Tread: **A Study in Ephesians – wk 9 - Walk This Way**

**Ephesians - a letter from Paul an Apostles of Jesus (now in prison) to a church he planted in Ephesus. The challenge of how to walk w/ Jesus**

**Ephesians 4:17-31 - As new person in Christ, you have a new way of thinking, a new way of looking at the world, and a new way of living your life.**

**There is a new you in Jesus. Walk this way (RunDMC / Aerosmith**

**Ephesians 5:1 Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children… NKJV - Therefore, be imitators of God as dear children. (1 Peter 1:15-16)**

**Notice this – it says, “be imitators AS loved children.”**

**Religion says do this *to be accepted* and become God’s child.**

**Christianity reveres it - you are made a child of God (in Christ as an act of grace) now imitate him *because* we love HIM.**

**One of the worst things you can do is try to imitate God when you don’t really love Him.**

**As a young minster I saw men who I wanted to be like - men who really love people. I thought, I need to be enthusiastic, positive and encouraging and make them feel special. But then struggled to do it. More than imitating his behavior I needed his heart for people.**

**Paul give - Three Specific Way We Should Walk (3X he says, “walk this way.” And then he gives where to get the power to walk that way.**

**When I was young I broke my elbow, wrist, & hand – anybody here ever break a leg? What was keeping you from walking? Could a video, pamphlet, or teaching get you to walk again? The solution was to fix / correct the legs (metal rod to reshape the inside bone)**

**Similar to our walk w/ God, Paul doesn’t just show us how to walk. He points to places that need fixing, healing, and rehab – and the power to walk again – to reshape the inside.**

**3 WAYS TO WALK – 1. Walk in LOVE – the way of love**

**Ephesians 5:2 and walk in the way of love, (two ways) just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.**

**2 ways to love are given here (let’s set the mood - incense)**

* **To love as Christ loved us – to love as we have been loved**

**What would your life look like if this became your standard for how you treat people? In marriage, family, work look like? Love take the 1st step**

**We tend to love people like we are primarily good people. That they have wronged us. Rather than realizing we are the sinner who God has forgiven first. \*\* 1st sinner, 2nd sinned against.**

**The way Christ loves us lived out in us takes on new life - we love un-conditionally, consistently, sacrificially, enduringly – as we have been.**

* **To love as an act toward God – “as an offering of love”**

**When we love others, we are ultimately loving God!**

**Paul uses the phrase fragrant offering (sacrifice altar aroma and the incense altar aroma). We do this as an act of love – give it to God. It is as God is saying – the way you love – hmmmm smells good.**

**We at times we don’t love or forgive someone because they don’t deserve it – they may never change or ever be “worthy” of my forgiveness, but we don’t do it for them, we do it for Him**

**What if you were able to look thru a person you were being asked to love and you see Jesus behind them. And you whatever you were doing for them – you were doing it for Jesus. (Colossians 3:23-24)**

**A great Bible picture of this - A woman brought a bottle of expense perfume – life’s savings – poured it all over Jesus feet / head. Called a waste. Jesus said people will speak of her wherever the gospel is given. Why? Because of the love behind the action. Our acts of love toward others are like breaking bottles of oil – sacrificing our life to Jesus. Even if it seems it is a waste to others - It is not.**

**Single mom working several jobs to raise son. Teaches him to respect others, work hard, be honest & kind – sacrifices everything to put him thru college. He graduates becomes a hard worker, honest & kind – just as she taught. BUT, never answers letters, calls, never visits, never a card. He became the man she wanted is that enough? What would you think? It is not acceptable to just live a good life and ignore the relationship to whom you owe everything. \*\*But many do to God.**

**3 WAYS TO WALK - 2. Walk in the LIGHT – the way of the light**

**Ephesians 5:8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) 10 and find out what pleases the Lord. 11 Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. (two types of fruit here – fruit of darkness and fruit of light)**

**Walking in light is about finding out what is pleases God, and shining light of the gospel on the things around you.**

**That why he says this is about you finding out what pleases the Lord!**

**Head lamp - Reading / camping - someone calls you and you look at them, shining a light right in their face. Paul says point the light onto areas of your life. Primary goal here is to shine a light on your life…**

**5:9 …for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth**

**The result (fruit) of walking in the light (discernment)**

* **Goodness - acts of goodness – living compassionate lives**
* **Righteousness – living God honoring lives**
* **Truth – growing in the truth of who God is**

**5:12 It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. 13 But everything exposed by the light becomes visible - and everything that is illuminated becomes a light.**

**Head lamp - Don’t just go with the flow think about what you’re doing, shine the light of God’s word on it. Don’t be led by your feelings, they can lead us astray if not submitted to God’s word.**

**Paul relates discernment to waking up – Eph 5:14 This is why it is said: “Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”**

**When you’re in deep sleep it’s hard to wake up. Alarm goes off - hit snooze over and over – throw it! We don’t feel like opening our eyes. Paul says, WAKE UP! The church is sleeping to death! Wake up sleeper! Open your eyes, shine the light on things around you.**

**Paul gives us some areas to - shine the light on**

**Back to verse 3 - Eph 5:3 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper (not consistent or fitting) for God’s holy people. (like trying to put a size 8 on a size 10 foot – why walk in pain?) 4 Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.**

* **On our sex life - Sexual immorality**

**5:3 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, (porneia – fornication - any Sexual experiences outside of God design) or of any kind of impurity (dirty, unclean sexual behavior)**

**The world views sex as simply another desire; you’re hungry - eat, you desire sex - do it. Bible however shines a light on this.**

**Walking in a dark room, you walk by feeling. Toes kick things, step on Legos, and other things – then you turn on the light and see the path is not clear. Most people feel their way thru life, based on feelings. God’s word shines light on the path. This is not extra credit.**

**Sex is designed by God as a profound union. A mingling of souls in marriage alone. An act of trust, transparency, and commitment that unites two as one followed by oneness in other areas.**

**Love puts the needs of others first, lust puts your desires above others Outside of marriage sex is reduced to cravings, feelings, desires, and breeds distrust and secrecy. Not the act of love, trust, & transparency designed by God. Having sex outside of the covenant bond of marriage places you in darkness. Shine a light – on your sex life.**

**Eph 5:3 But among you there must not be even a hint… of greed, (Covetous) because these are improper for God’s holy people.**

**\* What we pursue - Covetousness = never satisfied / discontentment**

**A hunger for more and more in v6 Paul calls this idolatry – heavy.**

**Thinking, God what you give me is not enough. What we are saying is, God you are not enough. I won’t be happy until that salary, move, car, diploma, approval, married, kids, divorced, weight – unsatisfied.**

**It’s okay to want things, but peace should not hang on them. This dishonors God - keeps us from joy. Christ is our security & comfort. Shine a light on your heart. (Remedy - is gratitude)**

**Eph 5:4 Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.**

**\* Your language - Foolish talking = sexual / perverse comments, humor**

**Shine a light – on your language – not on others.**

**Learning to walk in the light of God’s word is vital - Ephesians 5:5 For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or covetous person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.**

**If you are living in disobedience to God, you have no inheritance in the Kingdom. God’s word is clear. Are you walking in darkness? Shine the light on your life.**

**BTW - Single women if you have a guy who says he is a Christian but does not heed these things, he will lead you straight into darkness. Get out of that relationship**

**3 WAYS TO WALK - 3. Walk in DISCERMENT way of wisdom (compass)**

**Ephesians 5:15 Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is.**

**Wisdom is the ability to think clearly and correctly about things not spelled out specifically in scripture.**

**Not everything in life is directly spelled out in the Bible. Like: what job to take, how to spend your money, what to do with your time, what to watch on TV, who to marry or hang out with?**

**The bible gives guidelines – then we are to use discernment.**

**NKJV- v16. redeeming the time, because the days are evil.**

**I like that, redeeming the time. Redeem the day!**

**The time we live in, like them, is filled with perversion, rebellion, hatred, and neglect – evil. Rescue from the loss!**

**Paul gives us some - Discernment Potholes**

**Ep 5:16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.**

* **Pothole 1 – False ??? - Lethargy / idleness / laziness / apathy**

**Poor use of time - watching too much TV, video / phone games, sleep, sitting around, too much time with a certain person - Though not morally wrong, they are not helpful (potholes). A blowout resulting in apathy, lack of drive, immaturity and a shallow walk with God.**

**In light of what we know about the world, how should we be spending our time? Make the most of the days, be intentional!**

**\*\* God gave us sabbath to recalibrate & rest, then it’s back to work!**

**Redeem your time at work – at home – and at play. Go on a mission trip instead of only vacations all the time. Skills & abilities are given to be a platform to help others see God – redeem them! Use the opportunity.**

**The world is growing corrupt, but millions are searching for hope. People are perishing - redeem your time! If you know the ship is sinking, get as many people as possible on the lifeboat**

* **Pothole 2 - False assurance**

**After a challenge to shine light on immorality and greed in our life - Ep 5:6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God’s wrath comes on those who are disobedient. 7 Therefore do not be partners with them.**

**Empty words - God doesn’t take sin seriously and we don’t need to either. Just walk an aisle, say a prayer, get dunked, sign a card, join a church, and give your 10%. You’re good.**

**Some churches peddle cheap grace and a false sense of assurance. Jesus is both Lord (master) and Savior. You are not His without a surrender to his rule and authority.**

**This is not about struggling with sin – there is a difference between struggling and surrendering. Between practicing sin and fighting sin.**

**You can walk with Jesus and towards Jesus and still stumble. But you get up and keep going. We all struggle w/ something.**

**Don’t buy the lie that you can live in sin and be a follower of Jesus.**

**Eph 5:8 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit...**

* **Pothole 3 - False comforts**

**Being drunk is compared to being filled with the Spirit of God.**

**Both are ways to deal with life’s pressures. Let’s compare.**

**Alcohol – a depressant that dulls your senses to reality. It makes you less aware of your surroundings.**

**The Holy Spirit – a stimulant that makes you more aware of reality and your surroundings.**

**Alcohol - gets rid of worry by making you forget the problems**

**The Holy Spirit- gets rid of worry by helping you remember the solution**

**Alcohol – gives you courage by making you less aware of the danger**

**The Holy Spirit- gives you courage by showing you how much larger God is than whatever you are afraid of.**

**You can either drink for tomorrow we die or dive onto your knees and seek the power of God to guide you to live! The Holy Spirit opens our eyes wide to the promises of God.**

**The Holy Spirit is the key to all of this! He is our power source!**

**Paul continues - Eph 5:18b Instead, be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, 20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**What does that mean? Walking around singing to each other?**

**Think of it this way - scripture is to be the soundtrack of our life, always playing in the background. Shaping mind & heart.**

**The words that come out of our mouth are the songs of our heart**

**When tragedy strikes, what song are you singing? What is your song? When the wold sings of fear, despair, and worry – Sing - I will not fear!**

**When the enemy says you can’t make it – Sing - I can do all things!**

**When you hear all hope is lost – Sing - I will never leave you…!**

**That means we read it, memorize it, listen to it, fill your mind with it**

**Reading God word – puts the lyrics in your heart and soul!**

**Small groups – are the songs of our heart we sing to each other.**

**Music – songs are sermons you can remember – if I asked about a sermon… – yet say, “What a powerful name it is” It can builds our faith, reminds us of God’s word, and puts a song in your heart of faith.**

**Corporate worship - stirs each other in faith with one voice and song!**

**Serving / missions / volunteer- you are a song of hope, peace, comfort!**

**Parents get your kids in student activities – if not the anthem in their hearts will be set by Disney, Bruno Mars, and Drake. They need to have their heart songs be written by scripture.**

**Walk in Love – Walk in the Light – walk in discernment.**

**Shine that light and watch out for the potholes.**

**Paul starts to talk about marriage, kids, work - everyday walking – some of the more controversial verses in scripture.**

**Prayer – \*\*\*Invite cards – at the door on**

**What’s the difference between religion that tries to be a good person and walking in the new self is?**

**Religion is most born out of an attempt to appease and use God. Reaching out to God to avoid pain, trouble or to get something. We do things, to get things - We give to get. That is religion in action.**

**But our new self is motivated by something different. We don’t do these to avoid suffering or fix our relationship w/ God. We do these things as a result of the love & grace of God we already received.**

**The fundamental distinctive difference is an internal revealed SIGHT!**

**It’s not a prayer – but sight! It’s not raising a hand – but sight! It’s not even baptism – but sight! These are all responses to that sight.**

**\*\*The gospel is not a diving board it’s a pool – JD Greer (author)**

**We treat the good news of Jesus like a onetime jump and we are in. But the diving board is more accurately, faith - and we dive deep into the gospel. Soaking us – changing us – swim in it**

**I am new in him, soaked in his word & Spirit. Ever get out of the pool on a cold day and can’t wait to get back in. You belong there.**

**You will never fully experience God’s love sincerely until you love God freely – otherwise you’ll always be trying to use Him.**

**The reward of this new life is Jesus – not stuff. Do you see it?**

* **A new life – v 20 – the revelation of Jesus Christ**
* **A new knowledge – v21 – the revelation of God’s word**
* **A new attitude – v 23 – the revelation of the Holy Spirit**