

Ephesians 5: 1-20



The text – Ephesians 5: 1-20

1. Read Ephesians 5:1-20. Paul tells the Ephesians to ‘Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children...’. What do you think the ‘therefore’ is referring to? What is Paul’s reason for imitating God?
2. What do you think Paul means when he calls the Ephesians to be imitators of God? How do verses 1 and 2 flesh the idea of imitation out more fully?
3. Verses 3 and 4 describe actions which commonly characterised the life of people in Asia Minor. The issues listed here were all connected with sexual immorality and idol worship. How do these verses contrast with the life of imitation described in verse 2?
4. In verse 6, Paul warns the churches, ‘Let no one deceive you with empty words’. What do you think he is referring to in the light of the previous verses? What are these empty words?
5. In verse 8, Paul says that we ‘are light in the Lord’ and that we should ‘live as children of light’. In what sense are God’s people to act like ‘light’ in verses 8-14?
6. Verse 16 is most accurately translated as, ‘redeeming the time, because the days are evil.’ In the context of this passage, what do you think it means to ‘redeem the time’? What ‘time’ is being referred to?
7. Verses 17 – 20 contrast a foolish way of life with a life of encouragement and sober-mindedness in thanksgiving. Why is sober-mindedness and wisdom so important to Paul in the context of the passage?
8. How is the communal, church focus of Paul made apparent in this section of Ephesians?

The Scriptures – Ephesians 5: 1-20 as a portion of the Scriptures

9. Imitating God has always been an important part of being God’s people. Read Leviticus 20:22-26 and consider what it meant for Israel to imitate the Lord. Why was imitating God so important for Israel as He prepared them to enter the promised land?
10. Paul uses the image of light to describe the life of the church. Read Isaiah 60. How do we see elements of Isaiah’s words fulfilled in Paul’s description of God’s people as children of light? How is the concept of ‘redeeming the time’ evident in Isaiah’s words?

Our lives – walking the way of Jesus in response to Ephesians 5: 1-20 as a portion of the Scriptures

11. What lesser gods beckon to us in our society? What does our society worship and revere? What hollow promises are we tempted to chase after?
12. What might it look like for us as a church to redeem the time? How might we expose the hollow promises of our culture and reveal the goodness of Jesus’ way to each other? To our society?
13. How have you been challenged to respond to this section of God’s word? How has it altered or consolidated your perspective of your place in the church and the church’s place in the world?