

- Isn't it funny how we look at someone when we find out they are the son or daughter of .... "Why, you look just like your daddy!" Do you know that people do that when they find out you are Christian. Wouldn't it be good to hear, "You look just like your heavenly Father!"
- On a wall near the main entrance to the Alamo there is said to be a portrait with the following inscription: "James Butler Bonham--no picture of him exists. This portrait is of his nephew, Major James Bonham, deceased, who greatly resembled his uncle. It is placed here by the family that people may know the appearance of the man who died for freedom."
  - **Application:** As believers, we too have a responsibility to display the image of the One Who died for "our" freedom.
  - We want to be the 'real deal' and not an actor on a stage whose mask comes off later.
- Paul is writing to the church in Ephesus. It was a city with many gods and very little moral qualities. He exhorts us Eph 4:30 not to grieve the Holy Spirit. I want to believe that the majority of Christians want to represent Christ to their sphere of influence. In Eph. 5, he begins to give us things to do if we want to shine for Jesus. If I can get us to be what we are supposed to be the 'don'ts' will take care of themselves.
- Several things Paul exhorts these Ephesian believers to be know for. They listened to Paul and Ephesus became a powerful church. Let Read Eph 5:1-ff. I want to look at several things in this passage that we want to be committed to as believers. And if we will commit to doing these few the 'issues' will not become an 'issue.'

## I. Imitate God

- A. "Imitate God in everything you do because you are children of God." We are to follow God's example and will. He is our heavenly father be like him. To imitate means to assume the appearance of, or to model.
1. Paul uses the word many times in his writings. Three facets of the word appears. 1.) To compare 2.) To use as example. 3.) To receive as directions. All three were to be understood in this word.
  2. "NT as a whole does not teach imitation in the primary sense of imitating an example but rather in the predominant sense of discipleship, i.e., of obedience to the word and will of the Lord either directly or by way of the apostles." DNTT
    - a) Hebrews 6:12 *that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.*
    - b) Phil 3:17 Paul exhorts believers to follow his example as he follows Christ. Also in 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1. "*Follow me as I follow Christ Jesus.*"
- B. Live a life filled with love. If I am imitating God, my life has to reflect intense amounts of love.
1. "*Live a life filled with love, following the example of Christ. He loved us and offered himself as a sacrifice for us, a pleasing aroma to God.*" (Ephesians 5:2, NLT)
    - a) Agape. It is to be a life filled not just sprinkled. It touches every area!
    - b) Romans 12:9-10 *Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. <sup>10</sup> Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other.*
    - c) People know when it is real. They also know when you are trying. That is o.k.
  2. Be like Christ. Remember He lay down His life for us. That is a life thinking about/considering others.
- C. This should be the goal of every believer: love well. When you love well you fulfill all the other commandments.

## II. Live As People of Light

- A. What Paul has in mind is this: Light produces light. Light will not produce darkness. The light of the Gospel of Christ has entered the heart. The deeds of darkness have been exposed by that light and repentance to God has followed. Don't go back to the darkness.
1. Don't be fooled vs. 6; especially by those who make excuses.
    - a) To be deceived or enticed it also speaks of a pleasant illusion. The word excuse means to make empty.
    - b) That's just 'shop talk, locker room talk'. It is ungodly talk is what it is. When you are making excuses you are compromising. Why not just live as people of light? ie. my niece to a college professor who kept dropping the 'f' bomb while teaching.
  2. Don't participate vs 7; in deeds of darkness. If it doesn't look like something Jesus would do then 'run away'.
- B. What Paul is talking about is purity. A Christian is a person who walks in ever increasing love and ever increasing purity. That is why he says to flee, sexual immorality, impurity, greed and obscene stories and coarse joking. Those are things that do not relate to the light.
1. Purity is not just about sexuality. It is also how we carry ourselves in relationships, language, motives, actions, etc.
  2. Live as people of light literally reads, "Walk as people of light."
  3. Imitate God and live life like God.
- C. Carefully Determine what pleases God. (dokimazo)
1. The word carefully, has to do with watchful, testing, authenticating. It is like a scientist doing an experiment. He is watching everything carefully. He is testing all the feedback and results.
  2. Paul is saying to us "Watch your life in light of the Word of God." Scrutinize your life with that Word. The Word is what tenderly and faithfully convicts me so that my life in Christ is authentic.
- D. Carefully Live (blepo)
1. What Paul is saying here is watch, look at, see. But of the three words meaning to see in the Greek, this word means to see intently, it can also mean strong spiritual insight. It also mean to note or to perceive.
  2. Paul give us three 'don'ts' for the purpose of explaining what he means to live carefully.
    - a) don't be foolish be wise.
    - b) don't be lazy be industrious.
    - c) don't act without thinking consider what God wants.
    - d) don't get drunk because a drunk person can't make right choices.

### III. Be Filled With the Spirit

- A. Filled means: full, complete, abundant in measure. It is same as being baptized in the Holy Spirit. Means to be immersed, no area untouched by Holy Spirit. It takes the Holy Spirit to be able to do any of the above that we have just spoken of. I need His help.
- B. Who is the Holy Spirit?
1. He is God. Just as Jesus was God in the flesh. The Holy Spirit is God with us. It was Jesus great desire to give to us the gift of the Holy Spirit from the Father.
  2. He is our helper, our teacher, our comforter.
  3. He is God with us. We are not left as orphans until Jesus returns.
- C. We need the Holy Spirit to help us to live a life after Jesus example. All we have to do is to look to Him for help. That is why we do not want to grieve Him. Listen to these scriptures:

1. Romans 5:5 *he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love.*
2. Romans 8:5 *Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. Help me with purity. And watching over my life. He convicts of sin.*
3. Romans 8:13-14 *For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. <sup>14</sup> For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.*
4. Gal 5:16 *I say then: "Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. <sup>17</sup> For <sup>v</sup>the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh;*

**Conclusion:**

- **The University of Michigan did a study several years ago on how couples begin to look alike the longer they are married. They did that by examining photos of newly weds and then photos later in their marriage. What they found was that the happier a couple were and the longer they were married the more they began to look alike. I think that is true of our heavenly Father. The happier we are with our relationship with Him and the longer we are in relationship with Him the more we look like Him.**
- **We all can look more like our heavenly Father. It takes faith and some daily effort to make it happen. But if we will imitate Him, walk as children of light, and be filled the Spirit people will notice Jesus in us.**
- **The next time someone finds out you are a believer will they say, "You look so much like your heavenly Father!"**