

1 2 **Ephesians 5:1-2**

- *Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. ²And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*

3 **INTRODUCTION**

- John 13:34-35: *A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.*
- Ephesians 4:31-32: *Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. ³²And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.*

4 **A LIFE OF IMITATING GOD**

- Paul's exhortations:
 - 1 Corinthians 4:16: *I urge you, then, be imitators of me.*
 - 1 Corinthians 11:1: *Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.*
 - 1 Thessalonians 1:6: *And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit.*

5 **A LIFE OF IMITATING GOD (2)**

- Jesus' Commands:
 - Luke 6:36: *Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.*
 - Matthew 5:48: *You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*
- Paul's summary – Ephesians 5:2: *²And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us.*

6 **WE MUST BE HIS BELOVED CHILDREN**

- God's children through the new birth
 - Nicodemus
 - J. I. Packer: *Knowing God: "What is a Christian? The question can be answered in many ways, but the richest answer I know is that a Christian is one who has God for his Father."*
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7 **God's children through the new birth**

- John 1:12-13: *But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*
- 1 Peter 1:3: *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*

8 **God's children through adoption**

- Parents adopting a child – Pick the child who is the most attractive or cutest or brightest or healthiest.
- God chose us – Adopted us – knowing that we would be sinful and rebellious towards Him.

- Example: Family adopting severely impaired child

9 **We are His beloved children**

- Earthly fathers (and mothers) love for their children
- The Heavenly Father's love for His children:
- 1 John 3:1: *Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!*

10 **TO WALK IN LOVE IS TO KNOW HIM AND HIS WAYS**

- From His Word – Crucial to know God as He has revealed Himself and not as our changing culture portrays Him
- We must submit to God as He is revealed in the Bible.
- Means spending time in His Word and in prayer
- Psalm 25:4-5 – David – *"Make me to know your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths. ⁵Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation, for you I wait all the day long."*

11 **WE MUST LOOK TO CHRIST AND LOVE AS HE LOVED**

- *"walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us"*
- Understand a biblical definition of love
- Our culture's use of the word 'love'
- Modern culture's view:
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12 **Supreme demonstration of God's love**

- John 3:16: *"God so love the world that He gave His only begotten Son."*
- Ephesians 5:25: *Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her."*
- John 15:13: *Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.*

13 **WE MUST LOOK TO CHRIST AS OUR ATONING SACRIFICE**

- Isaiah 53:10-11: *Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He has put Him to grief. When You make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, And the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. ¹¹He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied. By His knowledge My righteous Servant shall justify many, For He shall bear their iniquities.*

14 **A FRAGRANT OFFERING**

- *¹¹He shall see the labor of His soul, and be satisfied.*
- KJV = 50 times in O.T. – Sweet-smelling savor
- Jesus dying on the cross so horrible that He turned the world into darkness for three hours.
- When the Father raised Christ from the dead, the sacrifice that caused Him to become sin became the sacrifice that conquered sin -- TO GOD A FRAGRANT OFFERING

15 **A LIFELONG PROCESS**

- 2:2 – He mentions how we used to walk in our sins.
- 2:10 – He says that we are now to walk in the good works which God prepared beforehand for us.

- 4:1 – He says that we should walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called.

16 **A LIFELONG PROCESS (2)**

- 4:17 – He says that we should not walk as the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind
- 5:8 – He will say that we must walk as children of Light.
- 5:15 – He will say that we must walk carefully, not as unwise men but as wise.

17 **A LIFELONG PROCESS (3)**

- 'walk' -- Carries the idea of a step-by-step, slow but steady progress. It refers to our entire manner of life.
- The longer you have been a Christian, the more your life should be characterized by love.
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18 **A LIFELONG PROCESS (4)**

- 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10: *Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, ¹⁰for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more.*
- Philippians 1:9: *And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment.*

19 **Three practical applications**

- First, to love others you must commit yourself to the glory of God.
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- Second, commit yourself to the Lord's Supper.
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- Finally, to walk in love you must commit yourself to the body of Christ, the church.