

Ephesians 5:3—But do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints;

The first subject addressed after Ephesians 5:1-2 is “*immorality*” (Ephesians 5:3). “*Immorality*” (*porneia*), the total antithesis of love, can be defined as “illicit sexual intercourse in general.” Individuals involved in immoral relationships fail to display God’s love toward the person with whom they are immorally involved. Let me explain.

Much of our society (including the body of Christ) has bought the lie that relationships are established for personal gain. Thus, relationships are entered into, not to give, but to get—the perfect formula for disaster. This arrangement endures only so long as the “partner” is pleasant, attractive, healthy, meets all needs, and surpasses expectations. The moment the feelings flee, however (and they will flee), the unfulfilled partner is free to pursue whomever he/she pleases. Satan dangles this lifestyle before the unwise to their ruin, for death is partner with “*the course of this world*” (Ephesians 2:2). Only Jesus can save us from such nonsense.

God despises sexual sin for an abundance of reasons, for sex was originally intended for marriage—for blessing (pleasing) the person with whom you enter into covenant (1Corinthians 7:2-5) and for bearing children (Genesis 1:27-28). Hence, Jehovah entered into relationship with Israel (Exodus 24:1-8; Deuteronomy 5:1-3) not only to bless her (Deuteronomy 7:6-11), but to bear His Son, Jesus Christ, the “*seed*” of Genesis 3:15 (Galatians 3:16), through a “*virgin*” (Isaiah 7:14) of Jewish descent. Yet, Israel committed adultery and played the harlot through worshipping foreign gods (Hosea 4:11-14). Besides breaking God’s heart, Israel’s disobedience communicated the lie that He alone was insufficient to meet her needs. It also revealed that Israel desired relationship without commitment. No wonder the Creator so despises adultery! Homosexuality (1Corinthians 6:9; 1Timothy 1:8-10) is even worse, making the bold statement that God is not needed at all. No wonder a homosexual-laced society teeters on the brink of destruction (Romans 1:18-32). God loves the adulterer and homosexual, but abhors their sin. So should we.

Unconditional “*love*” (Ephesians 5:1-2), *agape* love, God’s kind of love, chooses to respond favorably with no strings attached. Worth, performance, and attractiveness are never required. Neither is *agape* “*love*” based on emotion (although the “feelings” or emotions are positively affected when *agape* enters the scene). *Agape* love is based on choice and commitment, the only love capable of generating the fruitful and lasting relationships the soul desires.

“*Impurity*” (Ephesians 5:3) is from the Greek *akatharsia* and points to both physical (Matthew 23:27) and moral uncleanness (Romans 1:24; 6:19; 2Corinthians 12:21; Galatians 5:19; Ephesians 4:19; 5:3; Colossians 3:5; 1Thessalonians 2:3). We can be safe in saying that “*impurity*” (Ephesians 5:3) points to sexual sin in general, such as impure thoughts, fantasies, lust, and a variety of sexual perversions within the mind.

“*Greed*” (*pleonexia*), which accompanies immorality and impurity (Ephesians 5:3), is an unrestrained desire to possess more. Thus, the passions and cravings accompanying sexual sin are never satisfied. No wonder “*immorality*” and “*impurity*” breed unfaithful relationships, either due to: (1) infidelity or (2) indecent sex acts, of barbaric proportions, performed between the partners.

The number of men, women, and children carrying emotional (and physical) scars due to these uncontrolled passions is appalling. Therefore, when tempted to compromise in these areas, Proverbs 7 and Romans 1:18-32 are necessary reading.

Because “*be named*” (Ephesians 5:3) can also be interpreted “be mentioned,” for saints to so much as

“mention” what can be categorized as “immorality,” “impurity,” or “greed” is not “proper.” A “saint” is a “holy one,” and his behavior should be progressing in holiness due to the holy, perfect, and blameless soul and spirit he has already become.

Ephesians 5:4—and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

Other patterns of behavior “are not fitting” for the saint to entertain. “Filthiness” (Ephesians 5:4) is “obscenity” or “all that is contrary to purity” (*Vine’s*)—such as indecent, disgraceful, or filthy speech. “Silly talk” is sinful dialogue void of forethought and wisdom, while “coarse jesting” occurs when, for the sake of attention and wit, a person turns an innocent statement into the suggestive, obscene, or indecent.

Paul exhorts his readers to be consumed with the “giving of thanks,” and in 1Thessalonians 5:18, even encourages believers to thank God for everything. Thanking God results in humility, unselfishness, and love—which helps guard against the sins previously described, sins resulting from pride, selfishness, and a deficiency of love.

Ephesians 5:5—For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Paul’s readers knew “with certainty” that not everyone will repent and believe, forever eliminating the gross error of universalism. How did they come to understand this truth? Paul had taught the Ephesians that “no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God” (Ephesians 5:5). These persons’ habitual sin reveals their corrupted hearts (1John 3:4-10). Similar terminology is used in verses 5 and 3—terms such as “immoral,” “impure,” and “covetous” in Ephesians 5:5, “immorality,” “impurity,” and “greed” in Ephesians 5:3. The believer is not to even “mention” such sin (Ephesians 5:3), much less wallow in it—as do the unredeemed (Ephesians 5:5).

Because “immoral,” “impure,” and “covetous” (Ephesians 5:5) are derived from the same root words as “immorality,” “impurity,” and “greed” (Ephesians 5:3), the notes from Ephesians 5:3 can be referenced for additional input. “Covetous” is linked with “idolater” in Ephesians 5:5, meaning that a “covetous” individual is an “idolater”—a person who worships idols (things) rather than God. This lifestyle results from a lack of gratitude for Jehovah—a lack of “giving of thanks” (Ephesians 5:4). Unsurprisingly, “idolatry” is linked with “greed” and “immorality” in Colossians 3:5:

Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. (Colossians 3:5)

A nation can’t survive the consequence of this type of evil.

During the Millennium, the church will reign “with Christ” (Revelation 20:4) over “The kingdom of Christ and God” (Ephesians 5:5). An amazing adventure awaits New Testament saints!

Ephesians 5:6—Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

“Empty” (*kenos*) is rendered “vain” on most occasions in New Testament Scripture but can also be interpreted “foolish” or “futile.” Hence, “empty words” “deceive” the listener (Ephesians 5:6). The

believer should disregard words of this type, for they are void of truth—their source being Satan who possesses no truth (John 8:44). “*Sons of disobedience*” (Ephesians 5:6), individuals void of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9, 14, 16) who receive God’s “*wrath*” (Ephesians 5:6), readily accept these lies due to their folly. The Spirit of truth allows the believer to steer clear of this emptiness so long as the believer remains alert.

Those who advocate that God’s love prevents Him from condemning the lost (the unwise and foolish) are communicating “*empty words*” (Ephesians 5:6). Individuals who listen and believe accordingly are “*sons of disobedience.*” They are Satan’s offspring possessing natures that enjoy sin (John 8:44).

Ephesians 5:7—Therefore do not be partakers with them;

Believers, under no circumstance, should “*be partakers*” (joint-partakers) “*with*” those who disregard truth and wallow in the world’s vices.

Ephesians 5:8—for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light

for you were formerly darkness, (5:8a)

As was verified in Ephesians 2:1-3, Adam’s sin resulted in spiritual death for himself and his offspring. Consequently, we were born children of “*darkness*” (Ephesians 5:8a). We “*were formerly darkness*” (Ephesians 5:8a) because we were sons of Satan (John 8:44), “*the power of darkness*” (Luke 22:53), whose dominion is “*darkness*” (Ephesians 6:12; Colossians 1:13). Therefore, we possessed both moral and intellectual darkness due to the sin nature inherited from Adam, a nature that made sin natural behavior. Yet, we possessed enough light in our depravity to repent and believe, for the darkness experienced by the depraved can be enhanced through exacerbated sin (review notes associated with Ephesians 2:1). A darkness that can be enhanced is never void of light, or else its enhancement would be impossible. The removal of light generates darkness—proving that the depraved, whose darkness intensifies with increased sin, possess at least a measure of light.

A totally darkened environment is thoroughly void of truth. Hence, the lost will live in eternal “*darkness*” (Matthew 8:12; 2Peter 2:17). As a good friend once said, “God’s love frees man to not only choose darkness over light, but to live in darkness for all eternity due to that choice.” Man basically rejects light because of its ability to expose sin:

“And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil. “For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. (John 3:19-20)

but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light (5:8b)

Because “*God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all*” (1John 1:5), Jesus, being “*God*” (Hebrews 1:8), was “*the light of the world*” during His First Coming (John 8:12; 9:5). Therefore, all who are “*in Christ*” (2Corinthians 5:17), and thus, in God the Father (John 14:20), “*are light in the Lord*” (Ephesians 5:8b). They come to the light because they desire to practice the truth (John 3:21)—unlike those who choose to reside in darkness (John 3:19-20). Isn’t it wonderful to know that when God “*called*” (invited) us “*into His marvelous light*” (Colossians 1:13; 1Peter 2:9) and we chose to accept that invitation, He delivered us

“from...darkness”? Hence, Jesus said of believers, *“You are the light of the world”* (Matthew 5:14).

We (as believers) are to *“walk as children of light”* (Ephesians 5:8b) because God, Who *“is light”* (1John 1:5), granted us His kind of life, *“eternal life”* (John 3:15-16; 5:24; 6:40, 47; 10:28; etc.), when we became His (1John 3:1-2). Because *“walk”* (Ephesians 5:8) is a present imperative in the Greek, we are to walk consistently as children of light rather than irregularly. We *“walk”* in this manner by yielding to the indwelling Christ (Romans 5:10)—not by submitting to valueless rules and regulations (Colossians 2:20-23).