

Ephesians 5:5-21 Children of Light

What does it mean to live a Christian life?

1. Knowing sin and walking in obedience (Ephesians 5:5-14)
2. Knowing time and walking in wisdom (Ephesians 5:15-17)
3. Knowing the Lord and walking in joy (Ephesians 5:18-21)

Christianity isn't intended to make the old-self **better** – to improve on some prior inadequacies. Christianity intends to change who you are and make you **new** (Ephesians 4:17).

1. Know sin and walk in obedience

(Ephesians 5:11) “*deeds of darkness*” – immoral, impure (pornography), greed

View 1: what the Bible says about sex is outdated but what it says about greed, injustice and oppression is absolutely right and should be heeded.

View 2: Denounce sexual immorality and make a big show of it but ignore what the Bible says about greed and involvement with the poor.

The Bible is comprehensive on both 1 & 2 above.

Idolater (Ephesians 5:4) – you may be living **externally** correct but **internally** your motives are wrong, which still makes it sinful.

The love, even of a good thing, like love for children, can be a problem if it is more important than love for God.

(Ephesians 5:8, Ephesians 5:11) “*once you were darkness...*” People do not occasionally do bad things. No. They are **bad**. The Bible is negative on human nature.

(Ephesians 5:6) **The guilt of sin.** God's wrath. Judicial condemnation. Sin means you are **guilty**, not that you **messed up**. We may feel that some people deserve god's wrath (i.e. Nazis), but not me!

Sin (Ephesians 5:8) You are light (goodness). Light in the Lord.

2. Knowing time and walking in Wisdom

(Ephesians 5:15-17) Living the Christian life is more than keeping the **moral rules**. It is also knowing how to navigate the 80% of life where the moral rules are ambiguous.

- Most jobs are morally permissible
- Most marriages are morally permissible
- Lots of choices in life which are morally OK

However, some choices are wise and some are **foolish**.

How do you decide the wise thing when the law of God does not clearly give direction?

“*be careful how you live (walk)*” when you walk you need to have a direction. Making money is ok, but for what purpose?

(Ephesians 5:16) “*Make the most of every opportunity.*” Redeeming your time and make strategic decisions.

3. Knowing the Lord and walking in joy

(Ephesians 5:18-21) Being filled with the Spirit. **Joy** is at the heart of Christian life.

Being filled with the **Spirit** gives what people are looking for when they get drunk. You do not need to get drunk and numb to find joy.

Signs that you are filled with the Holy Spirit:

- a. Live a life of **gratitude** towards God
- b. Live a life of **service** to others
- c. Always walk around singing and full of **joy**

Ephesians 5:21-33 : Marriage in Christ

Marriage: 1) What it is, 2) What it does, 3) What it Needs, 4) What it shows

1. What it is

In Ephesians 5:31 Paul quotes Genesis 2:24 – marriage is a **covenant** – not a **contract**. Nor is marriage a declaration of **present** love, but a binding promise of **future** love. It is not a promise to always feel warm and loving (who can do that), but to be loving, and cherishing and serving and faithful (regardless of the emotional ups and downs). This is in complete contrast with our present culture, which does not see the most important thing in a marriage relationship to be the covenant but the chemistry. ~~There is a problem with monogamy. Marriage is a matter of duty and not passion and spontaneity.~~

2. What it does (purpose of marriage)

- 1) It **Cleanses**, and 2) it **Meshes**

1. Cleanses:

Ephesians 5:25-27: **Q: What is Christ's purpose?** To bring about **change**.

Spiritually we are twisted and bent and Christ wants to make us straight and beautiful.

Your spouse is supposed to help you be the person **Christ** wants you to be.

Culture says the purpose of marriage is finding someone who will not change me but accept me as I am.

Marriage is to supplement me, and enhance my life, not to change me.

You need to admit you are not fine as you are! You are nowhere close to being the person that God created you to be.

Philippians 1:6 – “*the good work he began in you ...*”. You are a **shadow** of who you are supposed to be.

Like visiting Danali. It is mostly covered in clouds but sometimes the clouds part and you can see the beauty of the mountain. That is what a Christian relationship should be. You get a glimpse of who that person can be in Christ.

Christian marriage is an intense form of Christian relationship. When we get to heaven will we turn to our brother and sister and say – “I always knew you could be like this!”

Practical implications of marriage:

- a. Expect to **clash** and have **confrontations**:

You are trying to change one another. You will be speaking the truth in love to each other (Eph. 4:15). If you are in a good healthy marriage, it will bring you to confront things that are wrong in your character. (A gem tumbler knocks off rough edges)

- b. Who do you choose to marry?

What are your primary interests and secondary interests in a relationship?

Shouldn't you marry a person based on something that will get **stronger** as you get older, not weaker?

Don't choose based on looks, money, connections – but find someone who can be your friend **and** counselor.

- c. **Chemistry** is important:

But nothing is as attractive as having the love of someone you greatly admire and respect.

2. Meshes:

Bridge the gap between the **genders**. The husband and wife's roles are not **identical**. The Bible takes our gender differences seriously and it gives us a way to complement and mesh our genders. One, only one principle – Eph. 5:22-23 “*wives let your husband be your **head**.*” Leadership and Final say. When you can't agree the husband has the final say. The Bible then says 2 things:

- 1) Don't use leadership to serve yourself. Husbands should always put wife's needs above his own. (Example – buy a red or blue car. Husband should pick car color his wife likes.)

Husbands should only overrule your wife and make the final call to seek the good of your wife, never to please yourself. Eph. 5:23 (headship) vs Eph. 5:25 (die for wife)

- 2) **Bible** gives no cultural detail on this principle.
The Bible does not give details on who controls the checkbook, or who is the main breadwinner, or who takes care of the kids. The Bible gives a principle for all times, places, and cultures – so no details.
 - **Liberals** do not like the principle of male headship
 - **Conservatives** want to bring in all their cultural details.

3. What it Needs:

Eph. 5:18 “*Be filled with the Holy Spirit*”. A Holy Spirit powered ability to do “**love philanthropy**”. Holy Spirit’s job is to take things you know in your **head** and make it alive in your **heart**. This will allow you to submit to and serve one another. Love Philanthropy: You get so much money from one source you can give it away somewhere else.

You cannot be a good spouse (or Christian brother) unless you can love your spouse (brother) when they are not being the spouse (brother) they should be. If your spouse is the main thing in your life and they criticize you, you will break down. If you love God more than your spouse, you will love your spouse well. If you are filled with love from God, you have enough love to share.

How can you do love philanthropy? **The Gospel – Jesus is the perfect spouse**. We rebelled and turned away from God and what did Christ do? The ultimate spousal love.

4. What it shows:

Eph. 5:32 **Christ** is the husband, and the **church** is the bride. This is not a metaphor but reality. Human marriage points to **heavenly** marriage. Marriage helps us understand what the **Gospel** is about, and the Gospel gives us the power to love well (married or unmarried).