

## Changed 5.

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- 1) Where's somewhere in your home you'd be a little nervous to shine a light?
- 2) Who's a role model in your life? Who do you look up to?

### Introduction:

A key to change that's worth it is having direction. While we're always changing, without a guide for that change, it's impossible to know if that change has been good or worthless. That's why, at the beginning of Ephesians 5 there's a very specific direction given to that change: Imitate God. Be like Jesus. As God transforms our lives, it's not just 'being different' that we're after, it's being like Jesus that we're after. And the results are worth it. The results unchain us from the dark places in our lives. We are set free as we change to become more and more like Him.

### Ephesians 5:1-20

"Imitate God, therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children. Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God. Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God's people. Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes—these are not for you. **Instead**, let there be thankfulness to God.

You can be sure that no immoral, impure, or greedy person will inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God. For a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. Don't be fooled by those who try to excuse these sins, for the anger of God will fall on all who disobey him. Don't participate in the things these people do. For once you were full of darkness, but now you have light from the Lord. So live as people of light! For this light within you produces only what is good and right and true. Carefully determine what pleases the Lord. Take no part in the worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead, expose them. It is shameful even to talk about the things that ungodly people do in secret. But their evil intentions will be exposed when the light shines on them, for the light makes everything visible. This is why it is said, "Awake, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light."

So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

- 3) When you think of imitating God and being like Jesus, what kinds of things come to mind?
- 4) The word "Instead" is bolded above. It says "instead, let there be thankfulness to God". How is thankfulness the antidote to the sin that's mentioned?
- 5) Paul asks us to be thoughtful about what we do. How much of what we do daily is thoughtless? How can we change that?
- 6) One of the things recommended in these verses is to sing songs and hymns. What things do you do to keep your mind focused on what God wants for you throughout the day?

Break.

- 7) What's your favorite cheesy love song?

Ephesians 5:21-33

"And further, submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

For wives, this means submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church. He is the Savior of his body, the church. As the church submits to Christ, so you wives should submit to your husbands in everything. For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word. He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault.

In the same way, husbands ought to love their wives as they love their own bodies. For a man who loves his wife actually shows love for himself. No one hates his own body but feeds and cares for it, just as Christ cares for the church. And we are members of his body. As the Scriptures say, "A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one." This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one. So again I say, each man must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."

- 8) The first half of Chapter 5 talked about shining a light in dark places. How has following Jesus shone a light on your relationships/marriage?
- 9) When you think of what Jesus did for the church, what does that love look like?
- 10) When you think of the people you know and the people in the bible who gave their lives to follow Jesus, what does that kind of submission look like?
- 11) When you consider that kind of love and submission, how should we love and submit in our relationships?

Reflection: Changing and following Jesus can open yourself up to all kinds of criticism and struggle. For next week, consider how you can protect yourself.

Prayer