

In Christ - Ephesians Series

Walk in Love (Part 2)

What it REALLY means to walk in love!

Text: Ephesians 5:4-6

Introduction:

1. This is the 3rd time we encounter the word 'walk' in this practical section of Ephesians. We are exhorted to:
 - Walk worthy of the Lord (Eph. 4:1)
 - Not walk as the unsaved (Eph. 4:17)
 - Walk in love (Eph. 5:2)
2. The word walk implies a couple of important truths:
 - The Christian life is a practical life.
 - The Christian life involves progress and forward movement. "The word depicts progress in the Christian life because the Christian life never stands still. It is a life of movement." (John Phillips)
3. In this section the Apostle now issues a call for us to walk in love. As we will see, this is connected with a life of strict separation from the sensual sins of the flesh. We are considering this section under three headings:
 - The Example of Love to Follow (Vs. 1-2)
 - The Evils of Lust to Flee (Vs. 3-4)
 - The End of the Lost to Fear (Vs. 5-6)

I. THE EXAMPLE OF LOVE TO FOLLOW (VS. 1-2)

As believers we are to walk according to:

A. The Standard of the Father's Love (Vs. 1)

B. The Standard of the Son's Love (Vs. 2)

II. THE EVILS OF LUST TO FLEE (VS. 3-4)

The sins Paul warns against fall into two categories:

A. Sensual Sins (Vs. 3)

B. Speech Sins (Vs. 4)

Warren Wiersbe notes, "It is not difficult to see the relationship between the sins named in Verse 3 and those in Verse 4. People who have base appetites usually cultivate a base kind of speech and humour, and often people who want to commit sexual sins, or have committed them, enjoy jesting about them."

1. The perverse tongue described (Vs. 4a)

a. Filthiness – signifies something shameful or obscene (Phillips).

It is "that which is shameful, disgraceful, base. Includes speech but not limited to it." (Hoehner)

i. As believers our speech should not include innuendoes, suggestive language, dirty jokes and questionable things. We are living in a day where nothing is sacred and talk about intimate things is commonplace. "Two indications

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of a person's character are what makes him laugh and what makes him weep." (Wiersbe)

- ii. Illustration: My Grandma's innocence of such things till 18 years of age.
- b. Foolish talking – means empty, futile, silly talk. It is made up of two Greek words; 'moros' (moron) and 'lego' (word, speaking). Vincent says "talk which is both foolish and sinful. It is more than random or idle talk."
 - i. Harry Ironside says it is "talking like a fool about unclean things, such as double meanings."
 - ii. John Phillips wisely points out that "Flippant talk often degenerates into worse talk. Another problem is that some people get into such a habit of talking on a light and foolish level, that you can't have a serious conversation with them. They turn everything into a joke or pun."
- c. Jestling – a coarse jest (Linguistic Key). The word is made up of 'eu' (well, easily) and 'trepo' (to turn). Therefore, it means "able to turn easily".
 - i. Wiersbe notes "it suggests a certain kind of conversationalist who can turn any statement into a coarse jest. The gift of wit is a blessing, but when it is attached to a filthy mind or a base motive, it becomes a curse."
 - ii. Robertson says, "nimbleness of wit but in a low sense as here ribaldry (vulgar, coarse or indecent speech), scurrility."
 - iii. Harold Hoehner points out "in the context it most likely indicates jesting that has gone too far, thus becoming sarcastic ridicule that cuts people down and embarrasses others who are present. It is humour in bad taste. Believers should build up and not destroy, even in humour... This does not mean humour cannot be used by Christians. However, it should not be employed at someone's expense thus running counter to Paul's injunction to edify each other (4:29) ... Like anger, humour is to be controlled."
- d. "which are not convenient" = the word 'convenient' means "befitting, seemly" (Wuest). It means "fit, suitable, proper" (Webster). It therefore means such speech is not appropriate for a believer.
- e. Question: What place does humour have in a Christian's life?
 - i. God created us with the ability to laugh and it is a valid expression of joy in the appropriate context. Ecc. 3:4 says there is "a time to laugh". Prov. 17:22 reminds us "A

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merry heart doeth good *like* a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.” The Psalmist spoke of the deliverance of God’s people from captivity and how their mouths were “filled with laughter” and their tongues “with singing” (Psalm 126:2). God Himself is said to laugh at the foolishness of the wicked (Psalm 2:4).

- ii. The key thing is that our humour is to be within the context of that which is wholesome. We are not to laugh at that which breaks God’s heart. We are not to laugh at the sins that nailed Christ to the cross!
 - iii. Where our humour one with another is in the form of a wholesome jest (sarcasm, wit, jokes, teasing), we do need to take care that we don’t cross a line and offend someone. If it tips over into running the person down or turns into a form of mockery, then it has gone too far. A good question to ask is “Are both parties having an enjoyable time?” If you are the only one having a good time and the other person is not, then you need to stop!
2. The pure tongue commended (Vs. 4b)
 - a. “but rather” = the contrasting alternative is presented.
 - b. “giving of thanks” = instead of having corruption on our tongues, we are to have praise to God. The message is clear. Instead of using your tongue to degrade and pull down, use it to give thanks to God. Elevate your conversation to a higher plane!

III. THE END OF THE LOST TO FEAR (VS. 5-6)

Those who do not repent of their sinful lifestyle face a fearful judgment.

A. They will be Excluded from God’s Kingdom (Vs. 5)

1. For this ye know” = evidently Paul had taught them about this previously and now reminds them.
2. The Apostle now lists three categories of men which tie back to the three key words in Vs. 3.
 - a. Whoremonger = ‘ pornos’; means ‘fornicator’. Links back to the sin of fornication mentioned in Vs. 3.
 - b. Unclean Person = comes from the same word as “uncleanness” (Vs. 3)
 - c. Covetous = Paul adds the words “who is an idolater” as covetousness is a form of idolatry – “...covetousness, which is idolatry” (Col. 3:5). “That which is coveted becomes the centre of one’s life and is worshipped instead of the Creator (Rom. 1:23).” (Hoehner)
3. “hath **any** inheritance in the kingdom” = these sins, practiced habitually, are evidence of an unregenerate heart. “A Christian is not sinless, but he sins less!” Those living this way “simply give evidence that they are not Christians at all.” (Hoehner) 1 Cor. 6:9-

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10 warns, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God."

B. They will Experience God's Wrath (Vs. 6)

1. The illusion of the deceivers (Vs. 6a)
 - a. "Let no man deceive you" = evidently there were those trying to teach contrary to the truth and thereby justify an immoral and wicked life.
 - b. "vain words" = Any person who tells you God is fine with sexual immorality is lying to you. Their words are 'vain', meaning "empty, hollow."
 - c. It shines a light on how many deceivers there are today within Christendom who preach a form of "easy believism" that leaves the truth of repentance out.
2. The reality of the defiled (Vs. 6b)
 - a. "because of these things" = the things Paul has just denounced in Vs. 3-4.
 - b. "cometh the wrath of God" = the word 'cometh' is in the present tense. It pictures the wrath of God hovering over the sinner, about to crash down upon him.
 - c. "children of disobedience" = a description of the unregenerate. If your life is characterized by disobedience, it raises a serious question over your salvation.

Conclusion:

1. Are you saved? If you are living habitually in such a lifestyle, then it is a warning to you that you have an unregenerate heart. You need to repent of that lifestyle and receive God's free gift of forgiveness.
2. How is your mouth as a Christian? From our studies in Ephesians to date in this practical section of the Book, it is very clear that what comes out of our mouths is very important to our God.