

St. Matthew AME Church
Bible Study
Monday, January 4, 2010

Ephesians 5:1-20

- I. Every Christian should be an imitator of God because we are a child of God. As a child imitates its parents, a believer should imitate God. (Ephesians 5:1-2, Matthew 5:48, Luke 6:36)
 - A. We imitate God by walking in love. The supreme example is Christ love for us
 1. He willingly gave up His life for us.
 2. Christians can imitate God's love by loving others

- II. Self-centered vices are the opposite of God's love and display lack of concern for others. A believer should not have even a hint of these sins in our lives. (Ephesians 5:3-4)
 - A. Sexual immorality and any kind of impurity and greed are sinful. Improprieties in speech (obscenities, foolish talk and coarse jesting) are out of place for followers of Jesus.
 1. This kind of talk becomes so easy for many of us and we take it for granted, so much so that it has become common even among believers.
 2. This conversation does not reflect God's presence in our lives and contradicts our voice and questions our sincerity when we use these same voices to praise God.
 - B. Paul sternly warns us that those who practice immorality, impurity and greed are not a part of God's kingdom. They have not been washed, sanctified, and justified. (I Corinthians 6:9-11)
 1. Christians should not view this warning as empty words because this behavior is the object of God's wrath. (Colossians 3:6) God's view of sin should be taken seriously.

- III. Christians should not be partners with persons who exercise this kind of behavior. The reason is because as Christians we are to be children of light. (Ephesians 5:7-8)
 - A. We have been rescued out of darkness (Colossians 1:13) and our behavior should correspond with our position (Ephesians 5:8-10)
 - B. This does not mean that we should keep away or have nothing to do with unbelievers. Jesus taught us that we should seek to lead them to Him, this requires interaction with them. (Luke 5:30-32)
 - C. What Paul is speaking about is condoning their behavior or adopting their lifestyle. This includes even those who are in the church, for they can cause division and undermine obedience.
 - D. Our actions should reflect what we believe. This way we expose "the deeds of darkness" to the light and show them for what they really are. (Ephesians 5:13-14)

- IV. We are then advised to "be careful then how we walk" or to "walk circumspectly."
 - A. We do this by exercising wisdom. Wisdom is to live according to or obeying God's Word. The Word of God is the standard by which believers live, not the rationale or logic of the world.
 - B. When we live by or obey anything else we are walking or living as fools.
 1. Rather than living foolishly or unwise we should "understand what the Lord's will is." (Ephesians 5:17) We understand the Lord's will on the basis of His Word.

- V. Paul contrast “walking circumspectly” and as fools with the example of being drunk with wine and being filled with the spirit. (Ephesians 5:18-20)
 - A. When someone is drunk with wine they act abnormally and are out of control. Rather than controlling himself the wine controls him.
 - B. When someone is “filled with the spirit”, rather than controlling himself, is controlled by the Holy Spirit. The believer yields to the Lord and is controlled by Him.
 - 1. Filled with the Spirit the believer manifest the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22)
 - C. The results of being filled with the spirit (Ephesians 5:19-20)