

EPHESIANS: PRECISION THINKING FOR ACCURATE THEOLOGY

SESSION 19 | EPHESIANS 5:1-7

MORAL CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR | EPHESIANS 5:1-14

- Verse 1 –
 - Paul asks the congregation to be **followers of God**. The word **followers** is μιμητής [mimates], an *imitator*. Believers should *imitate* God in behavior as God's **dear children**
 - Note that since each of the commands in chapter 5 are in the plural, there is a sense in which the *church* must consider how to do this collectively (which requires individual involvement). See v. 24 which says, **as the church is...**
- Verse 2 –
 - This is one of three "as Christ also" statements in the Bible.
 - Romans 5:17 - **receive one another, as Christ also...**
 - Ephesians 5:2 - **walk in love, as Christ also...**
 - Ephesians 5:25 - **love your wives, as Christ also...**
 - Note that all three of them use Christ as the *standard* for interpersonal relations.
 - Jesus became **an offering** (that which did not involve blood) and **a sacrifice** (that which required blood) **to God**.
 - It is important to recognize that any theology of the ministry of Jesus that only sees Him as an example is insufficient, and any Christology that only sees Him as a **sacrifice** is equally insufficient. Christ is our example, both an **offering** to us in His life, ministry, and example, and a **sacrifice** for us in His death.
 - Now, in resurrected life, His **sacrifice** is an **offering** to us. Having accepted this as the basis for our salvation, our lives should be a **sweet-smelling savour**.
- Verse 3 –
 - In verses 3-5, Paul gives sinful activity that should **not be once named among you**.
 - **Fornication** is an inclusive word for sexual sins. **Uncleanness** is *that which is not kathartic* (purifying or cleansing), using the word ἀκαθαρσία [akatharsia]. Thus, if an activity *fuels the fires of sin* then it should not be part of our activity. The word **covetousness** is based on two Greek roots which mean "to have more."
 - While these three may be taken individually, it looks like Paul intends to include **uncleanness or covetousness** with **fornication** because he uses the **let it not once be named** rather than *let THEM not once be named*. Thus Darby translates all three as related, "But fornication and all uncleanness or unbridled lust, let it not be even named..."
 - When Paul says, **as becometh saints** he uses the Jews under the Law, which has clear and strong instruction to moral behavior, as the standard. He is *not* claiming that the Ephesians are **saints**. The word **becometh** means, *is fitting*.
- Verse 4 –
 - Adding to the previous list, Paul adds three things which (with the possible exception of the first) are related to our speech.
 - **Filthiness** is only used here in the New Testament, and likely refers to *obscenity*.
 - **Foolish talking** is μωρολογία [morologia], built on the root *moros*, which is *foolish* (and from which we get words like *moronic*).

