

# **This is a Great Mystery**

## **A Study of Ephesians**

### **Week 21 – Ephesians 4:30-5:4**

**Prayer** – Come, Holy Spirit, renew our hearts through the knowledge of the Son; kindle in us the fire of your love so that we would live at peace with you and with everyone else in our lives. Amen.

**Review/Introduction** – This is a nice opportunity for a big picture review. Let’s all open up to Ephesians 4 and, starting with verse 17, everyone read (on their own) up to the verses before us today. As you read, recall what we have discussed and jot down any questions or big takeaways that come to mind. When you’re done reading, discuss your questions and comments with those at your table (or nearby). We will take the first five minutes of class to do this activity.

**Ephesians 4:30** - καὶ μὴ λυπεῖτε τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον τοῦ θεοῦ, ἐν ᾧ ἐσφραγίσθητε εἰς ἡμέραν ἀπολυτρώσεως.

**And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.**

1. The word “grieve” in this verse was always a strange one to me; maybe I’m alone in that. What does it mean to grieve the Holy Spirit? Well, before we answer that, I dug into the word λυπεῖτε a bit. Its other options are “vex, irritate, offend, or insult.” That helps me understand the phrase much more clearly. To grieve the Holy Spirit means to insult or irritate him (if God is capable of being irritated). In what ways might we do this?
2. The “day of redemption” is an interesting concept. I think we would often think of a future day of redemption; and that’s not wrong. However, redemption can be spoken of as having taken place in the past, taking place right now, and yet to take place in the future. Explain how each is true for us:
  - a. Past –
  - b. Present –
  - c. Future –

**Ephesians 4:31** - πᾶσα πικρία καὶ θυμὸς καὶ ὀργὴ καὶ κραυγὴ καὶ βλασφημία ἀρθήτω ἀφ’ ὑμῶν σὺν πάσῃ κακίᾳ.

**All bitterness and rage and anger and quarreling and slander—let them be taken away from you—with every [kind of] wickedness.**

3. This is a continuation of what grieves the Holy Spirit and how to conduct one's speech. So it's not exactly a repeat of verse 26, where Paul talked about being angry but not sinning. This is a special application for what kinds of speech we are to get rid of. Looking at each style of speech, whom are we thinking about most centrally when we think and speak in such ways?

**Ephesians 4:32** - γίνεσθε [δὲ] εἰς ἀλλήλους χρηστοί, εὐσπλαγχνοί, χαριζόμενοι ἑαυτοῖς, καθὼς καὶ ὁ θεὸς ἐν Χριστῷ ἐχαρίσατο ὑμῖν.

**[Always] be to each other kind [and] compassionate, forgiving each other, just as also God in Christ forgave you.**

4. These are more present tense verbs, hence the “always”—the action to be continuous, simply the way a Christian lives their life! Still, it would be a little clunky to sandwich “I forgive you” into every conversation we have with a fellow Christian. So, how can we constantly forgive each other?
5. The words “kind” and “compassionate” are ones that we maybe hear about but don't ponder often. What things should we keep in mind so that we can strive to be kind and compassionate not just to fellow Christians, but to everyone we meet?
6. What a beautiful way to wrap up this chapter! Paul opened chapter 4 by talking about living a life that is worthy of your calling. And, while he touched on it throughout the chapter, he lands on where we find our strength, ability, and motivation for living that life—God has forgiven us in Christ.

What comments and questions do you have?

**Ephesians 5:1-2** - γίνεσθε οὖν μιμηταὶ τοῦ θεοῦ ὡς τέκνα ἀγαπητὰ <sup>2</sup> καὶ περιπατεῖτε ἐν ἀγάπῃ, καθὼς καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ἠγάπησεν ἡμᾶς καὶ παρέδωκεν ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν προσφορὰν καὶ θυσίαν τῷ θεῷ εἰς ὁσμὴν εὐωδίας.

**Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children, <sup>2</sup> and walk in love, just as also Christ loved us and gave himself over for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.**

7. “Be imitators of God” – What percentage of God's behavior are we called to imitate?
  - a. Is there any divine behavior or action that God does NOT call us imitate?

8. Think about the picture Paul uses here in encouraging us to imitate God: we are God’s beloved children; he is our beloved Father. Using that same picture, what are some explanations that people (we) might give to get out of having to imitate God?
  
9. Just like chapter 4 began with an overarching principle and then moved to specific applications, chapter 5 does the same thing.
  - a. The principle: Imitate God!
  
  - b. First application: Walk in love!

We will see this unfold as we make our way through chapter 5. Keep the principle of this chapter in mind as we go through.

10. Just a few linguistic things:
  - a. παρέδωκεν ἑαυτὸν – “he gave over himself” – The same root is used for Jesus’ betrayal. He was handed over by Judas; but he also voluntarily handed himself over. Both can be true.
  
  - b. προσφορὰν and θυσίαν – both mean “offering” or “sacrifice” – the emphasis here is the voluntary expression; an offering is not a wage or a tax, given under compulsion. While our sins required (demanded?) payment, Christ still gave himself up voluntarily. That’s a difficult point to mentally grasp, but that is how the Scriptures speak.
  
  - c. εὐωδίας – “fragrance” – this is the odor that would come from burnt offering. Look up **Exodus 29:18**. Is that what comes to mind when you think “pleasing aroma”?
    - i. Explain how such an aroma, especially when connected to Christ, is pleasing to God.

**Ephesians 5:3-4** - πορνεία δὲ καὶ ἀκαθαρσία πάντα ἣ πλεονεξία μηδὲ ὀνομαζέσθω ἐν ὑμῖν, καθὼς πρέπει ἁγίοις, **4** καὶ αἰσχρότης καὶ μωρολογία ἣ εὐτραπελία, ἃ οὐκ ἀνήκεν, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον εὐχαριστία.

**But, as for sexual immorality and all impurity or greediness, let [such things] not even be named among you, just as is proper among saints; <sup>4</sup> and [let there be no] obscenity and foolish talk or crude joking, which are not fitting, but rather [let there be] thanksgiving.**

11. Remember the principle—Imitate God! This is a big part of that process. All the bad stuff must not be allowed in our lives, whether thoughts (verse 3) or words (verse 4).
  
12. Some will say that these verses mean that we should not talk at all about these things, especially sex and its accompanying temptations. In what ways does that play into the devil’s hand and keep us and others from imitating God?

13. What would be a better way to interpret these verses? In other words, what does Paul mean when he says, “Don’t let these things be named among you”?

14. A few linguistic notes on the types of speech in verse 4:

- a. αἰσχρότης – obscenity – behavior that flouts (ignores or disobeys) social and moral standards. There’s a “who cares” mentality behind this kind of speech. No one can tell me what I can and can’t say! It’s not even breaking a law, per se; such speech simply violates social norms. It appears this can change from culture to culture.
  - i. Example: While American culture is more aware of words that are frowned upon for unfiltered public consumption, Europe’s social norm when it comes to such words is a little more “lax.” This comes through with music, especially, as there is no need to bleep out or edit lyrics in Europe. We have radio editions that are a bit more “acceptable” for our general population.
- b. μωρολογία – foolish or silly talk – “μωρο-” transliterates to “moro-” What five-letter English word comes to mind here?
  - i. An example of this kind of talk is brought up in **Titus 3:9**. How would you describe μωρολογία in your own words?
- c. εὐτραπέλια – coarse jesting – This is the only use of this term in the NT. It can be used in a positive sense (to be witty or facetious; to turn a phrase); however, as we all know from experience, it only takes one step over the line to take a joke from funny to offensive and hurtful. What should a Christian’s criteria be for determining whether a joke is witty or crude?

What comments and questions do you have?

**Closing Prayer** O God, My Faithful God CW 459 v. 2 and 3  
**Grant me the strength to do With ready heart and willing**  
**Whatever you command, My calling here fulfilling,**  
**That I do what I should While trusting you to bless**  
**The outcome for my good, For you must give success.**

**Keep me from saying things That later need recalling;**  
**Grant that no idle words May from my lips be falling,**  
**But then, when in my place I must and ought to speak,**  
**My words grant pow'r and grace Lest I offend the weak. Amen.**

*Reminder:* If you’re available, join us for the virtual concert to help with introducing more of the new hymnal this afternoon at 3:00! If you want to, but can’t make it, talk to Pastor Proeber.