

# In Our Father's Footsteps

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November 5, 2023 ▪ Nick Braitto

**Walk in love.** (vv. 2-6)

**Walk in light.** (vv. 7-14)

**Walk in wisdom.** (vv. 15-21)

## ***Ephesians 5:1-21***

<sup>1</sup> Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. <sup>2</sup> And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

<sup>3</sup> But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. <sup>4</sup> Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. <sup>5</sup> For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. <sup>6</sup> Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

<sup>7</sup> Therefore do not become partners with them; <sup>8</sup> for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light <sup>9</sup> (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), <sup>10</sup> and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. <sup>12</sup> For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. <sup>13</sup> But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, <sup>14</sup> for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

*"Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."*

<sup>15</sup> Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, <sup>16</sup> making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. <sup>17</sup> Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. <sup>18</sup> And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, <sup>20</sup> giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>21</sup> submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. (ESV)

## ***Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions***

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**Open:** What's one or two ways you are like your mother or father (whether intentionally or not!)?

**Read and Discuss:** Ephesians 5:1-21

1. Paul tells us to be "imitators of God" (v. 1). What are some ways we're called to imitate God? How does thinking of yourself as one of God's "beloved children" motivate you to want to imitate Him?
2. Paul also calls us to "walk in love, as Christ loved us" (v. 2). Though we can't sacrifice ourselves for others in the way Christ did, what are some examples of how we can show Christlike love to others? How are all the sins mentioned in verses 3-4 the opposite of Christlike love for others?
3. Understood the wrong way, verses 3-5 could leave a Christian who occasionally falls into sin unnecessarily burdened by guilt. On the other hand, not heeding verses 3-5 could leave someone who doesn't take sin seriously with a false assurance of their salvation (*See v. 6, as well as 1 Cor. 6:9-11*). In light of the rest of Scripture, how should verses 3-5 be properly understood?
4. In verse 8, Paul tells believers they "are light in the Lord." In what sense is this true? (*See also Matthew 5:14-16*.) How does thinking of yourself in this way motivate you to want to "take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness" (v. 11)?
5. Verse 7 calls us to not be "partners" with those who walk in sin, and verses 11-13 speak of how we are to "expose" what is sinful. Given our current cultural climate, how can we wisely fulfill this role in a way that most effectively shines both God's love and God's light into a darkened world?
6. Verses 15-16 make it clear that walking in wisdom requires intentionality. How do you do this in your own life? Based on what we've seen so far in Ephesians, what would you say the "will of the Lord is" for your life (v. 17)?
7. How is being "filled with the Spirit" both similar to and dissimilar from being "drunk with wine" (v. 18)? As you consider the evidences of being filled with the Spirit that are mentioned in verses 19-21, what are some ways you might ask God to help you walk more closely with Him?

**Pray:** Ask God to help us more fully and consistently embrace our identity as His "beloved children"—and out of that identity to more joyfully walk in love, in light, and in wisdom that we might better reflect God's character to a world that desperately needs to understand both His wrath and His grace.