

THE CHRISTIAN WALK (Continued)

Ephesians 5:1-21

III. A Christian Is To Walk Lovingly. Ephesians 5:1-17.

1. Walk as children of love. 5:1-7.

(1) As imitators of God. 5:1.

"Be ye therefore imitators of God, as children beloved."

(2) Having Christ as an example. 5:2.

"And walk in love, even as also the Christ loved us, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odour of a sweet smell."

(3) Abstain from sensual practices. 5:3-4.

"But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness not even let it be named among you, even as is becoming saints; and filthiness and foolish talking or jesting, which are not becoming; but rather thanksgiving."

In sixty-two places in the New Testament the word "saint" is used to designate the believer in Christ. A saint is nothing more nor less than a believer in Christ. Sometimes a professing Christian will say, "I am no saint." What does he mean? If he is not a saint, then he is not a Christian. If he is a Christian, then he is a saint. Every Christian is a saint.

While all believers in Christ are saints, not all of them are saintly. Some of them become very unsaintly in their daily walk, not because God wants it that way, but because they yield to the flesh rather than the Spirit.

It becometh saints to be strong. It also becometh them to be spiritual. Paul wrote about three kinds of men--the natural man, who is unsaved and the one to whom the things of the Word are foolishness; the carnal man, who is a Christian, but is living, walking and judging after the fashion of the world; and the spiritual man, who is controlled by the Spirit of God and whose desire is to put first things first.

Christians, we have become saints by His grace; therefore let us live as becometh saints, to the end that our Lord Jesus Christ shall be glorified thereby.

(4) Those practicing sensuality have no inheritance in the kingdom. 5:5.

"For this ye know that any fornicator, or unclean person, or covetous, who is an idolater, has not inheritance in the kingdom of the Christ and of God."

(5) Those practicing sensuality invite the wrath of God upon them. 5:6-7.

"Let no one deceive you with empty words; for on account of these things comes the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience. Be not therefore joint-partakers with them; for ye were once darkness, but now light in the Lord; as children of light walk."

2. Walk as children of light. 5:8-14.

(1) Walk in keeping with what you are. 5:8-9.

"For ye were once darkness, but now light in the Lord; as children of light walk, for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." Show what you are since Christ saved you and not what you were before.

(2) Pleasing the Lord. 5:10.

"Proving what is well-pleasing to the Lord." Because we have passed from darkness into light and are walking as children of light, we will struggle

to make our actions pass the test of acceptability unto the Lord. Before we try to please ourselves or others, let us seek the favor of Christ and live for Him. "By their fruits shall ye know them."

(3) Shunning the works of darkness. 5:11a.

"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness." Our calling forbids having a share in the life about us, becoming partners to sin, delighting in vice, compromising our standards of conduct. Light and darkness have no fellowship with each other. Both cannot occupy the same space at the same time. Christians are light bearers to give the Light of the world to those in darkness. Do not forget whose you are and whom you are serving.

(4) Reproving the shameful things done in secret. 5:11b-12.

"But rather also reprove; for the things in secret being done by them it is even shameful to say." So, you can see that our attitude towards evil is to be more than aloofness. Reproof is commanded. Others must be warned of dangers which have been discovered. A holy life is the best possible reproof of sin. The sinlessness of Christ angered His accusers. His righteousness made the Pharisees so frantic that they sought directly and indirectly to ensnare Him and kill Him. One holy life can do more to condemn and reprove wickedness than a thousand denunciations. Light has been given to us in order that we may shine and scatter darkness.

(5) The light makes manifest the things that are reproved. 5:13.

"But all of them being reproved by the light and made manifest; for that which makes everything manifest is light."

(6) An exhortation to arise and receive the light. 5:14.

"Wherefore he says, Arouse, thou that sleepest, and rise up from among the dead, there shall shine upon thee the Christ."

3. Walk as children of wisdom. 5:15-17.

(1) Not as unwise, but as wise. 5:15.

"Take heed therefore how accurately ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise." The Christian is a light bearer. To be deceived by evil is the height of folly. Walk with the eyes open to the dangers of yielding to temptation and living in sin. The proof of the value of Christianity is in the living of the Christian life.

(2) Buying up the opportunity since the days are evil. 5:16.

"Ransoming the time, because the days are evil." Paul here pictures a man seeing an opportunity, seizing it and making it his own. Life is a succession of opportunities, so it is a mark of wisdom to use them rightly. If you saw a man throwing money into the ocean, you would say he is insane. Our Lord daily observes many throwing away hours, days, weeks, months and years, which are possessions of far greater worth.

Time must be given to eating, drinking, exercise, sleeping, home fellowships, friendships, reading, study, work and religious services. Time thus used is not wasted or lost. Through reading good literature people continually add to the quality of their lives, enrich their characters, and prepare themselves for larger usefulness and greater influence. It is splendid to know how to redeem time from waste and to make it a bearer of blessing, of cheer, of encouragement, and of good to others.

Time is not to be used in idleness, trifling amusements, useless conversation, undue devotion to secondary things or positive wickedness. The right way to use time is in gaining useful knowledge, earning an honest livelihood, walking

circumspectly, doing good to others and doing the will of God. Our time should be used rightly because it is short. Much of our short time has already elapsed, and we do not know how much yet remains to us. There is so much to be done. The work to be done is so important. Besides, time misspent can never be recalled. We shall have to give an account for the way we use time. Momentous consequences depend upon the way we use it. We should make the most of every opportunity and use it thoroughly while we have it.

(3) Seek to better understand the Lord's will. 5:17.

"On this account be not foolish, but understanding what the will of the Lord is." His will is all-important and it can be known. The Christian is to discover and to do the will of God in all things, at all times, in all possible ways, to all the people possible, under all circumstances.

IV. The Secret Of The Christian Walk. Ephesians 5:18-21.

1. A life filled with the Holy Spirit. 5:18.

"And be not drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness; but be filled with the Spirit." It is just as imperative that the Christian be filled with the Spirit as it is that he not get drunk. Being filled with the Spirit is not something you have to do, but it is something you have to let God do.

2. A heart overflowing with praise for the Lord. 5:19.

"Speaking to each other in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and praising with your heart to the Lord." The Spirit-filled life is one of great joy. The Holy Spirit takes away bitterness, gloom and sadness.

3. A spirit of continuous thanksgiving to the Father. 5:20-21.

"Giving thanks at all times for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to Him Who is God and Father, submitting yourselves to one another in the fear of God."