

**SCRIPTURE:** Ephesians 5:1-20 NLT

"Imitate God [be imitators of Christ], therefore, in everything you do, because you are his dear children.<sup>2</sup> Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us<sup>3a</sup> and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God. <sup>3</sup> Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God's people. <sup>4</sup> Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes—these are not for you. Instead, let there be thankfulness to God. <sup>5</sup> You can be sure that no immoral, impure, or greedy person will inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God. For a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. <sup>6</sup> Don't be fooled by those who try to excuse these sins, for the anger of God will fall on all who disobey him. <sup>7</sup> Don't participate in the things these people do. <sup>8</sup> For once you were full of darkness, but now you have light from the Lord. So live as people of light!<sup>9</sup> For this light within you produces only what is good and right and true. <sup>10</sup> Carefully determine what pleases the Lord. <sup>11</sup> Take no part in the worthless deeds of evil and darkness; instead, expose them. <sup>12</sup> It is shameful even to talk about the things that ungodly people do in secret. <sup>13</sup> But their evil intentions will be exposed when the light shines on them, <sup>14</sup> for the light makes everything visible. This is why it is said, "Awake, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will give you light." <sup>15</sup> So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. <sup>16</sup> Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. <sup>17</sup> Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. <sup>18</sup> Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, <sup>19</sup> singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts.<sup>20</sup> And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

**1) WALK IN LOVE**

- We are all imitating, learning from, or being influenced by someone!
- We are called to imitate Christ, like a child imitates a parent! We need to learn our behaviours from Christ.
- Imitating Christ in Our Lives: John Comer comments that we are to: "Be with Jesus; Become Like Jesus; Do as He did!" Dallas Willard states, "Discipleship is the process of becoming who Jesus would be if he were you!"
- One way that we can imitate Christ is to walk in agape, "extravagant, self-sacrificing" love, in every area of our lives.
- Our lives should be characterized and driven by our love for God and for others.
- Learning to imitate Christ, by walking in love as Jesus did is not easy and can be messy and difficult at times. Leonard Ravenhill put it this way: *"If you want to be like Jesus, remember, He had a wilderness, a Gethsemane, and a Judas."*
- We can't walk in a love like Christ, unless we allow Holy Spirit to develop and grow a love in us that does not settle for how we used to live (immorality/sin) but instead to live a life of discipline, obedience and holiness.
- When we choose the new transformed life, a life of love and holiness, our lives become a sweet aroma to Him!

## 2) LIVING IN THE LIGHT

- If we want to imitate Christ we must learn to live in the light and shine like "lights in the darkness" (John 9:5).
- Everything is Revealed in the Light: We need to be okay to step into the spotlight, letting Holy Spirit reveal the areas we need to work on, and transform us, so we can walk in the fullness of our Kingdom calling.
- Our daily prayer needs to be: "Search my Heart O God" (Ps. 139:23-24).
- We need to stop hitting the "snooze button" on our lives and spiritually wake up!
- We need to come alive and walk in the new life that Christ has given us and then begin to walk in boldness and shine "light" on that which is not of Him in our culture/communities.
- Arise & Shine: We are called to go to the darkest areas of our world and society and show His love and be a light!

## 3) LIVING BY THE SPIRIT'S POWER

- We can't imitate Christ without living by the Spirit's power.
- A transformed Spirit-filled life includes: A life of applied wisdom (v. 15), holiness (v. 18), fulfilling the will of the Father (Heaven to Earth) (v. 16-17), and a life of praise and thanksgiving (v. 19-20).
- We need to choose to draw near to God, be engulfed by His love, and be filled, led, transformed, and empowered by His Spirit so that we can be a "Jesus with skin on" to a hurting world!

## GETTING PRACTICAL

- **A) Read the Word:** 5-10 mins
- **B) Prayer/Reflection:** 5-10 mins
- **C) Get Your Praise On:** 3-5 mins
- **D) Acts of Love:** Look for an opportunity to display self-sacrificial love this week
- **E) Get Accountable:** Walk with someone to help us grow in our relationship with Christ