

CALL to PRAYER - Pray that we might consider others more important than ourselves.

Ephesians 5:1-2 - Love & Sacrifice

Intro - What is your goal in life? Many strive to achieve some definition of success, some just want to be happy, while others just want to make it to the end of the day. But as Christians our goal is to be godly. Christians should be striving to be Christ-like. God has predestined that we be conformed to the image of His Son ^{Rom. 8:29}. We have received a high and holy calling, and we are to walk worthy of that calling ^{Eph. 4:1}. Christians are called to follow Christ and to be in a process of looking like/acting like Christ. This is a monumental goal, but it is the goal of all who have been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb. Our text continues the admonition to practical Christianity (chap. 4) and these two verses list some basic things, but some really big things, that we are called to. We are called to reflect God's character as His children and God's character exudes love and sacrifice. If our goal in life is to be godly....Well, God is love and God sacrificed Himself for others...so our goal is to love & sacrifice and so show that we are God's kids.

MIMIC

- Ephesian 5:1
 - The word "*imitators*" is the Greek word from where we get our word "*mimic*"
 - As believers we are to mimic the God who redeemed us
- We are His children and children look like their father
 - This is as basic as our biology....we all look like our daddy
 - 1 John 3:10
 - There is a family resemblance in God's family...and in the Devils family.
 - God's children are to mimic Him and be godly 1 Peter 1:15-16
 - My kids would wear my work boots or my helmet....to mimic their dad
 - God's children will mimic Him
 - No adoption (1:5) without assimilation New name with a new nature
- When God saved us, He restored our capacity to reflect His image
 - The new birth brings a renewed image Eph. 4:24 (Col. 3:10)
 - God's children have His image restored in them, so they begin to reflect Him.

LOVE

- Love is the first characteristic the Christian must start to mimic Eph. 5:2
 - To walk in love is to live a lifestyle of love
 - 1 John 4:7-8
- Love of God is paramount and should be our first love. The chief love/highest love is love for God
 - The greatest commandment - Mark 12:28-30
 - God is love = The Father loves the Son. The Son loves the Spirit....
 - inter-Trinitarian love John 1:18; 3:35; 5:20; 17:24,26
 - To walk in love begins with loving the Triune God as a part of your lifestyle
 - Do you love God?

- We must be careful to use a Biblical definition of love
 - Love is not love. Society has and uses a pagan definition of love
 - “Love” = a selfish fulfillment of erotic passion
 - *LOVE does not act unbecomingly or seek its own* – 1 Cor. 13:5
 - “Love” = not being critical of the immoral. “love” = accepting & tolerating sin
 - When our society says “be loving” it means be accepting of sin
 - *LOVE does not rejoice in unrighteousness* - 1 Cor. 13:6
 - “love” is not LOVE
 - There are 3 different Greek words we translate as “love” (two used in the NT)
 - *Eros* – erotic/sexual (not used in NT but common in NT society and our society)
 - *Phileo* = family/brotherly love (friendly feelings / fondness) (Philedelphia)
 - *Agape* - this is a higher expression of love focused on a committed giving to others
 - LOVE is not “free love”. True love will cost you something
 - God’s kind of love is a giving love - John 3:16, 35
 - God’s kind of love is a sacrificial love - John 15:13
 - Love & Sacrifice go together

SACRIFICE

- ❖ Christians are to mimic God by living a life of sacrificial love. - Eph. 5:2
 - Christ is our example of love
 - Christ’s love was demonstrated in giving and sacrificing Himself for others
 - Christians are to follow Christ’s pattern - John 15:12-13
 - 1 John 3:16 1 John 4:10-11 *“More About Jesus would I know, more of His grace to others show...”*
- ❖ Sacrifice smells good to God
 - Eph. 5:2 *“fragrant aroma”*
 - This is an allusion to the repeated phrase found in Leviticus. (Lev. 3:5)
 - Christ’s loving sacrifice for others smells good to God...He loves it - John 10:17
 - Do you like the smell emanating from a BBQ restaurant?
 - Sacrificial love smells good.
 - Sacrificial love smells good, but it doesn’t feel good
 - It will hurt you to offer you body a living sacrifice...love others (Rom. 12:1)
- ❖ The way of the cross is the way of the Christian.
 - Imitate Christ by being Christ-like Mark 8:34
 - The way of cross is to: Die to sin...Die to self...&...Die for someone else
 - Die to sin
 - Jesus dies for our sins. We love God by dying to sin
 - Die to self Jesus denied Himself Phil. 2:5-8
 - Die for someone else
 - Jesus loved God and loved others, so He sacrificed out of love
- ❖ What is your goal in life?
 - If you are a Christian, your goal is to be godly...your calling to be Christ-like.
 - Mimic God by love & sacrifice
- ❖ Invitation - Matt. 11:28-30 Matt. 10:37-38