

EPHESIANS

17. WHAT MUST NOT BE NAMED EPHESIANS 5:1-7

As the book of Ephesians progresses, Paul speaks more and more about the practical ramifications of following Jesus in our lives. Paul starts to speak about the things that directly pull us away from a deep relationship with Jesus—namely, our sin. We often surrender to things other than Christ, which leads to hardened hearts and forgetfulness about the saving grace of Jesus.

Read Ephesians 5:1-7

- ♦ **Why is it important to read this list of sinful behaviors in the broader context of Ephesians?**
- ♦ **How does being God’s “dearly loved children” provide freedom for conviction and repentance?**
- ♦ **What kinds of actions are befitting of our new identity in Christ?**

We should want to live in righteousness because living impurely ‘does not fit’ with those who love and are loved by a holy God (the word “proper” literally means “doesn’t fit” us as God’s children). Essentially, these behaviors are at odds with our new identity in Christ. If we talk about putting off and putting on, this is the direction of Paul’s words.

- ♦ **In what ways do many Christians look like everyone else in the world?**
- ♦ **How is the Holy Spirit leading you away from these kinds of behaviors?**

Sexual immorality – Paul says this because he has seen what sexual immorality does to people. God’s intention IS NOT that we would get as close to sin as possible without touching it, it is that we would live in freedom. Paul says the world we live in is confused when people who claim the name of Christ look like everyone else.

Impurity – This means something evil that makes you feel defiled. The beauty of the Gospel is that in Christ, if we confess our sin, He is faithful to forgive us and purify us (1 John 1:9).

DISCUSSION NOTES

Covetousness – The desire to have more and never being satisfied. Paul is reminding us that it is not about how much we have, it is about how satisfied we are with what we have.

Filthiness – This is the word for obscenity.

Foolish talk – These are dumb arguments that don’t matter.

Crude joking – This is not a little joke here and there; this is taking what is beautiful and private and pushing it out into the open.

Idolatry – This is the worship of self. The point is not to hate ourselves; it is to love our God.

We are saved by grace and we are saved to good works. We will never be truly free or satisfied until we trust Jesus and realize that not only has He saved us from sin and death, but He is also continuing to save us from ourselves. Paul says to let no one deceive us, not even our own selves.

- ♦ **How do you gravitate toward self-deception?**
- ♦ **How can community be helpful in becoming aware of and combatting deception?**

Disobedience is an indicator of the areas of our hearts in which we struggle with unbelief; disobedience is ultimately a heart—not necessarily a moral—issue. When we are satisfied in Christ, we can walk away from sin in the power of the Holy Spirit. The goal of life is to be close to Jesus—not merely trying not to sin. In all circumstances, we are to continually return our trust to Jesus, who continues to work in us.

- ♦ **Spend some time thanking God that despite our wayward hearts and actions, our security is in Him.**
- ♦ **Ask Him, as a community, to grow in deeper satisfaction so that our hearts increasingly turn from sin.**