

Ephesians

Transformed by Grace, Empowered by Peace

Study 16

Children of the Light

Ephesians 5:1-21

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“Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. 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.

But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them.

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says:

“Awake, you who sleep,
Arise from the dead,
And Christ will give you light.”

See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.”

1. Fill in the blanks. Based on the video lecture, what is Ephesians 5 about?

Ephesians 5:1-21	Children of the Light
Ephesians 5:22-33	Marriage made in heaven

Ephesians 5:1-2

“Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. 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.”

2. a) Comprehension question. Paul exhorts the Ephesian believers to be imitators of God in Ephesians 5:1. What does that mean?

Paul uses the metaphor of a family to show us what we should be like. Children inherit the traits of their parents, i.e. their identity, love, DNA. And likewise, we should imitate our heavenly Father as we imitate our earthly parents.

b) Comprehension question. Based on Ephesians 5:2, what aspect of Christ should we imitate? How?

Walk in love.

3. a) Discussion question. Our love for others should be driven by grace and not legalism. We should love others because Christ first loved us. Is it possible to love others because we are commanded to as a rule?

Legalism will not produce genuine love. We will not be able to love others unconditionally if we ourselves have not experienced it from God first through His grace.

After all, the first of the 2 commandments is to love God and our neighbours as ourselves - clearly all have failed. Following commandments will not produce genuine love.

b) Discussion question. On the other hand, hypergrace means that the grace of God is taken as a licence to do all we want because we have been forgiven. But true Christians need to fight the good fight. What do we fight against? Refer to Ephesians 6:12-18.

Ephesians 5:3-6

“But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.”

4. Comprehension question. Based on Ephesians 5:3-4, what are the 3 types of sins we are warned against?

Sexual immorality

Covetousness

Speech sins

5. Fill in the blanks. Based on the video lecture, what is the difference between lust and love?

Lust	Love
Goal is self fulfilment	Goal is love for a person
Object is anyone who can fulfil	Partner to build relationship
Use the person	Serve the person
If the person no longer fulfils need, cut him/her off	If the person no longer fulfils need, remain committed
Devalues the person	Values the person

6. a) Comprehension question. Covetousness leads to:

- Envious of others
- Anxiety
- Risk taking behaviour
- Office manipulations
- Idolatry

In your own words, describe what covetousness is to you.

b) Comprehension question. Generosity - We could be generous for various reasons. What should motivate our generosity?

"A man is generous because he trusts God and never doubts but that he will always have enough. In contrast a man is covetous and anxious because he does not trust God." - Martin Luther

c) Discussion question. Why is sexual immorality mentioned together with covetousness?

7. a) Comprehension question. Why did God create us as creatures with desires?

God created us with desires that point to Him and find ultimate fulfilment in Him.

b) Discussion question. What is the difference between desiring and coveting?

c) Discussion question. How does the command not to covet safeguard both the worship of the Lord and the wellbeing of our neighbours?

Covetousness is essentially idolatry - to want something more than God Himself. If we guard against covetousness, we are making sure our greatest desire is God Himself and nothing else. If we do not covet what our neighbour has, we will not harm the wellbeing of our neighbours.

Ephesians 5:7-11

“Therefore do not be partakers with them.

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.”

8. Discussion question. We have been called out of darkness into His marvellous light. The metaphor is used to describe the changes that happen in us when we believe in the Lord Jesus. Describe the changes:

a) In our identity (darkness -> light)

b) In our motives (darkness -> light)

c) In our thinking (darkness -> light)

Ephesians 5:12-21

“For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says:

“Awake, you who sleep,
Arise from the dead,
And Christ will give you light.”

See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Therefore do not be unwise, but **understand what the will of the Lord is**. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled **with the Spirit**, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.”

9. a) Objective question. What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? Refer to Colossians 3:16-17.

- A. Start to speak in tongues**
- B. See the spiritual realm**
- C. See God**
- D. Feel God’s presence**
- E. Transforms our thinking**

b) Comprehension question. What does the answer to (a) change in us?

Dwelling on God’s Word transforms us. It changes:

- our identity**
- our motive**
- our thinking**
- our actions**

10. Comprehension question. Based on Ephesians 5:20-21, what is the result of a Spirit filled community?

- Giving thanks always
- Submitting to one another

Takeaway

- A. We are Children of the Light**
- B. As Children of the Light, we should imitate God and walk in love**
- C. As Children of the Light, we should avoid:**
 - a. Sexual immorality**
 - b. Covetousness**
 - c. Speech sins**
- D. As Children of the Light, we have:**
 - a. New Identity**
 - b. New Motives**
 - c. New Thinking**
- E. Being filled with the Holy Spirit is to let the word of Christ dwell richly in us**

Case Study

Case 1 – Filled with the Spirit

Derick Compton was feeling restless in his church. He was learning a lot from the preaching and classes but somehow he never really felt excited about Jesus. The Bible studies were intellectually stimulating and he even considered signing up for part time Bible college classes at one stage. However he spent little time in worship nor had much inclination to share the gospel which he regarded as a tiresome duty rather than a joy.

Alison Choy, his friend, suggested he try her church and they had a vibrant worship and he was uplifted in his spirits and they even taught him how to speak in tongues. After a few months he was back where he started. There wasn't much in depth study of the Word and

it was just lots and lots of worship and prophecy time and he was beginning to doubt the prophecies as a lot of them were general and the ones which were specific did not come true. He did join a life group but they seldom shared in very much depth nor broached the topic of personal spiritual growth as it was just about learning more spiritual gifts and making sure they hit the evangelism targets. He then joined a Yoga class and it seems to have given him some spiritual reality and he is really into it.

1. What was Derick suffering from? What are the problems of both churches?

Derick yearns for spiritual transformation.

The first church only studies the Bible from an intellectual perspective, not a spiritual one which results in the transformation of the heart.

The second church focuses on the outward appearance - of what can be seen, such as gifts, worship, music, prophecies. People can be easily taken in by the sights and sounds - mistaking these as being filled with the Spirit.

2. How is yoga going to help or hurt him?

Harmful. He is mistaking yoga as a spiritual experience instead of what is truly being filled with the Spirit.

3. What do you think Derick should do to experience God more in his life?

Derick needs to meditate and reflect on God's Word - that is to be filled with the Spirit. There is a huge difference between studying God's Word intellectually as opposed to letting "the word of Christ dwell in us richly in all wisdom" (Colossians 3:16).