

Tuesday, February 19th

Read Ephesians 5:8-16

⁸ For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth)¹⁰ and find out what pleases the Lord. ¹¹ Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. ¹² It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. ¹³ But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. ¹⁴ This is why it is said:

“Wake up, sleeper,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

¹⁵ Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.

This passage discusses what it means to have the light of Christ in you. However, there is a distinction. Verse 8 is not saying you are full of light but you are NOW light. Remember last week when Paul was telling his readers to imitate Christ. This is digging further into that. If you are a child of the light (and you are) then you should emulate the light, displaying the fruit of the light. This fruit of light, listed in verse 9 as goodness, righteousness, and truth is akin to the fruits of the spirit listed in Galatians 5 (and newly inscribed in the commons!) If you exude these things then you will have “nothing to do with” the darkness. Those things we discussed last week in verse 4.

The end of verse 11 and into verse 12 is where things get interesting. We should have nothing to do with the deeds of darkness but we should expose them. However, exposure for the sake of gossip or merely to discuss the deeds of darkness is NOT beneficial, that merely perpetuates the foolish talk. Exposing darkness, or sin, is meant to bring to light the folly of what is happening and be a form of correction. Hence, the verse 14 quote stating that the sleeper should rise from the dead and Christ will shine on you. When the light shines you wake up to your sin and make changes so you are able to live wisely.

Bruce, F. F. *The Epistles to the Colossians, To Philemon, and to the Ephesians*. William B. Erdmans Publishing, 1984.

Wednesday, February 20th

Read Ephesians 5:17-20

¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. ¹⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Remember this verse is following up what it means to live in the light and to live wisely as discussed yesterday. Paul's word choice is very intentional here. Yes, it is NEVER a good idea to get drunk. But in verse 18 Paul is comparing being drunk with the more edifying sense of being filled with the Holy Spirit. In verse 19, he continues this analogy by saying

we should be overflowing with praise rather than raucous and rowdy songs that can occur when intoxicated.

Finally, in verse 20 Paul is finishing up his instruction in wise living by reminding his readers (us) to always give thanks to God, for he is the ultimate provider.

Bruce, F. F. *The Epistles to the Colossians, To Philemon, and to the Ephesians*. William B. Erdmans Publishing, 1984.

Thursday, February 21st

Read Ephesians 5:21-27

²¹ Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

²² Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. ²³For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. ²⁴Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

In today's modern culture, this passage has become somewhat controversial. This is in great part because many people dwell on verses 22-23 excluding the rest of the passage.

Here Paul "reflected the cultural customs of his times and his own understanding of the divine order. He nevertheless rejected any notion that the husband thus was lord over or master of his wife with the right to do to her or with her as he wished. On the contrary, he cut across many of the cultural norms of his day and stressed the equality that exists between husband and wife and the mutual responsibility that each has to the other." This passage begins by urging all believers (husbands and wives among them) to submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. In fact the whole of the following passage flows from the initial statement in verse 21. The term submit isn't actually present in the original greek version of verse 22. It is carried over from verse 21. This should lead the reader to understand that submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ is connected to wives submitting to their husbands.

This passage is not giving a husband "license to rule his wife, but he is ordered to love his wife with self-sacrificing love--the same kind of love that Christ had for the church. In this sense, then the husband in actuality also submits himself to his wife as she to him, for he puts himself at her service. According to Paul, then, any exercise of headship on the part of the husband in relation to his wife is to be actualized not through self-assertion but through self-sacrifice."

Keener, C. S. "Man and Woman." *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, edited by Gerald F. Hawthorne & Ralph P. Martin, InterVarsity Press, 1993

Hawthorne, G.F. "Marriage and Divorce, Adultery and Incest." *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, edited by Gerald F. Hawthorne & Ralph P. Martin, InterVarsity Press, 1993

Friday, February 22nd

Read Ephesians 5:28-33

²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.²⁹ After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church—³⁰ for we are members of his body. ³¹ “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”³² This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

This passage is a clear continuation of yesterday’s passage. Paul is reiterating what it means to love your wife. But he goes further and refocuses in on his main point. He is trying to set up a picture of what the church’s relationship with Christ should be like. Remember, men are to love their wives as Christ loved the church? In verse 28 Paul gives an illustration. Love your wives more than your own bodies. His words are a reflection back to Genesis 2:23-24 (partially restated in verse 31)

*The man said,
“This is now bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called ‘woman,’
for she was taken out of man.”*

That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

When a man and woman are married they become one. This is why Paul says in verse 29 no one ever hated their own bodies. If a man and woman are one how can you hate yourself? And when you accept Christ’s sacrifice in your life and become part of the church it is the same. You have become part of the body of Christ.

Bruce, F. F. *The Epistles to the Colossians, To Philemon, and to the Ephesians*. William B. Erdmans Publishing, 1984.

Keener, C. S. “Man and Woman.” *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, edited by Gerald F. Hawthorne & Ralph P. Martin, InterVarsity Press, 1993