

Paul's Letter to the Ephesian Church
Lesson 3

The Mystery of the Gospel of God

As we continue in Chapter 5 of Ephesians, Paul continues with some very important points that the Ephesians must be maintained in their lives.

Ephes. 5:¹Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; ²and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

Point 8: Live this life just like God! Christ showed us how to live like God. Living like God requires that we love just as Christ loved, and was willing to sacrifice everything for others. This type of life is a sweet smelling aroma to God!

Ephes. 5:³But do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints; ⁴and *there must be no* filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. ⁵For 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.

Point 9: Rid yourself of all forms of immorality! Immorality is much more than just sexual sins and degradation. It also involves the words that proceed from your mouth, the thoughts that you think, and the plans that you make. Is your mouth full of filthy words? Do you dream plans and harbor them in your heart and mind. Is your heart and mind full of filth and evil? Do you act out on these desires? It doesn't matter whether you act out on them or not, the action and the thought is just as bad. In other words, you can be an immoral person inwardly while the world looks up to you as a symbol of goodness. The answer is to master those thoughts and live as Christ lived.

Ephes. 5:⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷Therefore do not be partakers with them; ⁸for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light ⁹(for the fruit of the light *consists* in all goodness and righteousness and truth), ¹⁰trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

Point 10: Seek only Godly counsel and turn away from the counsel of the ungodly world. As Christians we should seek counsel for everything we do in this life from Christian people. Very seldom will you ever receive light bearing advice from a person who lives in the darkness of the lost world. However, not all Christians give godly advice. Seek out Christians who have a good established reputation for giving sound and solid advice.

Ephes. 5:¹¹And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; ¹²for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. ¹³But all things become visible when they are exposed by the

light, for everything that becomes visible is light. ¹⁴For this reason it says, "Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you."

Point 11: At all times, make sure your actions and deeds represent Christ. There are many things offered in this life that in certain circumstances seem acceptable, but when viewed under the microscope of Scripture, fail to be godly. One such example might be the attire you wear to the beach or public pool. The scripture teaches that we are to dress ourselves in modest clothing yet Christians scantily cloth themselves for the maximum sun exposure, while at the same time exposing themselves to the entire population on the beach. "Everyone else is dressed this way"... therefore it is seen to be alright. It is the darkness of the world. Another option might be when counsel is given to you to do some act "under the radar" of some authority. When something like this is attempted in secret, it is always wrong and against God's will. The old life without Christ will commit these sins in secret, but the Christian is to be a person who has risen from that old life of darkness so that Christ will shine on you with all blessings.

¹⁵Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of your time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Point 12: Know the will of the Lord! We really do live in an evil world. It was evil in Paul's day and it is evil in our day. There is no time for foolishness. There is no just reason for foolishness. It is not the Lord's will for His children to make unwise and foolish choices. We are to seek out wisdom and strive to make wise choices every moment of our lives in this world. For those who need help getting started in the will of the Lord, Paul gives us a list of things that are part of the will of God for every Christian, no matter who you are.

¹⁸And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; ²⁰always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; ²¹and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

Things that are GOD's WILL

1. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation. Dissipation is a dissolute way of living. It is a wasteful way of living. It means in this context that where there is drunkenness, there is no salvation.
2. Be filled with the Spirit. In contrast to being filled and drunk with wine, we are to be filled with one third of the Godhead instead. Because of this we will speak to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord.
3. Always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father. We are to give thanks for all things. How difficult this is! God has a plan for your life and He has lead you into circumstances that you might now look back on and think "Why did God place me here?" Perhaps you have been a faithful believer since you were

saved in your early years and now you find yourself married to a wonder person whose family are all far away from God and have absolutely no salvation. The longer you are in the family you realize that your witness is having absolutely no effect on their lives at all and they will die without knowing the Lord. Perhaps you saw yourself when you married as God's witness to bring the family to the Lord but now you know that will not happen. Do not think that you are out of God's will in this marriage. Listen, you were put there to be a witness for the Lord. Here on earth your life is to be a witness to them so they will have an opportunity to come to know the Lord. In heaven your life will be a witness against those who knew you and did not accept the Lord. There they will be without excuse because your constant witness to them will be proof enough that they made their own choice and chose eternity away from the Lord.

4. Be subject to one another in the fear of Christ. This is a military term and it means to "line up together." Christians are to be in one accord, lined up together for the purpose of praise, worship, and thanks.

Ephes. 5:²²Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself *being* the Savior of the body. ²⁴But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything.

5. Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ... as Christ also is the head of the church. The military term is used again here. The wives are to line up with their husbands just as the church must line up with Christ in everything.

Ephes. 5:²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; ²⁶that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. ²⁸So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; ²⁹for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also *does* the church, ³⁰because we are members of His body. ³¹FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. ³²This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. ³³Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and *let* the wife see *to it* that she respect her husband.

5. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church ... FOR THIS CAUSE A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER, AND SHALL CLEAVE TO HIS WIFE; AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. ... This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and *let* the wife see *to it* that she respect her husband.

Here the noblest picture of marriage that is given to a couple. Husbands love your wives! Why does a husband have to be told this? Because a man does not show love easily! The

man must understand that his wife is an extension of his own body; her body is his body for they are one. What a mystery!

Ephes. 6:¹Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ²HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise), ³THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH.

7. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH. Here the word honor means to not cause your father and mother distress and anxiety over your behavior and decisions. Here children are to obey their parent's decisions and words as long as they live in the house so that they do not bring unrest to the parent's family in which they live.

Ephes. 6:⁴And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

8. And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. Provoke is the difficult word in this passage. This is a rare word used in the scripture. It carries the idea of the common sin of many fathers to press upon their children their own desires and wants, causing the children to become angry rather than directing the children to the teachings and instructions in the word of God. It is the common problem of man's reasoning verses God's reasoning. God's reasoning is always the best.

Ephes. 6:⁵Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; ⁶not by way of eye service, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. ⁷With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.

9. Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh. If the scripture was written today this would have read "Employees, be obedient to those who are your employers in this life." Employees are to do a good work for their bosses just as they would for the Lord.

Ephes. 6:⁹And, masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

10. And, masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him. Today, this would have been written to the employers to lead their employees without threats and without partiality, being good to them in all things.

Ephes. 6:¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might.

11. Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. Where is your hope and faith? Is it in the Lord? Is the Lord your strength and your salvation? Then it is in the Lord that your strength must be found.

Ephes. 6:¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. ¹²For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. ¹³Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, ¹⁵and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; ¹⁶in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil *one*. ¹⁷And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

12. Put on the full armor of God ... HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, ... HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, ... having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; ... THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. The full armor of God is your only true protection here in this world from the crafty evilness that surrounds you.

Ephes. 6:¹⁸ With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, ¹⁹and *pray* on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in *proclaiming* it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

As each church member clothes himself with the armor they must bath themselves in prayer at all times. Paul too needed to be bathed in pray for he was speaking the gospel with boldness and there were many more souls that he longed to share the good news with while still in jail.

Ephes. 6:²¹ But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you. ²²And I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us, and that he may comfort your hearts.

"Circumstances!" Paul did not tell us much about his circumstances but he wanted the beloved church to know what was happening to him. That would be told by word of mouth and not written in the scripture. Perhaps that was because the gospel was more important than anything happening to him at that moment in jail.

Ephes. 6:²³ Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with a *love* incorruptible.

And so Paul ends the letter with a plea for the church of Ephesus to “love with faith.” It must be love of the brotherhood accompanied by faith in Christ. As we saw in the Revelation passage in the beginning of this book, the emphasis on the churches love would be lost in less than 30 years. It would be the one thing that Christ had against the Ephesians church. But the church in Paul’s day still loved the Lord and so Paul ends the letter with his logo and a final plea to keep a “love incorruptible.”