Ephesians Study 6
Walk in the Light (A fragrant offering)
Ephesians 5:1-14

Q. Christians are taught to live in the world but not of the world. What does this mean and do you agree, why or why not?

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Read Eph 4:1-15 and circle all the contrasting conjunctions (but) to get a feel for the content of this text. Discuss then what you think is the main issue in this passage.

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5:1 Therefore **be imitators** of God, as beloved children.[2] **And** walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

[3] **But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness** must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. [4] Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, **but** instead let there be thanksgiving. [5] For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is **sexually immoral or impure**, or who is **covetous** (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

[6] **Let no one deceive you** with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. [7] Therefore **do not associate with them**; [8] **for** at one time you were darkness, **but** now you are light in the Lord**.**

Walk as children of light [9] (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true),[10] and try to **discern what is pleasing to the Lord.**

[11] **Take no part in** the unfruitful works of darkness, **but** instead expose them. [12] For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. [13] **But when anything is exposed** by the light, it becomes visible, [14] for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

Read verse1. How should the people of God ‘imitate’ God?

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What examples are used to portray this love?

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Verses 3-5 explain the contrast to a life lived in love. Why do you think the writer uses the words ‘impurity’ and ‘covetousness’ to do this? How does it relate to the opposite of imitating God?

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The people of God must live their lives as a ‘fragrant’ offering to God, in love, as we imitate the one whose family we are now adopted into. As did Jesus before us, we live a sacrificial life to please our father in heaven. The ‘sons of disobedience’ will use their lips to speak deceitful and impure words which go up to God in a stench of decay. God’s people will speak words of ‘thanksgiving’ (v4) which rise up as a pleasant fragrance to God.

Read verses 6-13. What does the imagery now change to?

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As children of light, our works now _____ ‘the unfruitful works of darkness’ (v11).

Why is this vital to God’s work of salvation? (v13)

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The great work of salvation begins with the very nature of God (v1). He is love and this love pours out through the sacrificial work of Jesus on the cross (v2). It is so important here to see the correlation between Jesus and us as we now sacrificially pour out this love upon others(v2). We, like Jesus will no take part in the filth that the world takes part in because our lips will not speak evil, just as our Lord Jesus was silent before His accusers(3-6). In doing so we will expose sin and bring it to light, just as did Jesus and in seeing their sin exposed, some may come to see their ungodliness and be convicted of their sin and will therefore turn back to God, as one waking from the deep sleep of death (11-14).

Prayer time

Spend some time now reflecting on those you know around you who still do not know Jesus. Scrutinise yourself honestly about how you think they may view you as a person. Write their names below:

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Spend a few moments praying for those on your list and pray that God will continue to change us, so that our light may shine before others, that the light is strong enough to expose the sins of others, that they too will share in our inheritance.

Gather… Grow…