

Title: HOW TO WALK IN LOVE  
 TEXT: Ephesians 5:1-2

Take your Bibles and let's turn to Ephesians chapter 5. Ephesians chapter 5 beginning with Vs 1....OUR TOPIC: HOW TO WALK IN LOVE

(Read 5:1-2)

Prayer

There is a key word in Chapters 4-5-6 which unlock these chapters and helps us to understand what is going on. IT IS THE WORD "WALK". For example: in chapter 4 verse 1 we are told to "WALK IN A MANNER WORTHY OF OUR CALLING." In verse 17 of chapter 4 we are told to "walk differently than the Gentiles or the world." Now, in chapter 5 verse 2 we are told to WALK IN LOVE. This is the third time out of five times that Paul tells us HOW TO WALK.

Also, there is another interesting word that I would like you to notice. It is the word "therefore." This also becomes a key word. Please notice....

In chapter 4 verse 1..."I therefore".....

Vs 8....."THEREFORE IT SAYS....."

Vs 17....."THIS I SAY THEREFORE....."

Vs 25..."THEREFORE, LAYING ASIDE FALSEHOOD....."

Chapter 5 verse 1....."THEREFORE, BE IMITATORS OF GOD....."

I point that out for this one reason. Paul is building each thing he says upon what he said before. It is a building process to teach us how to walk or live ~~the~~ christian life. *style*

Now, remember, in chapters 1 thru 3, Paul discussed THE DOCTRINAL ASPECTS OF THE CHURCH. How the church should function and what it should believe.

Now, these last three chapters are all dealing with CONDUCT,...the life style of a christian. And everything builds upon what he said before.

So, It would be foolish of us to start out in chapter 5 about how to walk in love and forget everything that was said in chapter 4. Because it is all related.

"Therefore" in light of everything that I have said to you so far, be imitators of God." Literally that means to "copy God". <sup>LIFE STYLE - COPY GOD</sup> Not in a hypocritical way, but really everything that we are, in terms of reaction, an attitudes towards one another, ~~would~~ really reflect the person and character of God, himself.

Let me share with you a few verses as it relates to that just to get your minds thinking about copying God.

In I Corinthians chapter 4, we read in Vs 16, Paul says that we have many tutors in christ, yet not many fathers. He was encouraging them as a father because he had laid them to christ. He became their father through the gospel. Then Vs 16 says: "I exhort you therefore, be imitators of me."

Paul's life style of such that he could make that statement.

In I Thessalonians chapter 1 Paul said in Vs 6 "You also became imitator of us and of the Lord."

It is also interesting what he says in Hebrews 13 verse 7, "Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the outcome of their way of life, imitate their faith."

Is it right to imitate someone who is a believer?...Absolutely...provided that they are imitators, also, of God. We are to follow those whose conduct is in conformity to the Word of God. It is not so much what one says, although we never want to diminish the importance of the content. But it is not so much what one says, because one will often make mistakes because men are fallible, but it is how one lives over a period of time that is worth everything.

Back to Ephesians, again. <sup>and so Paul is</sup> We are simply saying that we are to imitate God. And especially in one area: LOVE....LOVE....Love is what we all want. WALK IN LOVE....This indicates a life style in love. Not just a momentary act of loving some individual. But that our whole life style would be in the sphere of love.

And ~~this~~ this is so important to understand. You will never really began to walk in love until you began to reflect the love of God in your life. It is not the love that the world says we need to have. Or, what you even think you need to have. Maybe you want something in love as to physical affection. Or, someone to encourage you or whatever.

That is not what we are talking about. God's love. His style is what we need. We can't walk in love until we reflect or imitate or follow God in his love. *OK - what is his Love - 5 principles*

So, ~~we want to take a moment to examine that which is really beautifully outlined for us in the first two verses.~~

(10) <sup>First, Love</sup> This is based, primarily, upon your relationship to God. Our ability to reflect God's love <sup>to walk in love</sup> begins and is based upon our relationship to God.

Paul says in Vs 1 "as beloved children." Literally it says "little born ones of my love."

You know, it was His love that begot you? You didn't love Him first. The Bible says in I John 4:19, "We love because he first loved us." He begot us. He caused us to be born. And as a result we now have the ability to reflect His love, *if we want to*

As a matter of fact, *isn't that what happens with* ~~don't we expect that of~~ our kids? Think about that for a moment. I don't always like the way my kids imitate me. But they do a good job of it, I have noticed. No matter what you do, *your* ~~you~~ kids pick up those habits. And you can see your true self.

*often* I like that classic statement that ~~those~~ couples planning to be married say: I just love their statement. They say, "We are going to be different from our parents.".....OH!!!.....That is funny. Because in the years that follow you often reflect and imitate things about your parents. Things that in growing up *you* may not even like. You may not even want to do it. But eventual you do. [You see, it is only natural to believe that the child would reflect his <sup>parents</sup> father. [And if we have been born of the Spirit of God as beloved born ones, God says therefore, imitate me. The possibility is there. It is based upon a relationship to Him. He is our Father. We are his children.

(2) And secondly, it is based upon the example of Christ.

*Friends* You and I cannot reflect God's love until we learn about Jesus. Until we go back to the cross, again. To remind us of what He has done. To remind us of the extent and nature of the ~~love~~ <sup>love</sup> of Christ in our behalf. Whenever God tells you to exercise some of those qualities of love like forgiveness and compassion, isn't it interesting how often he says: "do that as Christ has forgiven you." Or, "as Christ has loved you."

*you* The great standard by which I know of whether <sup>or not</sup> I am reflecting God's love in my life, is the example of Jesus Christ. That is why he says in Vs 2.. "walk in love just as" in equal proportion to, what Christ did when he loved you and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant ~~offering~~ <sup>aroma</sup> ~~offering~~." ~~offering~~

His motive is stated very clearly. He loved you...The word love is in the aorist tense meaning at a moment of time. I remind you that the great moment of time when God loved you, ~~who are believers~~, was at the cross. Because it was there that your sin was paid for and your forgiveness completed. HE LOVED YOU. *For God So Loved The World*

It is also true that he continues to love us. But that is not what that text says. HE LOVED YOU AT A MOMENT OF TIME. Even before you were ~~born~~ <sup>born</sup> Jesus knew about you on the cross. ISN'T THAT A KIND OF NEAT THOUGHT? There He is on the ~~cross~~ and he knows your name. He knows every person in human history and HE LOVED YOU....as he died there on the cross for you.

Turn over to Hebrews and let me re-inforce that in your minds. Hebrews chapter 12. This is a beautiful statement. Hebrews 12. CHRIST LOVED YOU. HE GAVE HIMSELF IN THE BEHALF OF ALL PEOPLE. That is true. But he loved you. Hebrews 12: 2 says "fixing our eyes on Jesus the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Now, there is a tremendous blessing here. It says "who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross." *Who was the "who"?* ~~Do you understand?~~ ...

There was some kind of joy that was motivating Christ to endure the suffering of the Cross...WHAT WAS THAT JOY?.....You and Me..

*The joy was*

Those who would come to know christ. It was that which was joy to his heart. And it ~~kept~~ <sup>kept</sup> him on the cross despising the shame. He endured it all ~~for us~~ <sup>out of love for us.</sup>

Turn back to Hebrews chapter 2. Hebrews 2 look at verse 9. It says, "But we do see Him who has been made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor Now, here is the phrase, Hebrews 2:9..."that by the agrace of God he might taste death for every one."

Christ was dieing on the cross in our place. He loved us. And over and over again the Bible says so. God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son.

This is love. That God sent his son into the world to be a mercy seat for our sins.

I like what it says in Epheisans 5 when it says that he gave himself up for us. The little ~~for~~ word "for" is "in the behalf of". It was for you, and it was for me that christ went to the cross.

*And the application is simple - Come back to Ephesians*

~~I am simply saying one thing at this point:~~ if I am going to walk in love, I must look at how Jesus loved me and understand that the motive was the individual that he was dieing for. [You know, so often in our acts of love the motive is very selfish. You are loving someone because you need it. That is not God's love. That is a form of love. But it is not the love of God. The love of God is unselfish. And it concerns it self over the one that you are loving. The motive is the other person. Not you. If I am to walk and reflect God's love in my life, I must follow the example of Christ. Who loved others. And the others became the motive for his love.

"The love of Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:14 says ~~it~~ <sup>it</sup> controls us."

Because we concluded that one died ~~for~~ <sup>for</sup> all, ~~therefore all died.~~

~~He~~ <sup>He</sup> died in our place. He knew our condition. He knew we needed help. We were the motive behind the great love of Jesus. Priaise the Lord.

(3) ~~And also~~ <sup>Then, To walk <sup>with</sup> understand</sup> I must ~~example~~ <sup>understand</sup> the extent to which ~~he~~ <sup>you</sup> acted on ~~my~~ <sup>our</sup> behalf,

~~if~~ I am really going to reflect the love of God to other people in my life.

Because according to the Bible the extent was that He gave himself.  
Ephesians 5:2 says "he gave himself up for us."

I wonder, <sup>Dear friend</sup> if you realize that the Bible tells believers that we have to ~~do~~ <sup>this - ~~do~~ ?</sup> be the same in order to love.

Turn to 1 John chapter 3 and let me show you. I John 3. He gave himself

I know that many of you who are parents know the ~~problem~~ / problem of giving your kids "things" in order to demonstrate love. And often it is a reflection of your love for them. But sometimes it is an excuse. Sometimes it is a "cop-out." Sometimes it is <sup>just</sup> doing something ~~or doing something~~ instead of giving yourself. And Ephesians 5:2 reminds us that Jesus gave himself up for us. And it was himself that he gave.

And when we look at I John 3 we find the same idea, ~~thought~~. Vs 16 says, "We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."

It was himself that was involved. WHY?... The ~~word~~ word "life" in that verse is "SOUL". <sup>Mean</sup> Mind..emotion,,,will..... <sup>Jesus</sup> He laid down his personal feelings, his personal desires, everything he laid down in behalf of the one in whom he was dieing. [And the Bible says "we ought to laid down our lives." Some people read that think it is <sup>to be a martyr</sup> ~~martydom~~. It is not martydom. It is the word "soul" in the Greek. <sup>Not</sup> ~~Now~~ the word for <sup>your</sup> physical life.

The point is that when you go to love <sup>someone</sup> ~~anyone~~ you have to lay aside your personality. I have to sacrifice, maybe, what I wanted to do in behalf of the one that I say I love. <sup>How</sup> How far <sup>should</sup> will I go? What is the extent? The extent is to lay aside everything about myself in order to meet the need of the one that I say I love. <sup>That is what it means to walk in love</sup>

Jesus gave himself up for us.....Now, back to Ephesians 5....

(4) There is also the matter of sacrifice. And there are two words to describe it. It says in Vs 2. "He gave himself up for us an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma."

There is a lot of O.T. pictures there. The sacrifices of the O.T. were fragrant aromas. Because when they burned them, especially the fat of those animals as they burned caused smoke. ~~the Bible~~ the Bible calls it a fragrant <sup>aroma</sup>

And the Bible calls it a fragrant aroma to God. It smelled good to Him. And it is interesting that according to this text Jesus was both an offering and a sacrifice. Look at the word "offerings"

(1E) The word "offering" is used some 58 times in the N.T. And the word literally means "to bear" or "to carry something toward something." And it's referring to the willing act of submission, committing the animal to the sacrifice.

<sup>New This</sup> The word "offering" is not talking about "the sacrifice." It is talking about the willing commitment of the one who is bringing the sacrifice.

So, <sup>The point is</sup> Remember this dear friends, Love is not only measured by what the sacrifice is...but also by the willingness of the who makes it.

So, often when we think that we are reflecting love to our family or our friends the emphasis is on the sacrifice. Look at what I have done for you. I ~~mean~~ mean, this cost me plenty.

And yet, in ~~reality~~ <sup>reality</sup> there is no willing submission. It didn't come out of the heart. And you and I know what gifts are like that come that way. Some how it hurts. It hurts because they gave it to you without the offering spirit. They didn't willingly commit themselves to it. It wasn't voluntary. It didn't come out off a heart of joy to minister to you. It was ~~just doing something that was expected~~ <sup>just doing something that was expected</sup> ~~dogging determination to prove that they could do it.~~ And that some how doesn't minister in love.

Oh, some of us could say, "We sacrifice for others." But do we offer for others? It was an offering to God.

It is interesting if you would turn to Hebrews 11:17 to see a usage of that as it relates to an O.T. story, about a father who had to learn what it means to offer in love his own son. Hebrews 11:17....says..."By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered (there is our word) offered up Isaac; and he who had received the promises was offering up his only begotten son."

And I would like to stress to you that that was a willing decision on Abraham's part. His son, Isaac, was so willing, if you will remember the story from the O.T. They were building the altar and Isaac said, "Well,

"Well, we got the wood, we got the altar, we have the knife and the robe, but Dad, where is the sacrifice?"

Now, his Dad didn't turn to him and say, "YOU WILL NEVER GUESS WHO?".... He didnt say that. Do you know what he did?

He did one of the most beautiful expressions of the Bible. When his son said, "Hay! where is the sacrifice?" And Abraham turned to his son and said "GOD, WILL PROVIDE HIMSELF A LAMB."

There are two ways to read that Hebrew phrase: ~~FOR~~

~~?~~ One: God is going to provide a lamb for himself.

But those who study that Hebrew grammer carefully in Gen 22 know that ~~what~~ what Abraham said is that God will provide himself as the lamb...And Abraham already knew that in his heart. It's that tremendous?.

Abraham's confidence was in God. And even at the point of lefting the knife above Isaac, He was going to kill his son. DO YOU KNOW WHY?

The Bible tells us because he believed in the resurrection. He wasn't even worried about what God told him to do because he knew that God could rise his son. His hope was so powerful that it didn't make any difference. And he was willing of his own accord to do that for his son.

His son <sup>wasn't</sup> was that willing. But Abraham was because God told him. And do you know that the Bible describes that in the sphere of love...? And here we learn that it was faith that God was testing Abraham.

You know, I believe God tests us a lot in this area, of loving people. God will test you a lot. Because a lot of times it is just dogging determination that causes you to do something. You know how it is. "Well, they need it. And I just have to do it." And so you do it. It is obligation. And duty. And that drives you to do something when in truth you are not reflecting God's love.

God's love begins by warming the heart, in willing submission. And saying, "I just can't wait to do this. I am excited about doing this. I want to do this."

*Also* Certainly "sacrifice is involved. *Notice the* The word "sacrifice" is in Ephesians

5. ~~if will turn back these~~



QF1 They usually, the word

and this word

The word "sacrifice" is used in the N.T. does refer to the death of the animal. And sometimes it is death to self and selfish interest that is involved. But there is also the willing submission in bringing the sacrifice.

God describes my own commitment as a christian in <sup>these</sup> terms in Romans 12:1 he says "I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worshp."

The word "present" has the same idea as "offering". There is a ~~willingness~~ willingness to submit to God and present my body to God. But I must realize that I am presenting it as a sacrifice.

Jesus said that if anyone wanted to come after him he must dien himself ~~and~~ and take up his cross and follow ~~him~~ me.

Now, when you take up your cross you are not bearing someone's budrens. A lot of folks teach that, but it isn't true. To take up the cross means that you are going on a one way tripe to cruification, to death.

So the apply

If I am going to follow christ and really reflect his love to others, there has to be some points in my life in which I die to self and selfish interest. The self is there and we all struggle with it. But there are decisions we must make everytime we want to love someone. Sometimes I must say NO to something that I wanted to do in order to express it.

But remember the "offering" needs to be there. Not just the sacrifice. Both are necessary.

IF we walked in this kind of Love, we would change the world

Are we walking in love as Jesus loved us?.....  
(5D) <sup>Then, finally</sup> And as it relates to the will of god: it was a fragrant aroma. It pleased God. It is what he wants. <sup>This is the kind of Love that God wants in our life</sup>

Ephesians 5 verse 2.."as a fragrant aroma."

I would like you to turn to two passages where we find this used. It is a beautiful illustration.

2 Corinthians chapter 2....Paul is referring to that fragrant aroma. By the way: it was fragran to God. Have you ever smelled fat Burning? I never thought it was OLD SPICE to tell you the truth..

But you know it was sweet to God because of the offering and the sacrifice that was involved. It is a good principle to remember. Because some of the things we do may ;not be as sweet to people<sup>s</sup> as they are to God. They may not smell as great to people. But whatever cup of cold water is given in his name, the Bible, says will receive a reward. It is not so much what other people think about what I do, it is what God thinks about what I am doing. A fragrant aroma to God.

2 Corinthians chapter 2 we read this in Vs 15 "For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing."

Look back at Vs 14..."But thanks be to God, who always leads us in His triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place."

That is why we are a fragrance. The fragrant aroma that is pleasing to God. That is really doing his will.

And in this verses this involves the knowledge of him in every place. Do we really know Jesus? Is it knowledge of christ that is over powering us and makes us smell nice? You cannot smell sweet to God, you cannot have the fragrance of christ to people, until you know Him. You cannot reflect the love of God until you know what God would do. You can't do in a situation what God wants you jto do, unless you know from the Bible what you are suppose to do. IT IS AS SIMPLE AS THAT.

That is why I have tof renew my mind, daily, in the Word. I forget. And go do you.

What should I do here? How should I react~~ed~~ to this person? My old sin nature reacts one way. And I need to be controled by God's spirit so I will react as Jesus would. But if there is nothing in ~~the~~ your life from the word, don't ~~expect~~ expect the Holy Spirit to work in a vacuum. If there is no knowledge of christ in my life, then there is no sweet fragrance. And no body respondes....

We are to grow in the grace and knowledge of our saviour Jesus Christ, says 2 Peter 3:18

So, how do we walk in love?...

*Answer*

One, by reflecting God's love in our life?.....

*in all the ways we have described*

*Friends*

Is that happening in your life?....If not, why not?....The love of God can be reflected in your life....And the method is so simple...

The song writer hit the nail right on the head when he wrote:

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,

Look full in His wonderful face;

And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,

In the light of His glory and graces.

Will you do that?.....

Will you turn your life over to Jesus and look into his wonderful face?.....

I pray that you will.....That we might walk together in love....

~~And for the following week will have that same character because we are~~

Let us close in prayer

*walking in love*