

## **WALK IN LOVE!**

(Ephesians 5:1-2)

Being loved by God in Christ is the motivation and ground of becoming a loving person. Understanding the depth of God's love for us in Christ is the key to growing into a loving disciple of Christ. That is the central message of Ephesians 5:1-2. As the apostle Paul concludes his practical instructions on living out our new life in Christ, he gives us two more positive exhortations concerning the radical kind of love that must characterize the life of every Christian.

1. **Be** \_\_\_\_\_ **as His beloved children.**

As Paul sums up his practical exhortation, he concludes by restating the ultimate goal of the Christian life – to be like God. In the words of Paul, “*Therefore, be imitators of God*” (Eph. 5:1). The term for imitate means to mimic or to copy the characteristics of another person. Paul is teaching us the truth that the whole aim of our Christian life and ethics is to reproduce in us the very characters of God Himself (Eph. 4:25-32; 1 Pet. 1:15-16). The underlying reason and motivation behind our imitation of God is the glorious truth that we are God's beloved children (1 John 3:1). It is our greatest privilege and delight then to aim and conform our character after God our Father.

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2. **Walk in love as** \_\_\_\_\_.

In Ephesians 5:2, Paul specifies how we must imitate God by urging us to “*walk in love as Christ has loved us.*” To imitate God is ultimately to imitate Christ in the way He loves us. This is foundational to our motivation in loving others. We could only love others when we truly grasp and understand how much we are deeply loved by God in Christ. In other words, we love others from the reservoir of God's love for us in Christ. Paul describes the glorious manner by which our Lord Jesus has loved us when he said, “*Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma*” (Eph. 5:2). Christ's love for us is self-giving (John 10:17-18; Phil. 2:8; John 15:13); substitutionary (Isa. 53:5-6; 2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 5:8); sacrificial (Heb. 10:11-14; 1 John 4:10) and satisfying (John 19:30; Heb. 10:14). By way of application, we walk in Christlike love when we commit to love others for the glory of God, when we commit to love our fellow believers as Christ loves His church, and when we commit to love the lost by sharing the gospel of Christ to them.

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