

April 7/8, 2001

The Truth About Our Life in Christ

A Study in the Book of Ephesians

Pure Light

Ephesians 5:3-14

Study Questions

Opening Discussion

1. We live in a sexually saturated culture. While sexual immorality has always been a problem, in what ways has technology intensified this problem in our culture today?
2. What evidence do you see in our culture that people are unable to be sexually satisfied? How does this fit the profile of the spiritually dead from 4:17-19?
3. Do you see evidence that Christians are radically different in this area of life or have we, as God's children, become more like the world? Why is that?

Bible Study

1. Read Ephesians 4:17 - 5:14 to pick up the flow of thought. How does 5:1,2 contrast with 5:3,4?
2. Compare Paul's words in 5:3 with those in 4:19,20. What is he saying?
3. Do you think the words of this poem by Alexander Pope are true? Why or why not?

Vice is a monster of such
frightful mien
That to be hated needs
but to be seen.

But seen too often
familiar with his face
We first endure, then pity,
then embrace.

– from *The Complete Poetical Works of Alexander Pope*, Henry Boynton, ed.

4. In what ways do “filthiness,” “silly talk” and “coarse jesting” cause us to first endure, then pity, and then embrace sexual sin?

How do we address this problem when it is all around us?

5. What would be the “empty words” (v. 6) used today to cause us to lose sight of the fact that this sin will be judged by God?
6. Compare Romans 1:18-32 with Ephesians 4:17-5:14. Also notice the emphasis on sexual sin in these lists of sins: Col. 3:5-11, Gal. 5:19-21, and 1 Cor. 6:9,10. Notice that sexual sins top the lists in each case. Why is this? Is this a sin we take seriously as Christians?

7. In 5:8-14 Paul draws a clear distinction between light and darkness. What does it mean to say there is no dusk in Christ? Is the distinction between light and darkness (believers and unbelievers) obvious in our culture today? Why or why not?
8. How do Paul's words in 5:11-13 compare with Jesus' words in John 3:19-21?
9. In what way does the mission of the church depend on an understanding and obedience of this passage in Ephesians 4:17-5:14?

Application

1. Is there any "hint" of immorality in your life? Examine your own heart before God.
2. Are there any "dusk" areas in your life that have blurred the distinction between light and darkness?
3. Have each person in your group write a prayer to God, responding to the message of Eph. 5:3-14. Take turns praying those prayers in response to what God has taught you in this study.
4. Write down 3 action steps you can take this week to walk as children of light.