



**WORD FOR LIFE CHURCH MINISTRIES**

IN CHRIST: BELIEVING AND LIVING BECAUSE OF JESUS  
*a study of Ephesians*

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## Ephesians 5:3-33

### In Christ: Believing and Living Because of Jesus

As we pick up Ephesians 5:3, it is important to note the contrast presented from where 5:2 left off. Identifying this contrast sets the stage to better understand Paul's goal for writing chapter 5. Based on previous lessons, what do you detect to be the goal going forward?

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**Theme:** Practical application of one's belief for life as a Christian.

**Reflection Questions:** Reflect on your spiritual journey. What did it take for you to progress from "darkness" to "light"? In what ways have you, or are you, making the most of the time you have to live in and be the "light"? Why do you feel as you do when you consider what submitting to one another means for the life of the church?

#### Key Term

- *Fornication* (5:3) – [*porneia* □ "to sell off"; a surrendering of sexual purity]. The term is expanded to include fornication, whoredom (sexual promiscuity) or any/every type of sexual intercourse (see Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25). (Note: This is not the same word as *moixeia* which points to marital unfaithfulness/adultery, but the meaning of *porneia* is often expanded to include adultery.) Metaphorically, *porneia* is a form of idolatry.
  - *Thanksgiving* (5:4, 20) – [*eucharistia* □ "thankfulness, gratitude"; actively, grateful – i.e., to give thanks.] The Eucharist commemorates Jesus' death and resurrection, and is also known as Holy Communion or the Lord's Supper. Note the seriousness of the instruction to give thanks as the alternative to crude, silly, and unproductive speech as well as an example of how one can "redeem the time" (as in verse 20).
  - *Darkness* (5:8) – [*skotos* □ term used to describe either physical or moral darkness/shadiness, as one who has difficulty seeing clearly.] Darkness is used figuratively to describe sin (in principal and condition); see Luke 22:52-53; 1 Corinthians 4:5.
  - *Redeeming the time* (5:16) – To redeem is "to buy up" as a ransom; to rescue from loss. So, then, what might it mean to "redeem the time?" \_\_\_\_\_
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#### Lesson Outline

Bible study note: It can be easy to view this portion of text with a lens that only looks outward. To best understand and appreciate what is being shared, it is important to meditate ("sit with")



with the intention of getting to how this text speaks to your spiritual journey and ways you can better shine your light.

**I. Living in Purity and Light (Ephesians 5:3-7)**

Verses 3-7 set the stage for the practical approach given to believers who desire to live out their professed belief. The implication is that belonging to the Family of God requires a different, “light”-er way of living.

- A. Avoid Sexual Immorality (*Ephesians 5:3*)
- B. Pursue Holiness and Purity (*1 Thessalonians 4:3-5*)
- C. Warning Against Greed and Impurity (*Colossians 3:5*)

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**II. Walking as Children of Light (Ephesians 5:8-14)**

Children of the light have come out of life “in the dark” and are responsible for living like they are in the light. How can this responsibility/duty be fulfilled?

- Find out what pleases God (*2 Corinthians 4:6*): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Expose the Deeds of Darkness (*John 3:19-21*): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Live as Children of Light (*Matthew 5:14-16*): \_\_\_\_\_  
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**III. Living Wisely and Filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:15-21)**

Wise living is a conscious decision that requires intentionality. Most successful people do not achieve success accidentally. In the same way, wise/successful Christian living requires purposeful intention.

- A. Redeem the time (*Colossians 4:5*)
  - Understand the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Be sober: \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Be Filled with the Spirit (*Galatians 5:16*)



- \_\_\_\_\_ what used to “fill you”: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ with similarly “filled” people: \_\_\_\_\_
- Be \_\_\_\_\_. Practice thankfulness: \_\_\_\_\_
- Remember God in and for everything: \_\_\_\_\_
- Recall the name of Christ: \_\_\_\_\_

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#### IV. Instructions for Christian Households (Ephesians 5:21-33)

However one views the imperatives in these verses, one must first account for how they s from verse 21 and land in verse 33. Just as the theological impetus that binds believers together under the banner of Christ in verse 21, so too should wives and husbands be bound together for the purpose of glorifying God by the ways in which they live with one another and demonstrate the union that exists between Jesus and His bride, the church.

##### A. Wives Submitting to Their Husbands (Ephesians 5:21-24).

These verses are often misunderstood and misapplied to subject wives to a secondary status in the marital relationship. If this is true, then Paul has been inconsistent and his theology is found lacking. Remember that Paul’s instructions are born out of his understanding of and appreciation for the Gospel.

1. Mutual Submission: An example of Christian \_\_\_\_\_.  
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\_\_\_\_\_
2. Spousal Submission: An example of Christian \_\_\_\_\_.  
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3. Christ and the Church: An example of Christian \_\_\_\_\_ .  
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##### B. Husbands Loving Their Wives (Ephesians 5:25-33).

Paul generally instructs believers to present themselves in a given way as a response to Jesus (*see Rom 6:13, 19; 12:1; 2 Cor 11:2*). Here, Paul presents Jesus and His finished work as the example of the husband’s responsibilities. With this, Jesus is the paradigm for husbands to follow.



1. Christ's Love for the Church (Ephesians 5:25-27)
  - What was the extent of Jesus' love for the church? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - Why did Jesus sacrifice His life for the church? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Husbands' Responsibility to Love (Ephesians 5:28-33) Colossians 3:19)
  - What standard of love is the husband to practice? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - Practical ways to fulfill the responsibility to love:
    - o Nourish: \_\_\_\_\_
    - o Tender care: \_\_\_\_\_
    - o Equality: \_\_\_\_\_
    - o Devotion: \_\_\_\_\_

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**V. Reflecting Christ's Love in Marriage (Ephesians 5:32-33)**

As if to reiterate what was written in verse 21, Paul ends chapter 5 with an exhortation toward Christian unity. The point is clear, then, that marriage is intended to reflect the glory of God and the effect of the Gospel. What are some possible implications of this message for Gentile believers?

A. Honoring God in Marriage. We honor God in marriage by respecting the gifts of wife and husband for the example of Christ that each one is and can be. For example, just as believers must not defile worship of God with sacrifices to idols, neither are spouses to defile one another by giving themselves to any other (*see Hebrews 13:4*). Spouses are to put each other first and only.

B. Mutual Respect and Love

Respect and love are teammates on the same field of play. The husband's love is characterized by taking pleasure in the wife (to long for, or be excited by her), while the wife's respect is characterized as a sense of reverence or awe of the husband. He is to esteem his wife and she is to revere her husband, as if hold him in esteem and defer to him. There may be some difference in how we receive these two verbs, but the essence of expectation is the same for both.

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