

A Practical Study of EPHESIANS

HEAVEN'S PLAN for Life on Earth

“What It’s Like Living According to God’s Plan”

Key verse 5:17 — *“On this account, do not be foolish but be understanding what the will of the Lord is.”*

Study Number Nine – His Plan for Living in the Light – Ephesians 5:3-20

We’ve come to: His Plan for Living in the Light.

Where have we been in our journey? We rose above the clouds and saw The Master Plan.

God the Father selected us, God the Son purchased us with His own blood, God the Spirit seals us in that relationship, guaranteeing our eternal destiny.

We saw His Plan for Getting to Know Him—as Paul prayed for an enlarged capacity to know Him.

His Plan for Giving Life—it’s a gift by grace.

His Plan for Peace—that the two might be one in Jesus Christ.

His Plan for a Body—through which He might function.

Then we saw him pray one more time—His Plan for Power—as the indwelling Spirit of God strengthens the inner man that we might have that determination, that desire to grow in grace.

Then we noticed together His Plan for a Functioning Body.

Bud Wilkinson said when the commentator asked him after winning so many ball games at the University of Oklahoma: “Is football contributing to the physical fitness of our country?” He said “No.” The commentator was taken back a little and he said “Why?” He said “Because when you’ve got 22 men on the field desperately needing rest and 50,000 in the stands desperately needing exercise, how can you say that football is contributing to the physical fitness of the country?”
(source unknown)

We’ve structured the church like that. We have one guy in the pulpit who’s killing himself and thousands in the pews saying “Yeah! Go for it!” And that’s the structure oftentimes that we have and that is not God’s design for a functioning body. We are in this together. We are serving the Lord to the mutual benefit of each other as we use our spiritual gifts for His glory.

In our last study we started to probe into the personal. We had in study #8: His Plan for Life on a New Level.

It is not foisting legalistic requirements. We notice he deals

with MORAL and ETHICAL areas.

He talked to us about not lying to one another, not stealing. He was dealing and probing in areas where we have this responsibility due to the fact that we know Christ to be living life on a different level.

Now this study goes right alongside. We're still in the realm of the practical.

His Plan for Living in the Light—Ephesians 5:3-20.

Our KEY VERSE is:

Ephesians 5:8

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Be walking as children of light.

If we're a Christian, we have no more higher priority in our life. We have no more higher priority in our life than our own personal growth in Jesus Christ.

If we are not desirous and eager to go on with the Lord and grow in Him, there's something wrong with us. Our relationship—our heart's gotten calloused and cold. We've heard a lot and lived a little, or there's something wrong somewhere.

Our TOP PRIORITY ought to be gaining victory in key areas

of our life, and beginning to grow into more and more of a dynamic effectiveness for Him in the time that we have here.

It's INCREASED INTENSITY. It's recognizing every day gets us closer to the goal.

So with increased desire, we long to grow in Him, to be what He wants us to be.

Paul was so urgent about that in Philippians 3:10. He says "You know, all I want to do is to know Christ. I've counted everything but loss for this. I'm forgetting those things which are behind. I'm pressing toward those things which are in front. I'm getting on with it. I want to be all that the Lord wants me to be at the time that I arrive there at home."

As we continue to pursue our responsibility in the body of Christ, what is the greatest encouragement to our brother and sister? Our greatest encouragement to our brother and sister in Christ is to see progress taking place.

In the body of Christ, what's more of a joy than to hear someone say, "For three months I'm dry." That's a great encouragement to everybody. He's making progress.

What's he saying? "I want to grow up! I want to develop into what Christ wants me to become."

We ought to have that longing desire. It's a sense of discontentment with where we are and an intense desire to

get where we need to be.

Romans 7:15

The good that I would, I do not. And that which I would, I find I'm always doing.

“I want to get after it! I want to do something about it!”

“Oh wretched man! Who'll deliver me from the body of this death.” (ref. Romans 7:24)

Francis Schaeffer in his book *Death in the City* says:

(Death in the City by Francis Schaeffer)

Our generation needs to be told that man cannot disregard God. In a culture like ours that has had such light and then has deliberately turned away, stands under God's judgment. God is a God of grace, but the other side of the coin of grace is judgment. If God is there and God is holy and we need a holy God, or we have no absolutes, there must be judgment.
(source unknown)

Lambert Dolphin says:

(Conquest of Inner Space by Lambert Dolphin)

As our world hovers again and again on the very edge of self-destruction and as modern science confirms the Bible, the

urgency increases, not only for godly living and committed surrender to Jesus Christ by those who know Him but for renewed dissemination of the gospel so that all who will, may, through a personal relationship with God, live forever in a new and restored creation which is to be escaping from the atomic fires of judgment which lie ahead.
(source unknown)

Bill Bright says:

(Revolution Now by Bill Bright)

We are in the position today of men who are straightening pictures on the walls of a burning house. We are dealing with peripheral issues. It is in the hearts of men that need to be changed. The problems of evil in the world that are threatening to engulf humanity can be solved only in Jesus Christ and he has commanded his disciples to go and tell his message everywhere.
(source unknown)

Jesus said that to Nicodemus:

John 3:19

This is the condemnation, light came into the world. Men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil.

Choices are being made. What he's telling us is He has a plan

for living in the light and that's where we ought to be in these days.

Picking up at verse 3 and we begin to see that it's very similar to what we have already looked at in the previous exposition.

v. 3 But immorality and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be named among you, as is fitting among saints.

“But immorality and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be named among you, as is fitting among saints.”

What did the previous study talk about?

The previous study talked about what we do to OTHERS and the things we do against them.

This study talks about what we do to US. This is what happens to us when we violate these kinds of principles.

1. He starts out with the first word in the third verse “immorality.” That is a word that communicates any wrong sexual relationship. No matter what it is, it's use in the Greek text would be to encompass the total activity.

2. “all uncleanness” is hidden activity which defiles the person. Reading ugly magazines, watching dirty videos and all that stuff that's hidden.

3. “covetousness”—this has to do with greediness and lust, which also denotes wrong sexual activity.

He says as a believer, we ought to stand as a LIGHT against this trashy society in which we live.

We should be as shocked with the permissiveness of what is being made available to the public. We don’t travel around very much but we bump into this.

Christians that are getting caught up in it simply because they’re saying “Well when in Roman, do as Romans, you know do what the Romans do.”

The Bible makes it quite clear that sex outside the bonds of marriage is sin. Now that’s unpopular isn’t it?

First Thessalonians 4:1-8 says the very same thing:

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

Let me add this dear brothers, you already know how to please God in your daily living for you know the command we gave you from the Lord Jesus Himself. Now we beg you, yes we demand of you in the name of the Lord Jesus that you live more and more closely to that ideal. For God wants you to be holy and pure and to keep clear of all sexual sin so that each of you will marry in holiness and honor, not in lustful passion as the heathen’s do in their ignorance of God and His ways. This also is God’s will that you never cheat in this matter by

taking another man's wife, because the Lord will punish you terribly for this, as we have solemnly told you before. For God has not called us to be dirty minded and full of lust, but to be holy and clean. If anyone refuses to live by these rules he is not disobeying the rules of men but of God who gives His Holy Spirit to you.

There's an interesting little piece that was written by a high school senior some time back. The article was called "Must I Give Up My Purity to be Popular?" and this is the statement:

Yes, to be popular with the sex crowd. To prove that I have no other attracting qualities to be popular with those who don't care how many lives they ruin for other guys. To be popular with those who only consider physical desire in their date. To be popular with those unconcerned about their bodies being the temple of the Holy Spirit. To be popular with those who live a lie under the cover of darkness or privacy. To impress girls with, how far I've been around town. To indicate that I'm too weak to say no, and stem the tide of ridicule. To show that I don't mind being considered an adulterer by the Lord. To be popular but not a help, to be popular but not a true friend. To be popular but not a witness for Christ. To be popular and a deceiver. To be popular and a slave to conscience tomorrow. To be popular but not a true lover. If I don't want God's purest and sweetest mate as my life's partner, if I'm willing to be marked for sale, cheap, slightly soiled and second hand. If I want to go out only with girls who've been handled by other guys too. If I'm willing to sell future happiness for a moment of desire, if I'm willing to be unpopular with girls of high

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Christian ideals, if I don't mind presenting the queen of my home with a husband soiled by other lips and other hands, if I don't mind being unfair to that girl who has kept herself unspotted for me. If I consider popularity with the crowd more important than popularity with God. If I want to impress her with myself and not with Christ, if I will be satisfied with a cheap imitation, not real love. If I do not believe, that Thou God does see me.
(source unknown)

Well said!

v. 4 And wickedness and silly talking, or coarse jesting, which are not proper, but rather giving of thanks.

“And wickedness and silly talking, or coarse jesting, which are not proper, but rather giving of thanks.”

Now here are **THREE MORE THINGS** in this verse that aren't proper.

We have “immorality” of the body in verse 3. Now we have the “immorality” of the tongue in verse 4.

When it's in the thought life, it's going to come out in the speech and here it comes.

The first in the immorality of the tongue is:

1. “wickedness”—it's speech that would offend moral purity.

Speech which is indecent or obscene.

We've probably all been in a situation like that. Where somebody's telling some kind of a vile, dirty story and we just kind of slink down in the chair and we just wish we could melt away and get out of it? We don't want to make the guy embarrassed but it offends us that he is speaking so freely of these matters.

He's saying as Christians, we are not to allow our speech to be indecent or obscene.

The second word is:

2. "silly talking"—this again is talking about stuff that really is offensive to decency.

The third word is:

3. "coarse jesting"

We have to really work to find the meaning of that. What is that?

Those are words that have a double meaning. It's speaking to someone about something that on the surface looks okay but it has a different meaning.

Kids have a whole different language. That's why some of this rock music that they listen to sounds alright but if we really

knew what the words meant, it would just blow us away. It's a whole culture. It has a language of its own.

We find that in the business world too. Saying words and we see some of the dirty-minded guys snicker because they know the other meaning to the word. The guy that said it probably was innocent in the situation. Or if he wasn't, he was "coarse jesting."

It's using and suggesting things that have double meanings or that can be interpreted in two different ways.

Paul says this sort of speech is "not proper" for the saint, but what is?—"giving of thanks."

Now he's going to have more to say about that. But really the kind of speech that ought to often come from our lips is the thanksgiving for a new day, the thanksgiving for bodies, the thanksgiving for families, and wonderful things that God gives us. It's expressing thanks for all the good things that the Lord has given.

v. 5 For you may be sure of this, that every immoral or unclean man, or one who is covetous, that is an idolater, is not having an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

"For you may be sure of this, that every immoral or unclean man, or one who is covetous, that is an idolater, is not having an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."

Now that he's given the previous COMMAND, he will now APPLY IT by saying:

“you may be sure of this,”

These people who are practicing these things are:

“not having an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.”

What we're thinking right now is, “I'm guilty! So that must mean I'm not a Christian.”

A lot of people get that idea.

There's a difference between an accident and a way of life. This very verse is just about identical to a verse in Galatians chapter 5. Listen to the apostle Paul:

Galatians 5:19

Let me tell you again as I have before that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Now what's Paul saying? He's saying that if this is the continuing way of life, and we are not coming out to live in the light but we continue to live this kind of life, it's a demonstration that the relationship has not been established.

Now that does not mean that a Christian cannot get snagged

because they're getting snagged all the time. The devil is the deceiver. These things look wonderful and he paints a beautiful picture and we get hooked and we get involved. Then what do we do with it? We just keep on going in it? Or do we deal with it? Get out of it and get on with it.

It's like the difference between pig and sheep.

J. Vernon McGee talks about that. Put a pig and a sheep in the mud and both of them have been washed and clean. The pig will stay there and wallow in it because he loves it. That's his environment. The sheep will immediately get out of that. It doesn't stay in that crummy stuff. He has a sheep's heart.

We are sheep of the Shepherd. We have a new heart! We get involved in that mud and that dirt, we get out of it. That's not our environment. The pig loves it. He stays right there and wallows in it.

The unsaved person loves it. That's his way of life. He's continually practicing this kind of stuff so he stays there. The believer recognizes this is not where he belongs. This is not what he wants. This is not the kind of life so he says, "No, I'm going to deal with it! It's sin! I'm going to learn to walk with God and I'm going to come back and walk in the light."

So when he says this here, he's speaking of those who are continually practicing this as a way of life, manifesting they have no relationship.

v. 6 Let no one be deceiving you with empty words, for because of these things there is coming the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience.

“Let no one be deceiving you with empty words, for because of these things there is coming the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience.”

That is a great statement to use with kids.

“Let no one be deceiving you with empty words.”

What are some of the “empty words” and phrases we here today?

“Well go on! Smoke a little pot! Everybody’s doing it.”

“It’s alright to take a little drink socially! Just enjoy it.”

It’s like the evil one looks for a tiny little foothold. And then once we are enslaved with that foothold, he’s accomplished his purpose.

“Oh go on! I mean this business of one woman for one man, that’s so outdated. Man you might as well be enjoying it, live it up. Go ahead! Everybody’s doing it now. They’re even recommending it for therapy! You know, just enjoy yourself! Play the laid back. After all, God’s a god of love. He’s not going to get mad! He understands you. He created you that way.”

Heard that story? That's the blasé story that's coming across and this verse says:

“Let no one be deceiving you with empty words...”

This is a strong warning and probably one of the strongest in the text.

“for because of these things”—all that stuff that he's just outlined in those previous verses—“the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience.”

Who are “the sons of disobedience?”

Those who have not come to know Jesus Christ or those who have come to know Jesus Christ and they're disobedient.

Hebrews 10:31

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

That's written to believers.

God will deal with us in these matters.

And He will deal with us in discipline and in chastening—
Hebrews chapter 12.

We're playing right into Satan's hands with this sort of attitude.

v. 7 Therefore, do not be sharing with them.

“Therefore, do not be sharing with them.”

Now some people read that and they really go overboard.

How can we read a statement like that that says “don’t be sharing with them” and see Jesus being accused as a wine-giver and spending all of His time with sinners and no time with the religious folks. It’s all in the word “sharing.”

When we are with people who are permissive in these areas, we can also say NO.

We don’t have to go along with them. But we do have to go be with them.

The body of Christ needs to be functioning out there with those people that desperately need them.

To move out from our comfortable little cloister and our warm Christian friends where we sit around and read and study the Bible and pray together and get goosebumps and look for special spiritual experiences and the whole world is going to hell!

We’re going to be held accountable for that!

Those goosebumps and that fun of holding hands and praying

and being together is for heaven! We're on assignment here! We have a mission! We have a season to play yet! The Super Bowl's ahead of us. We have to suck it up and get on with it and focus on the ministry that's out there for us!

Don't take a verse like this and come to me with this attitude of "Oh we're not supposed to be out there with them."

Yes we are. We're not supposed to share, we're supposed to love the sinner and hate the sin.

It's Daniel purposing it in his heart when the guy comes and says "your diet's going to be this way."

He purposes in his heart he's not going to defile himself with the king's meat so he goes and challenges the guy and says, "Let me eat vegetables for 10 days and let these other guys eat this stuff that you've prescribed and see who comes out the best."

The guy says alright, we'll give you your chance. Daniel and his three friends Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego came out better in the situation! God honored the conviction. We can stand for it!

Something needs to be said to our kids. They're more like thermometers. They register the climate where they are.

They're chameleons. They take the color from the last environment they crawl across.

We want thermostats that determine the climate. We want crocodiles that nobody argues with. We want people who are not allowing the world to squeeze it into its own mold but letting God remold their minds from within so they can prove what is good and acceptable and perfect will of God! That's what he's saying! He's saying forge your convictions. Stand out there. That's your greatest witness for Him to this lost and dying community.

2 Corinthians 6:17, 18

This is why the Lord said, leave them, separate yourselves from them, don't touch their filthy things and I will welcome you and be a father to you and you will be my sons and daughters.

There it is! It's not associating with the activity! Being involved in the sin.

Don't "be sharing with them" in their sin but "be sharing with them" the SAVIOR.

v. 8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord: be walking as children of light.

"For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord: be walking as children of light."

There's our KEY VERSE for His Plan for Living in the Light.

1 Thessalonians 5:4-8

But dear brothers, you are not in the dark about these things and you won't be surprised as by a thief when the day of the Lord comes for you are all children of the light and of the day and do not belong to the darkness and the night. So be on your guard, not asleep like the others. Watch for His return and stay sober. Night is the time for sleep and the time when people get drunk. But let us live in the light, keep sober, protected by the armor of faith and love and wearing as the helmet, the happy hope of salvation.

In essence he's saying, let our conduct match our creed.

Walk in the light! Demonstrate our lives to them!

v. 9 For the fruit of this light is found in all goodness and righteousness and truth.

“For the fruit of this light is found in all goodness and righteousness and truth.”

Paul says we're going to find light when we find “goodness,” “righteousness and truth.”

Galatians 5:22, 23

“But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, He will produce this kind of fruit in us, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,

goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control and here there is no conflict with Jewish laws.”

One verse that will summarize the whole of the Christian experience. One little tiny verse that would just capsulize the whole thing. It’s the next one.

v. 10 Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

“Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.”

Want to get along with Him? Want Him to love us? Want Him to be excited about us? There it is.

Such a simple recipe! Such a simple prescription!

“Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.”

What was the first command?

“Be walking as children of light.”

And as we come to the Lord in the light in these questionable areas where we’re not really sure about it, we come and we ask ourselves the question:

Is it “pleasing to the Lord?”

Does what we’re doing make the Lord happy? Is He excited and in agreement with what we’re allowing to go on in our

life?

Woo! That is testy! But that's right!

In the east when they went to buy garments or pieces of pottery, they always had a practice. They'd step outside the shop and they'd hold it up to the light. And if there was a crack in the pottery it could be seen. If it had been filled with wax and it was not a good piece. And so they would offer less for that.

But if it was a good piece and been formed properly it passed the test of the sun. That's in essence what is in Paul's mind here when he says we ought to be walking "as children of light."

That's exactly what Jesus said:

John 3:21

He who loves me, comes to the light and lets his deeds be proved and demonstrated that they're from God.

We don't have anything to hide. We can lay it all out there.

Because the things that are coming out of our life are coming from the Lord. We are "trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord."

We're letting Him expose every one of our actions, every

decision, every motive, to the light of Christ.

Now if we want a great example of this, that's Jesus.

Boom! Out of heaven comes "This is my beloved Son"—WHAT?—"in whom I am well pleased." (ref. Matt. 3:17)

Now Paul says, with that in the back of his mind, we "try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord."

Could the Lord say: "Boom! You are well-pleasing in my sight"?

Could he say: "Boom!"—mention your name—"That is My child and I'm well-pleased! He is well-pleasing! She is well-pleasing in my sight!"

Oh that's great, isn't it? That was worth the whole series in the book of Ephesians right there!

Ephesians 10:5

Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

That takes the focus off us running around to our Christian brothers and sisters to try to figure out whether it's right or wrong to do what we're trying to do. Brothers and sisters aren't trying to run around and find out what we're doing whether it is right or wrong. We all are trying to find out what is pleasing the Lord!

When we focus on that kind of thing, it solves all this picky legalistic stuff that we talk about—the stuff we do and we don't do in the Christian community.

v. 11 And do not be associating with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather be exposing them.

“And do not be associating with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather be exposing them.”

Don't associate with them by our life and by our lips—expose those things. Demonstrate our convictions when we have an opportunity to express them.

v. 12 For it is a shame even to speak of the things which they do in secret.

“For it is a shame even to speak of the things which they do in secret.”

v. 13 But when anything is exposed by the light, it is made visible, for everything that is being made visible is light.

“But when anything is exposed by the light, it is made visible, for everything that is being made visible is light.”

v. 14 Therefore, it is said, be waking up he who is sleeping, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon you.

“Therefore, it is said, be waking up he who is sleeping, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon you.”

v. 15 Take heed therefore, how carefully you are walking, not as unwise men, but as wise,

“Take heed therefore, how carefully you are walking, not as unwise men, but as wise,”

The Lord said “Even the very elect could be deceived.” (ref. Matt. 24:24)

“Take heed”—that’s a strong warning.

In an immoral society, in a society that is moving further and further away from God—BE CAREFUL, take warning. Recognize the danger of this.

“how carefully you are walking, not as unwise men, but as wise,”

Proverbs 3:5, 6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and lean not unto your own understand.
In all your ways acknowledge Him,

and He will direct your path.

1 Corinthians 10:12

Take heed brethren...

James 1:5

If you lack wisdom, ask of God...

Colossians 4:5, 6

Make the most of your chances to tell others the good news. Be wise in all your contacts with them. Let your conversation be gracious as well as sensible for then you will have the right answer for everyone.

Be very careful, he's saying, in our personal life.

We should have the guts to pray a prayer like this:

O! Dear God this aching desire!
My heart cries for it, it longs for it.
With deep throbbing intensity!
Yet in the depths of my soul
I know that what I ask
Is not Your highest or Your best for me.
I cannot come to You boldly
Nor can I come to make my rest in the
name of Your Son. I dare not ask

For a stone when You offer me bread.
And so my Lord, though the longing clutches
My heart, I yield it to You totally.
I ask not that You grant my desire
But that You free me completely from desiring it.
(source unknown)

That's what the Lord's asking here. When we come to walk in the light, our desires are not going to be His. But can we pray, "Free us completely because we don't want to be content with a stone when You've got something so much better for us."

And in essence, that's the rest of the study. Look at verse 16.

v. 16 making the most of the time because the days are evil.

"making the most of the time because the days are evil."

Verse 17 is the KEY VERSE to the whole book.

v. 17 On this account do not be foolish, but be understanding what the will of the Lord is.

"On this account do not be foolish, but be understanding what the will of the Lord is."

That is His whole plan!

When we go home with all twelve parts of this put together in

the divine plan, it'll help orient our Christian life around divine truth—willing to pursue, having understood it—to become one who is accomplishing the will of God for our life.

v. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,

“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,”

Now when we come to this eighteenth verse, we notice it says “do not get drunk with wine.”

We get so involved in how we take something so wonderful like being “filled with the Spirit” and pollute it with something like getting “drunk with wine”?

Well, it's very easy. It's a great illustration.

Take a drunkard and describe his conversation, his orientation during the time of his drunkenness and everything else, we almost got a perfect picture of a spirit-filled Christian.

Stop and think of the parallels—there are at least 3 or 4 that we came up with.

1. The person who is intoxicated has submitted himself to a rule or authority of a power outside of himself.
2. The person who is drunk is controlled as to his speech, his

walk, his acts, his thought by a power apart from himself to which he has voluntarily submitted himself.

3. He's controlled by the "spirits" rather than the SPIRIT.

The Spirit of God fills our lives so He controls our walk, our talk, and our thoughts. That's exactly what He's been talking about in all 17 of these verses that comes down to this.

In our last study, His Plan for Life on a New Level, he was dealing once again with this.

And now in this study, His Plan for Living in the Light, all of it has to do with our WALK, our TALK and our THOUGHT.

As we are submissive to the Spirit of God, He fills our lives and gives us victory to stand in these areas.

Ryrie has written a book called *Balancing the Christian Life* and this is what he says about the filling of the Spirit. There's a lot of misunderstanding on this.

(Balancing the Christian Life by Charles C. Ryrie)

To be filled with the Spirit means to be controlled by the Spirit. The clue to this definition is found in Ephesians 5:18 where there is a contrast and comparison between drunkenness and Spirit-filling. It is a comparison which gives a clue, for just as a drunken person is controlled by the liquor which he consumes, so the Spirit-filled Christian is controlled

by the Spirit. As a result, he will act in a manner unnatural to himself, not an erratic or abnormal behavior, but one contrary to the old life. Controlled by the Spirit is a necessary part of spirituality.

(source unknown)

Listen to Stephen Olford on the same thing:

(I'll Take the High Road by Stephen Olford)

When a man abandons himself to drink, it usually affects him personally and generally. That is to say not only are his mind, body and money affected but also his home, friends, and business. Similarly the only abandonment to the Spirit which the Bible teaches affects the believer's whole life, spirit, soul and body.

(source unknown)

Dwight L. Moody says it this way:

A great many think because they have been filled once they are going to be full for all time after this but oh my friends, we are leaky vessels and we have to be kept right under the fountain all the time in order to be full. If we're going to be used by God, we have to be very humble. A man that lives close to God will be the humblest of men. I heard a man say that God always chooses a vessel that is close at hand. Let's stay near to Him so He can use us.

(source unknown)

This is Donald Grey Barnhouse on the same thing:

Irrigation is necessary in many parts of our country because ordinary rainfall is either seasonal or insufficient for the needs of the land. If the channels are not kept open, the land will revert to its arid condition and the crops will fail. From those great valleys, teeming populations of the past drew their life from the rich soil, but today, the valley, like the Euphrates and the Tigris are half desert, half lands of low yield.

Archeologists can trace for you a system of canals that carry water to the far fields. The dams were allowed to fall into disrepair, the channels became filled with silt, dryness and the death followed the breaking down of the flooding system. The situation is similar in the hearts of believers. They may lay bare their hearts before the examining gaze of the Holy Spirit so that He may flush out the debris that has clogged the channels of living and bring the smooth flow of love to its highest level.

(source unknown)

The Spirit of God, as He fills and controls the life, will provide the victory that is demonstrated here in these passages to stand against this kind of society.

It is the filling of the Spirit. Now what is the filling of the Holy Spirit?

The filling of the Holy Spirit is not getting something that nobody else has. The filling of the Holy Spirit is simply the resident becoming president. We don't divide up the Person of

the Holy Spirit!

It's the areas of our life that He's in control of that determines how filled we are with the Spirit. If He is controlling every area of our life, we are "filled with the Spirit."

We are to be continually BEING FILLED with the Spirit.

There are two NEGATIVE COMMANDS in Scripture. We had one of them earlier:

Ephesians 4:30

Grieve not the Holy Spirit ...

If we grieve Him by living and being involved in this kind of lifestyle that we've looked at, He's grieved. Therefore we're not filled with the Spirit.

First Thessalonians 5:17 says we can "quench" the Holy Spirit by resisting His work in our life.

By doing that, we're putting out the fire of the Spirit, therefore we're not filled.

So what are we saying?

To be assured of being filled with the Spirit, be sure we're not grieving Him by dealing with sin in our life.

Sing that hymn:

“Search me O God and know my heart...”

Secondly, quenching Him, be sure that we’re not resisting Him in any area where He’s endeavoring to lead us and direct us in His service.

Now what will happen when the Spirit of God takes over?

v. 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with all your heart to the Lord;

“speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with all your heart to the Lord;”

We actually have **FOUR MANIFESTATIONS** of the Spirit-filled life here in verses 19-21.

The first one is:

1. “speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs”—we’ve been doing that.

The second one is:

2. “singing and making melody with all your heart to the Lord.”

The third is in verse 20.

v. 20 giving thanks always concerning all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;

“giving thanks always concerning all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;”

3. “giving thanks always concerning all things in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;”

The fourth one is in verse 21—and we’ll see that even in our next study where we read:

4. “putting yourselves in subjection to one another”—with respect to Christ.

It’s interesting when we take Colossians chapter 3 and Ephesians chapter 5, we find the same results.

A person who is filled with the Word has the same results in his life as a person who is filled with the Spirit. Colossians 3 and Ephesians 5—if we want to play that against itself—Colossians 3:16-18.

Here are the lessons we get from our study.

Lesson #1: We must be careful to protect ourselves from immorality and all uncleanness or covetousness.

Lesson #2: We must pray daily that the Spirit of God will control our tongues and fill our mouths with the giving of thanks.

Lesson #3: We can be sure that those whose lifestyle is characterized by these ugly words will not be having an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ in God.

Lesson #4: Are you walking in the light transparent before the Lord?

Lesson #5: There are consequences of this lifestyle. We are warned that there is coming the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience.

Lesson #6: The fruit of walking in the light is found in all goodness, righteousness and truth.

Lesson #7: Are you learning by reading the Word what is pleasing to the Lord?

Lesson #8: Are you careful to make the most diligent use of your time?

Lesson #9: Can you say that you are conducting yourself carefully, walking in the power of the Spirit?

Lesson #10: Are you beginning to understand what the will of the Lord is for your life?

Lesson #11: At this moment, are you characterized by being filled with the Spirit?

Lesson #12: Are you finding joy in your worship of the Lord, “speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with all your heart to the Lord”?

Lesson #13: Are you giving thanks always, concerning all things, not just the good?

Here are the THREE C's if we have a problem in any of those areas:

1. CONFESS it to the Lord,
2. CROWN Him as King, and
3. CLAIM His promises.

Father, we come to a time of incredible decision. A time that will determine our future happiness and fulfillment, the way we answer these five questions. We would pray that You'd help each one of these who are students of Your Word in the book of Ephesians to give serious consideration of these matters and make the right decision to allow You to be all

that You want to be to each of us. In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.

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A Practical Study of EPHESIANS

HEAVEN'S PLAN for Life on Earth

“What It’s Like Living According to God’s Plan”

Key verse 5:17 — *“On this account, do not be foolish but be understanding what the will of the Lord is.”*

STUDY NUMBER NINE – HIS PLAN FOR LIVING IN THE LIGHT – EPHESIANS 5:3-20

KEY VERSE 5:8

v. 3 But immorality and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be named among you, as is fitting among saints.

v. 4 And wickedness and silly talking, or coarse jesting, which are not proper, but rather giving of thanks.

v. 5 For you may be sure of this, that every immoral or unclean man, or one who is covetous, that is an idolater, is not having an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

v. 6 Let no one be deceiving you with empty words, for because of these things there is coming the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience.

v. 7 Therefore, do not be sharing with them.

v. 8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord: be walking as children of light.

v. 9 For the fruit of this light is found in all goodness and righteousness and truth.

v. 10 Try to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

v. 11 And do not be associating with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather be exposing them.

v. 12 For it is a shame even to speak of the things which they do in secret.

v. 13 But when anything is exposed by the light, it is made visible, for everything that is being made visible is light.

v. 14 Therefore, it is said, be waking up he who is sleeping, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon you.

NOTES

NOTES

v. 15 Take heed therefore, how carefully you are walking, not as unwise men, but as wise,
v. 16 making the most of the time because the days are evil.
v. 17 On this account do not be foolish, but be understanding what the will of the Lord is.
v. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit,
v. 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with all your heart to the Lord;
v. 20 giving thanks always concerning all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;

QUESTIONS:

1. Read Ephesians 5:3-20 and in your own words pull out the main thought of this passage.

2. Outline the things saints should avoid according to verses 3 & 4.

3. What may we be assured of according to verse 5?

4. What are we commanded to do in verse 8?

5. Where is the fruit of life found according to verse 9?

6. What should be our #1 priority according to verses 10 & 11?

7. What are we commanded to do according to verses 17 & 18?

8. Outline the evidences of being filled with the Spirit according to verses 19 & 20?

9. What verse in the study has meant the most to you?

10. What lesson have you learned from this study?

LESSONS FROM THE PASSAGE:

What are some of the lessons we can learn from this particular study?

LESSON #1: We must be careful to protect ourselves from immorality and all uncleanness or covetousness.

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