the backseat – Stop it – stop it – Dad she is touching me – Dad.....**

1) **Your so stupid..... / goes on and on**

C) **Blow a gasket – knock it off – pull the car over – spank both of you!**

Heard the story of one dad – who had to do just that

A) **Kids on the side of the road – spanked them both – put back in the car**

B) **I don't want to hear a word out of either of you for 30 minutes**

C) **After 30 minutes – said ok – ready to behave ? Nodded – ok you can talk –**

1) **the younger of the two said – Dad problem – shoe.... Back there**

D) **So the term Mimic in our minds can conjure up bad memories – fights with our siblings**

1) **Obnoxious friends -**

But the people to whom Paul was writing knew exactly what this word meant: BC - William Barclay gives this insight

“Imitation, was a main part in the training of an orator. The teachers of rhetoric declared that the learning of oratory depended on three things-theory, imitation and practice. The main part of their training was the study and the imitation of the masters who had gone before. It is as if Paul said: "If you were to train to be an orator, you would be told to imitate the masters of speech. Since you are training in life, you must imitate the Lord of all good life." – William Barclay

See To mimic God – we have to really Know God!

A)The more time that we spend with God – studying his word the more that we will become like Him.

B)Key to Bible study: Is to know Him – to catch His heart

1)The key is not merely head knowledge – it is heart transformation

C)Why - Sometimes we need to slow down – don't be so quick to get through a chapter or your reading

1)Say Lord I want to know your heart – I want you to speak to my heart

D)I want to write it down – I want to meditate on it through the day

1)That is how heart transformation happens

E)The more time we spend with Him in that way – the more we become like Him

Acts 4 Said of Peter and John – **Marveled untrained men – but they could tell that they had been with Jesus** - Best compliment –

A)Becoming like Jesus is not just something that we aspire to –

B)but it is something that is actually happening to us – God's goal – conform you Son

C)Paul's wording here is really insightful **Be imitators..... As dear Children** – Part Motivation and part impartation

D)Motivation: Children like to be like their parents –

1)2nd Grade – **Dad was my Hero – still is** - stood in the bathroom watching my dad shaving – Gillette foam

E)My attempt – Old school razor - Bleeding – I cut myself shaving

I admired my dad – I wanted to be like Him – Motivation

A)So too the closer we get to Jesus the more we fall in love with Him

B)the more we want to be like Him – Motivation as His Children

C)But that phrase as dear children also speaks of **impartation** – or in other words -it is genetic – “**As his dear children**” You possess His life!

“You can never be godlike, without God's life”- Ray Stedman

D)You have His life in you – you have His spirit in you – follow that – respond to that

“For to be carnally minded *is* death, but to be spiritually minded *is* life and peace. ⁹ But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you.” Romans 8:6,9

D)The Spirit of God dwells in you – He is a part of you – He is working in you to transform you –

But here is the problem – Be imitators of God is such a broad idea –

A)There are so many ways that I can't be like God – He is all powerful – I am not (I might think – I am sometimes but I am not)

B)God is all knowing – I am not – might act like it

1)God is perfect – I am not

C)If Paul left us with that one statement – be imitators Children –

1)that could leave us very frustrated – what are you talking about Paul

But Paul doesn't leave us there – he defines for us exactly what He is talking about in V.2 when he says **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.**

A)Walk in Love as Christ as Christ has loved us and given... for us.

B)There is the definition: This is the Love that the world needs to see modeled by the Followers of Jesus today.

C)For the rest of our time this morning – lets discuss what the Love of Jesus looks like – Defining marks

#1 Jesus love is a Sacrificial love

A)On the night Before Jesus going to the Cross – Last Supper with his disciples in this upper room

B)Jesus gets up and doesn't something that blows their minds – John 13

1)Washes their feet – even Judas – Dirty stinky – sandals dirt roads

C)Washing feet was the Job of for the lowest servant in the house – the bottom of the totem pole – foot washer

D)Jesus said to his disciples – **You need to do to one another as I have done to you!**

Washing feet is being willingly to get up close and personal with other people's dirt!

A)To serve them by loving them, caring for them, and walking with them in and through their most difficult seasons

B)It is being willing the love the unlovely –

C)To be a servant and sacrifice your time, your comfort, your dignity in order to help them come to Christ and grow in Christ

Paul notes the Ultimate example of this form of love in noting how Jesus gave himself for us at the Cross

A)On that very same night – Jesus would say to his disciples John 15:13 **“Greater love has no man than this lay down his life for his friends”**

B)The Apostle John would later write: **“We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters.”** 1 John 3:16 NLT

C)Interesting that Jesus said: Mark 8:34

And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would

come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”

D)The question is what is our cross?

1)The Cross is my burden to bear? The cross is my spouse – my boss – this job that I hate.

E)What was the cross of Jesus – An instrument of death that brought life to others – life to the world!

Picking up our Cross is being willing to live a Sacrificial life that blesses others and benefits others.

A)The key phrase in that verse is let him deny himself

B)“Walking in the love of Christ is a self-sacrificing, caring commitment that shows itself by seeking the highest good of others.”

C)#1 The Love of Christ is a Sacrificial love

#2 The Love of Christ is an unconditional love!

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

A)Our world says – I will love you if.....
Or I love you because.....

B)Jesus says I love you regardless!

C)When we were at our worst – rebellious against God – he sent his beloved son

1)Jesus willingly came to give his life for sinners

Think about this: Jesus loved people, and served people, and made himself vulnerable to people he knew – Turn on him – Hosanna – Crucify

A)Even Disciples – Forsook him/ betrayed him/ Peter denied – He knows this

B)Still loved them – still washed their feet – who does that ?

C)Be like you getting married – You know – your spouse is going to be unfaithful – break your heart

1)Would you still get married?

Friendship – You know they are going rip you off and rumors and lies

A)Would you enter into that friendship?

B)Lani in Oregon – Never going to do that again!

1)We understand that – anyone who has been hurt – trust broken – **I am never going to let myself be vulnerable again**

C)We can't say that - if we are going to walk in the Love of Christ –

1)it will mean that we will have to make ourselves vulnerable to people who **might hurt us/ have hurt us**

Pastor Rob – you are making me mad right now – I can't do that –

A)Don't get mad – You are absolutely right you can't do this – at least not consistently – and neither can I

B)Good news – It is not up to us to produce this love – We have this love

C)“God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.” Romans 5:5 ESV

The very love that we need to love people with a sacrificial love – to love people who have hurt us – to love people not expecting love in return

A)Has been given to us by the presence of the Holy Spirit living in our hearts

God's love has been poured into us, and the Holy Spirit is seeking to work out of us what has been poured into us.

B)I think that is when you know you are growing – when you are reacting in a loving way to unlovely people – in unloving situations

1)Wow – How did that happen – God is at work

C)The Love of Christ is a Sacrificial love – Unconditional love

#3 A compassionate Love

But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd” Matthew 9:36

A)Walking in the love of Christ is realizing the real reason that people are not being what they are supposed to be or acting like they should act.

B)If they are unbelievers it is because they don't know the Shepherd

1)Have compassion on them – love them – pray for them – seek to share with them

C)Adopt that insight – it will change your whole outlook of living in this world

What about when Believers are not being what they are supposed to be or acting like they are supposed to act ? That never happens right ?

A)Happens all the time – why – they are not allowing in that moment, that situation – Jesus to be their Shepherd.

B)Again – I want to love them – be patient with them – Why? Because I do that too –

C)I have done that – Jesus has been so patient with me - So forgiving of me

D)When we live like that – Sweet smelling aroma to God – Wow – He smells good -she smells good –

Sweet smelling aroma to others – Noticeable – Contagious

A)The world will know that you are my Disciples by your love for one another

B)It is a sweet aroma – but When we don't it is offensive to the people around us

1)And to the Lord

C)B.O. – Body Odor – CV how is our B.O.?

1)Your C.O. Christ Odor – the Fragrance of you or the Fragrance of Christ

I will close with this

The Pattern of our love will stem from how much we know we have been Loved – How much we have been forgiven

A) Jesus was eating in the home of a Pharisee / woman came in / who was a prostitute

B)Anointed Jesus feet w/ her tears & w/ perfume/ Hair " *If truly a prophet he know what type of woman this was !*

C)Jesus story Moneylender two men 2 debts / one \$5000 other \$50 / he graciously forgave both ! **Which loved more?**

1) *One forgiven the most Right !- her sins which are many have been forgiven- Result she loved much .*

2) *but he who has been forgiven of little loves little!*

Simon had no sense of the enormity of his own sin & therefore sensed no need of forgiveness.

A)Result : He was unforgiving of others!

B)Our DESIER to walk in the love Jesus will depend on our sense of how much God Has forgiven us!

C)He who has been forgiven much – loves much!

Reality - We have all been forgiven much – All our sins on the screen – next week

A)This screen is not big enough – need 500 of these

B)We have all been forgiven much – Do you realize it?

Pray

Communion:

A)Thankful for Jesus' love for us – grateful for how much we have been forgiven

B)Also Declaring: Lord I want to walk in your love

1)I want to be willing to deny myself - die to my rights – in order for others to be blessed!