

A New Family

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[0 : 00] Good morning, everyone. It's been pretty well almost a year since I spoke here last. And as Charles mentioned, I've been busy at Keniston, able to speak there as well.

Throughout the spring and last weekend I was there as well. Today, if you want to turn to Ephesians 5, we're going to be going through 1 to 21.

And as you turn there, I'm going to give a little introduction. Ephesians, Paul was writing to the Ephesians while he was in prison.

And yeah, he really focuses in on a family and what the family of God looks like. And as I was reading through this and going through this book and specifically chapter 5, it brought to mind for the last two, three years we've had guys come from college to work with us at our farm.

And it's interesting for what you think is normal for your family is not always normal for other people. Or there's situations within your family which are like expected, kind of normal things that you grew up doing.

[1 : 23] But to someone that comes into that family, they don't know the expectations of your family. They don't understand the way that you've been raised. And in a similar way, Paul addresses this in chapter 5.

And so to start, I'm going to look, I'm going to read through 1 to 21. And I'll start right now. But instead, let there be thanksgiving.

1 to 21.

2 to 21.

2 to 21.

[3 : 46] So going back to verse 1. Paul writes, Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children. Verse 2. And walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

And he points out two things here. One, he says, be imitators of God. But then he makes the second point. But then he makes the second point, as beloved children. And when we accept Christ into our lives, we are then accepted in as children of God.

For he declares that we are sons and daughters. For he declares that we are sons and daughters. But before that, when we're walking in sin, we're walking in the darkness.

We're lost. We're orphans. And it says that God adopts us into his family. And as he adopts us into his family, his kingdom, there is expectations and requirements that he asks of us.

And one is, therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children. And the first one is, and walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

[5 : 05] He's saying, look to Jesus. Look what Jesus did. Be imitators of him. Follow him. Trust him. There's new expectations from what you came from into this new family.

It's a new way of life. And whereas normally, these people are walking in many things, and he makes a list of what they were walking in before.

For he says in verse 3, But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you as is proper among saints. And in Ephesus, it's similar to a lot of the places such as Corinth and Philippi.

And as Paul's writing, these people have been influenced by the Roman culture around them. And with this culture, it is sexually immoral. It's a sexual immoral culture.

Especially in Corinth, where they had many temples. And within those temples, they had up to hundreds to thousands of prostitutes serving in those temples.

[6 : 22] And the same would be along Ephesus, Philippi. These cities and towns in which Paul is writing to. And he's saying, You once walked in this way.

But now be imitators of God. Walk in love as Christ loved us. And not satisfying your own desires. Not satisfying your own flesh. When you come into Christ's family, there's new expectations. For he says, But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you as is proper among saints.

And let there be no filthiness, nor foolish talk, nor crude joking, which are out of place. But instead, let there be thanksgiving. We're called to no longer live in the ways of the world.

Which, if you look today out at our world, our culture is very sexually immoral. There's impurity. There's covetousness. There's filthiness.

[7 : 33] There's foolish talk and crude joking. If you go to any workplace, you'll find these things more than likely. Many words that are seen as improper swear words are common language today.

But this, and this is what Paul is saying, is this should not be among people of the church. For we're taken out of that lifestyle, adopted in as sons and daughters into the kingdom of God.

We're to be imitators of him. And just as Jesus walked and walked in love, loving those, caring for the sinners, caring for the people that were despised in their culture.

And he loves them. He shows care to them. We're to do the same. I've been working through a few different books and preaching through a few different books.

And there's a lot of similarities. Like James, he talks about true religion is caring for the orphans and widows. And caring for the despised of culture.

[8 : 45] And James talks about mourning against the rich who are often the ones that oppress the poor, oppress the needy.

And he's saying, this is not right. In the kingdom of God, we're not to favor others. We're not to favor different people. But we're to love people as Jesus loved people.

Then it goes on. Verse 5.

For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure or who is covetous, that is an idolater, has no inheritance in the kingdom of God.

Kingdom of Christ and God. Amen. Amen. And idolater is choosing something or someone and placing it above God.

[9 : 49] You're placing them above him. And God says, the very first command, love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. And we're to do the same.

We're accepted in this family. And it's like, we're to love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. And then, as Jesus said, the second command is like it.

Love your neighbor as yourself. We're to walk in love. Verse 6. Let no one deceive you with empty words.

For because of these things, the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. And in this time, Paul and many of the apostles, when they're writing, they're writing a good amount of the time against false teachers.

False teachers who are coming and twisting the scriptures and twisting the word of God and twisting what they think is normal. And a lot of that battle is circumcision, uncircumcision.

[10 : 55] Saying that Jesus isn't enough, but you have to do the law as well. And there's so many doctrines being pushed. And from a Roman society, there's philosophers. There's sophists.

There's so many things that are called wisdom coming from the world. And these men are now fighting against these things. Saying, no. Go back to the truth that Jesus spoke.

Remember the word of God. Don't you understand? And they're pulling from Old Testament and showing these people. And I mean, there's different books that will address Jews or Gentiles.

And this is a book that's addressing Gentiles. And for them, it's these false teachers are coming with philosophies, with other doctrines.

Well, one doctrine is dualism, is the idea of it. So it's your mind or your spirit separate from your body.

[12 : 01] And so in this, Paul addresses this in Corinthians, where the people were believing that, oh, I can do whatever I want. And it doesn't affect my soul, my spirit, or my mind.

And so these people were living in sexual immorality, living in impurity, because they didn't think it mattered. And others, even in Ephesians here, Paul addresses it somewhat as, some were saying, well, where there's sin, grace abounds.

And so shouldn't we sin all the more so that grace abounds more? And they had a twisted view of what God's grace was. Now, it's true where sin is, God's grace does abound.

And he will continue to give grace. But it doesn't mean that we can continue living in sin so that God's grace may abound more. It's twisted. And here he makes it clear. He says, let no one deceive you with empty words. For because of these things, the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. The wrath of God is coming because of these false doctrines, because of these empty words, because of the deception. [13:23] And in our culture today, they don't want to believe that God is wrathful. There's this idea that God is only loving and there's no wrath.

But that's a false teaching in itself. Because without God's love, you need, or to have God's love, you need his wrath.

And to have his wrath, you need his love. See, kind of a way to explain this is to go back to Old Testament, but also come to New.

Old Testament, God commanded the Israelites, I want you to go into this land and I want you to conquer the land. Now, many people, the argument today is, how could a loving God command a nation to go destroy hundreds of thousands to even millions of people?

If God's so loving, then why did he allow them to wipe out a whole country, a whole nation? But what people forget is that God gave those people some 400 years to repent of their sins, to turn from their wicked ways and come to him.

[14:50] And they questioned, well, if God's so loving, God is loving because he gave them 400 years. And he warned them. And he gave them that opportunity to repent and they didn't.

And finally, he said, enough is enough of this sin. I'm going to send my nation in and they're going to wipe them out. And it's also an act of love to his people.

For he promised, I will give you this land. You will receive it. And it's going to be a land of flowing with milk and honey. It's going to be beautiful.

It's going to be full of blessing. And so he pours out his love and his wrath. He pours out his wrath on the sin that the people were doing.

And yet he gives his love to the Israelites. So you see an image of both love and wrath coming from God and they're together. And in the same way in the New Testament, when you look at the cross, it's an image of God's love and wrath.

[15:56] Jesus died on the cross to satisfy God's wrath that was coming because of our sin. And it still is coming later.

There's a wrath, there's a judgment that will come eventually. But Jesus died for our sins so that we could come to the Father to have that relationship with him.

And it's his love for us because he offers life. It's his grace. We deserve to be up there. We deserve death.

But God came down and he said, I'm going to pay that penalty. And he died for all people. Now, some will also twist that and say, well, if he died for all people, then doesn't that mean everyone goes to heaven?

No. Because he comes and he does die for all people. But there's a point in which we need to accept his gift. We need to humble ourselves and surrender our lives to him.

[17:05] Understand our sin and realize that we need him. We cannot come to the Father unless it's through him.

It's his blood that satisfies the sin, that atones for our sin, covers us, makes us new. We cannot do it on our own.

And if you look at the Israelites, it's a perfect example of that because they never could follow the law perfectly. And in James, it talks about if you can live this out perfectly, then you are perfect.

But you can't. That's why we need Jesus. That's why we need him. Because we can't do it on our own. So we see an image of both God's love and wrath.

And because of these false doctrines, because of this deception that is in the culture and in polluting their church, he says, for this reason, the wrath of God is coming.

[18:17] And we read in our Bibles that there will be a day of judgment. There will be even seven years of judgment. The great tribulation. And Christ will return a second time and wipe out those that didn't believe.

Those that chose to follow the Antichrist over him. And then you see new life. Where God says, and you see a new heaven and a new earth.

He's going to make all things new. And that's an image of his love. He's going to bring us who believe into a life.

Into a perfect place where we will dwell with him again. Where there will be no more temptation. There will be no more sin. There will be no more death. And that is still coming in the future. But as I was reading yesterday in Revelation 22. Jesus says three times. Actually, I'll flip there. Three times.

[19 : 29] One in verse 7. I think that's where the first one is. And behold, I'm coming soon. Verse 12. Behold, I'm coming soon. And lastly, verse 20.

And who testifies to these things says, surely I am coming soon. Amen. Come Lord Jesus. And three times. And three times.

Is important in scripture. Such as. When you look in Revelation as well. It says. The angels cry out. Holy, holy, holy. Is the Lord God Almighty.

It's not just holy is the Lord. It's not just holy, holy is the Lord. But it's holy, holy, holy is the Lord. And it's this image of completeness. It's this image of harmony or perfection.

And it's saying that God is above all. There's nothing that compares to him. And Jesus states three times.

[20 : 29] Behold, I'm coming soon. And so he will. And he is. And for the believer, that should bring joy. That should bring praise.

That things are not always going to be this way. On this earth. That the enemy won't have free reign or rule to deceive or to tempt any longer.

But for the unbeliever, this should bring fear. And many are dying and not knowing the truth. Not knowing Jesus who saves. And this should also give us an urgency as believers to share the gospel. Share the good news of Jesus Christ.

What he did on the cross for us. Even the statement of Jesus saying, I am coming soon. He's saying that he's coming soon.

[21 : 36] Time is running out. Go. Share the good news to the nations. And do we as the church really have this urgency?

And I mean, when end times stuff is brought up, many people are like, well, this stuff has happened many years.

Like, how do you know that it's going to come soon? Like, it could be another thousand years. It's true. It could be. But I mean, even when you read in specifically Thessalonians and some other books, it's like the people then were believing that Jesus was coming even in their day.

And that's been 2,000 years ago. They had this urgency. They had the desire that Jesus is coming soon. And so for us, 2,000 years later, how much more urgency should we have that he's coming soon?

And when Jesus gives the list of signs of like, you will see these things start to happen, we're starting to see them more and more and more. But what should that drive us to?

[22 : 53] It should drive us to share the good news even more. Of what Jesus did for us. Verse 7.

Therefore, do not become partners with them. Saying, do not join them. You're part of a new family now. I've brought you out of the darkness, out of your sin.

Brought you to new life. Do not join with them in these things that they're doing. And I've heard over the years some people where, some believers were like, okay, well.

I, for example, the party scene. They're like, well, I go to the parties. Because then I might have an opportunity to share Christ with them.

And, I mean, all right. That's, you can choose that. But be careful. Because it's in a place where you can easily be enticed into doing what they're doing.

[24 : 06] You want to influence them, yes. You want to share the gospel with them. But it might be hard to share the good news with someone who's hardly able to stand up because they're so drunk.

It's kind of difficult. Not saying it's impossible because God's power is beyond that. But there is a point in which we need to be careful not to put ourselves in a place of temptation and fall into it in these situations.

And here it makes clear, do not join them. Do not become partners with them. There's opportunities to reach these people outside of that scene.

Jesus, for example, he did eat with sinners. He did spend time with people that did things that weren't right.

So I'm not saying never go to certain things in hopes of sharing the truth with non-believers. That's not what I'm saying. But what I am saying is you don't have to join them in what they're doing to reach them.

[25 : 19] That's a common misconception. I've heard it to the extreme of people sinning to reach other people. And this was to the extreme of this guy became a drag queen to reach other drag queens.

It's not right. Jesus was perfect and did not sin, yet he was with sinners. He didn't join in with them. He didn't partner with them. But he loved them. And he cared for them. That's what we're called to do. Be imitators of God.

Verse 8. For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light. For the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true.

And try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. For at one time, verse 8, you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.

[26 : 27] Walk as children of the light. We're brought out of darkness into the light. And we're to walk in that light.

That light which is Jesus, who said, I'm the light of the world. I'm the way, the truth, and the life. We're no longer walking in darkness.

And he's just explaining it more. Like from verse 3 and 4, explaining these things. Sexual immorality, impurity, covetousness, idolatry, filthiness, foolish talk, crude joking.

All these different things. And he's saying, remember, that was where you came from. That's darkness that you were walking in. But now you're called out of that into the light.

Light reveals all things. If you're in a dark room and you can't see in front of you, you turn a flashlight on and it illuminates the whole room.

[27 : 48] And you can see. You can see clearly. And we're to walk in the light. When you walk in the light, you're less likely to stumble because you can see in front of you.

But if you walk in the darkness, you're kind of, you're paranoid, right? Because you're like, where's that desk? Where's that stand? You're kind of feeling. And that's how people are walking in this world today because they're walking in darkness.

They walk into situations and they're like, then they fall off a cliff. It's like, God comes and he's like, I'm going to light this up.

I'm going to bring life to this darkness. I'm going to bring light to your life. In verse 10, and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.

And the question is, how do we do that? How do we discern what is pleasing to the Lord? We go to this.

[29 : 02] We go to God's word each and every day. For he makes it clear. And he will make it clear to us. As we go before him. How are you supposed to be an imitator of God if you don't know anything about him?

Jesus came so that we could have relationship with him. And relationship is getting to know. You're growing together. And you get to know that person.

And marriage is a good example of this. Over the years, you start to even, in one sense, become one. And marriage talks about when you do get married, you become one.

That's what you're considered as. But from watching even my parents, it's like, they almost, in one sense, know what the other one's thinking.

Before it's even said. And they live together so long that they know each other so well. They know what frustrates one another.

[30 : 07] They know how to please the other. They know how to care for one another well. And in the same way, God is desiring that we will come to him in a relationship and get to know him. And he's put scripture together to teach us about his ways.

To reveal to us who he is. And we can come to him because of Christ in prayer. Jesus came and he, as Hebrews talks about, he's our high priest.

And the high priest was a representative of the people that could come before God once a year into the Holy of Holies. And make atonement for the sin of that nation.

Now, if that high priest entered into the Holy of Holies any other time besides when God said, come, he was struck down. When Jesus died on the cross, that curtain was torn in two.

When Jesus said, it is finished, that curtain was torn. He opened up the way that we could come before the Father in holiness, atoned for, made right before him.

[31 : 20] He opened that door that we can come now through Jesus into essentially the throne room of God. We can come before him.

In verse 12, for it is, oh, sorry, verse 11. Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.

What exposes them? The light. The light exposes darkness. And what are we called to do? We're called to be light. Bears were to be the light of the world by Jesus Christ. Speaking the truth, bringing light to the darkness.

In verse 12, for it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible.

[32 : 26] And this last week, I was up at North Battleford visiting my sister.

We watched a documentary on the topic of human trafficking. And it's one of the things that these men and women are trying to speak out against because it's been in the darkness so long. Many people think this is a situation that's overseas. It's not happening in our country. Yet, they said it's the leading... Or...

What's the word for it? Basically, it's the next leading illegal trade in the world. So it's already passed the illegal arms trade and it's about to pass the illegal drug trade.

And the top country that's both providing and abusing these people, these kids, is America. And it's going across the U.S.-Mexican border.

[33 : 34] It is being exposed. And what has happened to these young kids, both young girls and boys, is a shameful thing to even speak of.

But it is being exposed to light. The light is shining upon this and making it look. Look what's going on, people. And it's part of the darkness.

It's sexual immorality. It's impurity. It is not right. We're to walk in the light.

As God has called us, being imitators of God. And I'm reminded when I think of that. Reminded of what Jesus said.

That if anyone causes one of these little ones to stumble, it is better for them to have a millstone tied around their neck and thrown into the sea. What is being done is disgusting.

[34 : 46] And yet many in denial will say, no, it's not in our country. But it is. And this is just one of the things that is coming out.

What saves us from the darkness, what can bring us out of this life, is only Jesus. Jesus. Verse 14. For anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you. Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.

Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. saying, Wake up. Don't be caught sleeping.

Be on guard. Be watching. It says, Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise. Be careful of every step. The days are evil.

[36 : 06] And Jesus said, As it draws near to the last days, there will be a great deception that will come. But to look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise.

And as James says, if you lack wisdom, then ask the Lord. Ask Him for wisdom. Dig into His word. Seek the wisdom.

Look, how am I supposed to walk? Lord, light up my path before me that I may see what I'm to do. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Again, how do we know that will? Seek Him. Seek Him in His word. Seek Him in prayer. Come to Him each day. And 18, And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.

Many will turn to physical things to care for the need that's inside. And one of them is drinking. In our culture, it's pretty controlling.

[37 : 33] I mean, most of my high school was kids that looked forward to every weekend so that they could go and get drunk and have just a break from the stresses of life. Now I have some, even of my own classmates, that are fighting addiction.

fighting these things that they did in high school. And it's, it leads them down a path of pain and sin.

And for that is, and it says, and do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery. What is debauchery? It is an extreme indulgence of bodily pleasures. And normally, when this happens, a lot of other stuff, debauchery is basically just sin in many ways. It's, basically, it will lead to much sin. And often with drinking, like Scripture says, do not get drunk. [38 : 42] But it also says, and warns of sexual immorality, adultery, lust, and often drinking and sexual immorality are very much connected.

At least in our culture, it is. When you're drunk, you're, you're not in control fully of your body. And with that, leads down a dark road. But it says, but be filled with the Spirit. How can we be filled with the Spirit? By believing in Jesus. By coming to Him. And then it goes on and it talks more of what's, what's our call as children. We're to address one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. [39 : 55] Christ. We're to be a children, a family that walks in love as Christ loved us.

And if we do that, even when we reflect on Christ's love on the cross, what He did for us when we understand the weight of our own sin, we then should address one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart. We should be giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We should explode with praise of what Jesus has done for us. He's given us all that we need. And when I say a family that loves or in walk in love, I think it's important to be reminded of what love is. And Paul makes this clear in 1 Corinthians. 13. For the love that the world says and for the love that Christ says are two very different things. [41 : 21] 1 Corinthians 13, 4 says, Love is patient and kind. Love does not envy or boast. It is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way.

It is not irritable or resentful. It does not rejoice at wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things, and finally, love never ends. Jesus says, there's no greater love than this, that one may lay down his life for his friend. There's no greater love. But when we look at Jesus, he laid down his life for his enemies. enemies. Jesus talks about it might, for a man to lay down his life for his friend, he's more willing. But even at that point, he might not. But to lay your life down for an enemy, someone who hates you, that takes love. [42 : 36] And Jesus came into the world where we were not seeking him. In fact, they killed him.

But it was for God's glory, it was for God's grace to be poured out. When we're living in darkness, we're enemies to God. But he brings us in, reveals his light to us. He makes us in to a family, a new creation that is not to walk in darkness, but walk in light. We are a part of a new family, taken and redeemed from a broken mess. And adopted into a new one. And more than that, we have become heirs. Hebrews 12 talks about it like, we're not just adopted in as servants, but we're adopted in as sons and daughters. Where we will rule with Christ one day. And even Paul says, he's like, do you not know that you will judge angels? It's like, oh, what, what does this mean?

[43 : 57] This is not something to take lightly, but is one to be shared of the love of our Heavenly Father. We are commanded to tell the good news of Jesus. The love of God, which God dying for us, paying the price on the cross to satisfy his wrath toward us sinners, so that we who were dead in our trespasses and sins, Ephesians 2, may have a right relationship with God, just as in the Garden of Eden, where Adam and Eve walked with God in perfect relationship.

And even in that, I've heard it talked about where Adam and Eve were covered in light, but when they sinned, that light was removed. Why are we to have a right relationship with God so that God might use us who were dead and broken to share of his love and mercy to a world that is dead in need of a new life, in need of the Savior, Jesus Christ? And what are we to do? We're to share the good news that Jesus, our Savior, paid the price and is alive and wants to give that life to those that are dead. So church gets sharing, is there? If there's disunity, reconcile with one another. If there's sin, repent of it. Our time here on earth is short because Jesus said, I'm coming soon.

Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children and walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. God.

[45 : 45] I remember I was, uh, driving with a high school friend and we were talking about, about the gospel and the truth and I told him, I was like, imagine it in this way.

So, the unbeliever doesn't know God. They're living in their own way but they're in darkness. So you're driving a car in the middle of the night and it's a dark night.

Like, there's no stars, no moon, there's no lights around you. It's just darkness. And for the unbeliever, that is their life. They're driving their car at high speeds, not knowing what's coming, not knowing what's ahead.

And they're just hoping for the best. They're like, well, hopefully if I'm good enough, then God will accept me. That's if they believe in God. Or hopefully, humans can make something that we can live forever.

And right now, our culture's striving for that. But at any moment, their lives could be done, taken.

[47 : 16] And being good enough is not enough. Because as Jesus said, if you lie, then you've committed the whole lot. If you sin once, you've committed it all.

But for the believer, we're still in this darkness, but the lights are on in the vehicle. And that light is God shining in this world.

As believers, we are still in the darkness, but we're lights. Sharing the truth of who God is.

His spirit comes in and gives us new life so that we can walk in the light. So that we can know, okay, where are we supposed to go, Lord?

Lead us, guide us. And one day, the darkness will be gone.

[48 : 26] This life in which we now know will be passed away. And it talks of in the new heaven and new earth, even in the millennial reign of Christ, that there will be no sun, no moon, but it will be light everywhere.

Because Jesus, our King, who is the light, is there. So question for you today, are you a child of God walking in the light, made new?

Or are you still in the darkness and lost and trying to feel your way around this world, being told so many lies and being deceived?

And if you are in the darkness, there's hope. hope. And it's in Jesus Christ. And if you don't know him, take the time to study his word.

Seek his kingdom. So I'm going to leave you with that. And for those that are believers, therefore, be imitators of God, his beloved children, and walk in love as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

[49 : 57] Thank you. Thank you.