

Bible Study
Ephesians 5:1-14

Introduction: Rowing club example. What is a recent ad you've seen or heard that uses sex to sell something? How did you respond to it?

Read Ephesians 5:1-14.

1. Verses 1-2. The true nature of love. Read Roman 5:6-8 and John 15:13. How do these verses help us understand Paul's admonition that we should "walk in love, as Christ loved us"?

Why is God's love manifested in the death and resurrection of Jesus "good news," that is the Gospel? Mark 16:15-16.

In these verses what do you think is the relationship between walking in love and being imitators of God?

2. St. Paul moves from what Christ has done to how this should affect our conduct. Review the two kinds of righteousness.

God's will is what's best for us.

3. **Oh, That the Lord Would Guide My Ways**

1 Oh, that the Lord would guide my ways
 To keep His statutes still!
 Oh, that my God would grant me grace
 To know and do His will!

2 Order my footsteps by Thy Word
 And make my heart sincere;
 Let sin have no dominion, Lord,
 But keep my conscience clear.

3 Assist my soul, too apt to stray,
 A stricter watch to keep;
 And should I e'er forget Thy way,
 Restore Thy wand'ring sheep.

4 Make me to walk in Thy commands—
 'Tis a delightful road—
 Nor let my head or heart or hands
 Offend against my God.

At your tables, answer how your verse reflects Paul's concern for who we are and what we do.

4. In verse 3, St. Paul uses an ascensive conjunction which “expresses a final addition or point of focus.” This point of focus is Paul’s desire to see conduct among God’s people that “is proper among the saints.” St. Paul goes directly to a misuse of sexuality: sexual immorality, impurity, or covetousness. The word covetousness here means “desire,” and in this context should probably be translated as lust (as in the 10th Commandment, you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife).

“The three terms (which appear together also in Col. 3:5) work together to describe an insatiable desire to misuse one’s body in way that are contrary to God’s holy will and that are bound up with idolatry. Whether or not the person who commits them consciously intends to worship a false god, they constitute false worship of self and the devil.”

How is crude joking and foolish talk connected to a misuse of the body?

Paul repeats these admonitions in verse 5. Why do you think he focuses so much on sexuality?

In verse 4, St. Paul says, “instead let there be thanksgiving.” How does thanksgiving provide a good substitute?

What does it mean when we are unable to give thanks to God?

5. St. Paul speaks of God’s wrath in verse 6. Read Hosea 4:8-14. Apparently, these temptations were nothing new. Read Revelation 18:7-8.

What does it mean that the church is the bride of Christ?

What does it mean that this applies to us corporately and not individually?

6. Read again verses 7-14. Verse 14 was probably a quotation from an ancient Christian hymn. For a further list of “fruit,” read Galatians 5:19-23.

St. Paul wants us to expose the works of darkness because when something is “exposed by the light, it becomes visible,” which is to say, we see it for what it really is. What’s so difficult about exposing things to the light of Christ?

7. “Please be patient. God isn’t through with me yet.” In what room of your life do you need to tack up this saying? Your family room? Your work room? Your library? Your dressing room? Your weight room? Your storage room? Your basement?
8. If you could tack up on the wall one phrase or verse of scripture from this passage for your life this week, what verse would you choose?