

Live a Life of Love

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-5 Larry: Chick-Fil-A. Harvest. Women's Mtg. REAL.
- B. Slide6 Children at Risk
- C. Slide7 Men's Fight Club - Tues Night.
- D. Prayer: Careless sin quickly gets out of control and does more damage than we can imagine. (Like a match to dry grass. What starts as playing around, ends up ruining many lives)

II. Slide8a Intro: Live a Life of Love

- A. Paul intended that these exhortations guide believers into patterns of wise living. He wanted them to develop the following qualities in their Christian lives.
- B. (1) Here Paul launches us to the highest standard possible...**Be imitators of God...**means imitators, mimics. [pres tense *continuous, ongoing action*]
 - 1. But how can finite human beings imitate an infinite God?
 - 2. If we are called to be God copiers, then What does a God copier look like? What needs to be done? We do it by...
 - a) Slide8b Walk in **Love**. Walk in **Purity**. Walk as **Light**. Walk **Carefully**. Walk **Filled**
- C. Paul starts by commanding, *not suggesting*, that believers *imitate God* in how they treat one another.
 - 1. It doesn't say that 2nd part in vs.1? **No**, but it starts w/the word **therefore**...so see 4:32.
- D. Slide9a In 1820, *Charles Caleb Colton* coined the phrase that states: **Imitation is the sincerest form of flattery**.
 - 1. Slide9b 3 Jn11 **Beloved, do not imitate what is evil but what is good. He who does good is from God, but he who does evil has not seen God.**
- E. The term **Imitator** was understood by Paul's readers. **Imitation** was the main part of the training of an orator. The teachers of rhetoric declared that the learning of oratory depended on **3 things: theory, imitation, and practice**. The main part of their training was the **study** and the **imitation** of *the Masters* who had gone before.

1. So Paul is saying to **train as an orator**, you would *imitate the masters of speech*. Since you are **training in life** *imitate the Lord of all good life*.

III. Slide10a **WALK IN LOVE (2)**

- A. **Walk** - to conduct one's life in a certain way. We look like God the most when we give to him our very best.
1. What you **are** is God's gift to you. What you make of yourself is your gift to God
 2. Slide10b So the beauty of a journey is *every step you take*, **not** necessarily getting to your *final destination*.
 - a) Slide10c People love the *outcome*. God loves the *process* (every step of the journey)
 - b) Eg. As a culture we love to spend a lot of money on the **wedding** and hardly anything on the **marriage**.
 - (1) **If** an average wedding in the US is \$26,640 (Aug.2016). **Then**, I'd love to see a couple spend \$6000 on **it and** then invest \$20,000 into their **marriage**. [*i.e.* on Couples retreat's, marriage conferences, weekend getaways, marriage books to read, etc.]
- B. **Walk in love** is *living a life of love*. It's a *daily* behavior.
- C. You've heard of *the duck test*...it is a term for a form of **abductive reasoning** (a form of *logical inference* which **starts with** an observation **then** seeks to find the simplest and most likely explanation).
1. It goes like this...*If it looks like a duck, swims like a duck, and quacks like a duck, then it probably is a duck.*
 2. The test implies that a person can **identify** an unknown subject by observing that subject's **habitual characteristics**.
 - a) So, *if your life looks like a Jesus Follower, walks like a Jesus Follower, & sounds like a Jesus Follower, then you're probably a Jesus follower.*
- D. **Christ** provides the **model** for how Christians are to *live in love*; His sacrificial death is the definition of love.
- E. This description of Christ's death draws on language from the sac system in the OT.
- F. **Christ loved us & gave His life for us**. Like the story of a **soldier** that was wounded so badly he had to get an *amputation*. The surgeon after the surgery said to him: "I am sorry

to tell you that you have **lost** your arm." "*Sir,*" said the lad, "*I did not lose it; I gave it - for my country.*" Christ did not lose His life, He **gave** His life for us.

1. The description of Christ's death uses language from *the sac system in the OT*
2. **Offering** – products from the field [what the worshiper brings to God]
3. **Sacrifice** – animals from the flock [refers to the sacrificing of animals]
4. **Sweet smelling aroma** – speaks of its acceptableness.
5. An **offering** & a **sacrifice** always speaks of **a cost**. Love costs!
 - a) There is always a *tremendous price* to pay for *freedom*.
 - b) With **love** there is always **sacrifice**. Always a **cost**.

IV. Slide11a **WALK IN PURITY (3-7)**

- A. The right kind of love implies that we hate certain things.
 1. Rom.12:9 **Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good.**
- B. Slide11b Paul doubles back & attacks the sins of the pagan world.
 1. 1st sins of *sexual immorality* (3).
 2. 2nd sins of *conversation* (4).
- C. (3) **Fornication** (*porneia*, refers to any kind of sexual immorality)
 1. **Uncleanness** (a broader term for impurity).
 2. **Covetousness** (greediness, often used to describe *uncontrolled sexual desire*)
- D. (4) **Filthy talk** - Obscenities. Shameful, filthy, or obscene speech.
 1. **Foolish talk** – Silly talk. Talk of fools. The conversation of a drunkard.
 2. **Course talk** – quick wit. Crude joking. Makes light of human weakness or human goodness.
 - a) Which do you think God hears? When you *give thanks* before your meal...or when you *complain* about everything you were served?
- E. (5) Paul underscores the seriousness of this kind of behavior by saying (read vs.5).
 1. Obviously there is **forgiveness** to one who falls to one of these...he's speaking about anyone who does this *habitually* with an *unrepentant heart*.

V. Slide12a **WALK IN LIGHT (8-14)**

A. (8) You were once darkness...not *were in darkness*.

1. How to know if you are walking in darkness: when you **hide** (erasing your history on your computer, why?), **lie** (what are you covering), or **blame someone else** (1st thing **adam/eve** did when they 1st walk in darkness. Its my x-wife, its my lousy kids, its my impatient boss, its my...).
2. It's when you're not allowing **light** to **expose** something.

B. **Children of light** - If **God** is light then naturally **His children** would be also.

1. Slide12b Think **purity**, not **lumens**. Think **spiritual** light not **phys** light.
2. *It's hard to walk in light, in a dark world.*

C. **Light produces Good Fruit** (9)

1. Here are some of the products of light (goodness, righteousness, truth).
2. Walking in the light produces spiritual fruit.

D. **Light Exposes Motives** (10)

1. **Light enables the Christian to discriminate between what is pleasing & what is not pleasing.** Shepherds Notes, pg.60.
2. Here is where all **motives, attitudes, & actions** must be tested.
3. **We are to find out what pleases the Lord.**
 - a) Just find out what's **acceptable to the Lord**. (i.e. not to others)

E. **Light Exposes Evil** (11,12)

1. Light exposes the unfruitful works of darkness.
2. **Evil activity**, when dragged into **the light of Christ**, is seen for what it is & dies a natural death. Slide12c [the story of the woman caught (in the very act) of **adultery**, is really the story of the men (Scribes/Pharisees) caught in **hypocrisy**]
 - a) Do you know when that story was over in Jn.8:11 what the very next verse reads?
Jn.8:12 *Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, I am the **light** of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in **darkness**, because you will have the **light** that leads to **life**.*

F. **Light Cleanses/Exposes** (13,14)

1. The **light cannot compromise** with the **darkness**; it can only **expose** it.
2. **Awake you sleeper, arise from the dead** - this is not a direct quote from any OT passage. **Or**, he also might be borrowing from an early Christian hymn or traditions related to baptism. [Paul might be alluding to Job 14:12 **or** Isa 26:19, 61:1]

VI. Slide13a **WALK CAREFULLY (15-17)**

- A. (15) **Circumspectly** – accurately, carefully, intelligently. *Carries the idea of looking around carefully so as not to stumble.*
1. **Have you ever not turned on the light at night & then ended up catching your baby toe** on the corner of something?
 - a) We need to take advantage of the light He has given us.
 2. It means, walking **intelligently** and **not** in **ignorance**.
 3. **Instead of walking accurately/carefully, they miss the mark, miss the road, & end up suffering on some detour.**
- B. Slide13b (16) **Redeeming the time** – buy up the opportunities.
1. The idea here is not clock time **but** what one writer calls **kingdom opportunities**.
 - a) **Those openings for ministry that often come at inconvenient times:** a friend who wants to talk; a child with a problem; the chance to lend a hand to someone in need.
 2. Slide13c Paul is encouraging us to keep our lives **uncluttered** so that we can respond when the need arises - because **kingdom opportunities** can get squeezed out of an **overly tight schedule**.
 - a) And do not waste **time, energy, money & talent** in that which is **apart** from His will. **Lost** opportunities may never be **regained**; they might be *gone forever*.
 3. This is the bible's **Carpe Diem** statement (seize the day) **"Seize the day boys! Make your lives extraordinary"** Robin Williams, The Dead Poet Society
- C. (17) **Will of the Lord** - Only after 1 understands what pleases God (vs.1) can he carry **it** out in his life.
1. Slide13d Understand His **Word** & you'll understand His **Will**.

VII. Slide14a **WALK FILLED (18-21)**

- A. (18) Let's step back to *Ephesus* in Paul's day...
1. **Dionysus** (Di-on-I-sus), in Greek mythology, god of wine and vegetation, who showed mortals how to cultivate grapevines and make wine.
 - a) He eventually became the popular Greek god of wine and cheer, & wine miracles were reputedly performed at certain of his festivals.
 2. The divine mission of Dionysus was to *mingle the music of the flute* and to *bring an end to care and worry*.
 3. **Slide14b Key:** The worshippers of Dionysus felt they were *united, indwelled & controlled by Dionysus, who gave them special powers & abilities*.
 - a) **Thus**, to be filled/controlled with *wine or the Spirit* was the *contrast*.
 - b) The indwelling Spirit of God should *continually control & dominate* the life of the believer. [present tense calls for the continual & habitual action]
- B. **Be filled with the Spirit** - in the Gk text of Ephesians, this **command** provides the basis for Paul's statements in v.19-21, *all of which* describe the outworking of being filled with the Spirit.
- C. **An example of being filled...**
1. **How can you get the air out of a drinking glass?** You can suck it out with a pump, but that creates a vacuum and you'll shatter it. The easier way is take a pitcher of water and fill the glass with it. *Thus removing all the air.* **Victory** for the child of God **does not** come by *working hard to eliminate sinful habits*, but rather by **Slide14c allowing the Holy Spirit to take full possession**.
- D. (19) **Psalms** – the songs of Israel in the OT.
- E. **Hymns** – obviously not the Hymns sung today...because they weren't around then. They were *new songs* of the Christian faith.
- F. **Spiritual songs** – songs shared among the believers to praise God with them.
1. This praise was to be accompanied with thanksgiving.
- G. (21) **Submitting to one another**...in that we **all** have to submit to *somebody*.
1. I believe the following passages defines what he means by this.
 2. **The section concludes in chapter 6:9.** [submission: wife/husband; child to parent; bondservant to master]

- a) There must be *harmony, submission, & love*...in each of these relationships...in the fear of God (a fear of *profound respect* for someone or something).
- b) And the secret to this *harmony* will be us being *habitually* filled/controlled w/the Sp.
- c) Slide14d To be filled with the Spirit of God is to be controlled by the Word of God
- d) **That** is what is going to save our *marriages, families, & work environments*.
- e) It will be from a **power** *within* not **pressure** from *without*.
- f) **Thus** the **marks** of the *Spirit-filled believer* are not unusual emotional experiences, miracles & tongues, but rather **Christian character**.