

Title: Walk in Love, Just as Christ Loved You

Passage: Ephesians 5:1-2

Context of Passage:

Ephesians 1-3: God's purpose and plan

Ephesians 4-6: Practical implications

Ephesians 4:1-3

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:17-21

Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ!— assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus

Ephesians 4:22-24 (key command)

to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

Comparison of verses:

Verse 22 v. Verse 24

Put Off Put on

Old Self New Self

Corrupted Created

Your former life Likeness of God

Sinful desires Righteousness and holiness

Based on deceit Based on truth

Preceding Verses to Passage: Use of Tongue

Ephesians 4:29-32

Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

James 3:4-5

Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire!

Quote: Tongue goes down to the bottom of the well of the heart to bring up what is there.

Healthy Communication Principles (Ware Conference)

Passage: Ephesians 5:1-2

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Overview: What is love and where does it come from?

I. This love comes from God

II. This love is the result of having been made a child of God

III. This love is evidence of the transforming power of Christ and the Gospel.

IV. This love looks and behaves like Jesus

I. THIS LOVE COMES FROM GOD (SOURCE)

“Be imitators of God”

- only place in the Bible where phrase found
- Quote: sum of all Christian duty

Love = *agape* (unconditional)

- its origin and source is in the very being of God

1 John 4:8

Anyone who does not love does not know God, because *God is love*.

James 1:17

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

- Love is produced by the Spirit of God in us

Galatians 5:22

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

Romans 5:5

and hope does not put us to shame, because *God's love has been poured into our hearts* through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

- The love of God is the work of the Spirit and not of any human origin.

Philippians 2:12-13

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, *for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.*

- It is God who works in you and allows genuine love to flow through you and enable you to love

Ezekiel 36:26-27

And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

II. THIS LOVE IS THE RESULT OF HAVING BEEN MADE A CHILD OF GOD (FAITH IN CHRIST)

“As beloved children”

- Perfect, true love comes through God's grace having granted you faith in Jesus to lead you to trust in Him as Lord and Savior

John 1:12-13

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, *but of God*.

What is the quality of this love?

- Covenant love.
 - perfect, saving love that does whatever is required to rescue us

Ephesians 1:4-6

even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

- God's grace chose you to be His child before you were created in His sovereignty

III. THIS LOVE IS EVIDENCE OF THE TRANSFORMING POWER OF CHRIST AND THE GOSPEL IN OUR LIVES (GOOD FRUIT)

“And walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us”

- not about perfection but about the *direction* of our lives
- Salvation brings about a changed life.

Matthew 7:17-20

So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

2 Corinthians 13:5

Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!

IV. THIS LOVE LOOKS AND BEHAVES LIKE JESUS

“A fragrant offering and sacrifice to God”

- How does this love look like to those relationships around us that God has called us to love?
- Answer: It looks and behaves like Jesus
 - Love is giving
 - Love gives of oneself
 - Give of one's own time and energy
 - selflessness (focus on other interests)
 - Glorifies God as a fragrant offering to Him

1. Love is giving

1 John 4:19-21

We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

2. Love gives of oneself

Philippians 2:4

Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

- Grows out of continual growth in Christ-likeness that comes from continual surrender and walking with God

John 13:34-35

A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

Prayer: I cannot do it. I need You to grant the grace to love as You love.

- allow the Spirit to work through you for His glory.

3. Glorifies God as a fragrant offering

2 Corinthians 2:14-16

But thanks be to God, who in Christ always leads us in triumphal procession, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.