

Chapter 7 - Walking the Ephesians 5 Way

Paul, after telling Christians in Eph 4:1 *to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called*, goes on in Eph 5 to illustrate three aspects of how they should walk worthy of their calling. He writes that they should walk in love, walk as children of light, and walk circumspectly. In this chapter, we'll examine each of these instructions.

7.1. Walk in Love

Eph 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.*

To be imitators of God is a good summary of this series. As we have often seen, the virtues we strive after are actually the attributes of God. As John tells us in 1 Jn 4:8, *God is love*. So naturally as we strive to imitate God, to be like Christ, we should walk in love.

As with all of the virtues of the fruit of the Spirit, love is not of ourselves, but is bestowed on us by God.

1 Jn 3:1 *Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God!*

1 Jn 4:12 *No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us.*

John emphasizes that, since God loves us, so we ought to love one another.

1 Jn 4:9-11 *In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*

Of course, let's not forget that loving one another is the new commandment of Jesus Christ.

Jn 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. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."*

1 Jn 3:11 *For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another.*

2 Jn 5,6 *And now I plead with you, lady, not as though I wrote a new commandment to you, but that which we have had from the beginning: that we love one another. This is love, that we walk according to His commandments. This is the commandment, that as you have heard from the beginning, you should walk in it.*

The emphasis that we should **walk** according to Christ's commandment means that we should make loving one another a matter of daily practice. Paul also emphasizes this, in writing of the fruit of the Spirit:

Gal 5:25 *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.*

John also points out that we mustn't just talk about love, but demonstrate our love for one another in practical ways.

1 Jn 3:18 *My little children, let us not love in word or in tongue, but in deed and in truth.*

In the chapter on good work, we stated that good work is the outward expression of the inward possession of the fruit of the Spirit. Ephesians 5 emphasizes this; not only should we genuinely love one another, but we should demonstrate this love by **walking in love**.

7.2. Walk as Children of Light

The second of the Ephesians 5 teachings on how we should walk is that we should **walk as children of light**.

Eph 5:8-10 *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.*

Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount is well-known, and complements Paul's admonition that Christians should *walk as children of light*:

Matt 5:14-16 *"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven."*

Note the way Jesus equates *light* with *good works*, and the way Paul relates *walking as children of light* with *the fruit of the Spirit*. As we *walk in the Spirit*, the inward possession of the fruit of the Spirit is demonstrated by the outward expression of good work. This is

evident to our neighbours, so that *they may see your good works and glorify your father in heaven.*

The following verses of Scripture about *walking in the light* are also instructive:

Jn 8:12 *Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life.*

1 Jn 1:5-7 *This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.*

Isa 2:5 *O house of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of the Lord.*

Isa 8:20 *To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.*

7.3. Walk circumspectly

The third of the Ephesians 5 teachings on how we should walk is that we should **walk circumspectly**.

Eph 5:15,16 *See then that you **walk circumspectly**, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

To walk circumspectly means literally to walk while *looking around*. It means to be aware of the evil around us, and to walk wisely, prudently, cautiously, watchfully and warily. This is a timely reminder that this world is not our home; as Christians we are in the world but not of the world; our citizenship is in heaven. Like the heroes of faith in Hebrews 11, who *were strangers and pilgrims on the earth*, we need to *walk circumspectly*. John aptly describes the situation as he closes his first epistle:

1 Jn 5:18-20 *We know that whoever is born of God does not sin; but he who has been born of God **keeps himself**, and the wicked one does not touch him. We know that we are of God, and the whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one. And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us an understanding, **that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him** who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.*