Walk Worthy
Walking Out Faith • Message 2
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Prayer Points for Prayer Time:

- **Pray that you would show God's love through your actions and not just your words.**
- **Ask God to help you stand firm in His truth when the world around you says otherwise.**
- **Thank God that His love and grace meet you right where you are.**

Worship Psalm:
May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
Romans 15:13 (NIV)

Scripture Reading:
Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. 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 for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. This is why it is said: "Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."
Ephesians 5:1-14 (NIV)

A. Introduction

(Ephesians 5:1)

Remember, in the first three chapters of Ephesians, there is only one command, and that's to remember what God has done for you… remember the grace of God. Then, in chapters 4–6, there are 40 commands.

So, the book of Ephesians breaks up into two parts…
First is about your identity… then it's about living out that identity, which is why we call it *Walk Worthy*…

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.
Ephesians 5:1 (ESV)

The word for *imitator* in Greek means *to mimic*… one of my daughters has learned to do this… so I will say, *How is your day?* and she says, *How is your day?* And I will say, *Stop it*, and she says, *Stop it.* It was funny for the first 5 minutes… then I said, *Mimic this… you're grounded.*

Daniel Day-Lewis… he dives deep into his characters. When he played Abraham Lincoln, the man took three years to get Lincoln down. He read 100 books on Abraham Lincoln. Studied the writings of Lincoln… studied what other people said about him… would read his speeches aloud…

When you see the movie, you're watching Abraham Lincoln, and it's weird.

As beloved children – so you don't do this to be a child; you do this because you are a child.

It doesn't say do this to be a child of God… that's religion… we are children, and because of that, we imitate Him…

Again… be like God… some of you might be going, *Don't you think that's a little hard, to be like God?*

Omnipotence, omnipresence… I don't think I'm going to hit some of the omnis… yes, there are a million ways you can't be like God… but there are 3 ways we can…

And that's why He says, *Walk like Him.* I'm going to speak on the first 2 today, and next week I'm going to talk about walking in the Spirit… and how to discern God's will… so come back for that…

B. Walking Out Faith

1. **Walk in <u>LOVE.</u>**
   (Ephesians 5:2-4. C/R: 1 Corinthians 7:5)

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

Notice: *walk in love*… people often think of love as emotions… it's an action.
Love moves. Think about it…

When you first started dating someone, you weren't just sitting there going, *Man, I think I love this person. That's weird*… and then going back to watching TV… no, you try to get around that person, you talk to them, you text them, you buy them things, you stalk them… because love moves you.

And two ways you walk out love here: imitate… do…

Fragrant offering – it's the idea of a gift… willingly and joyfully… nobody forced Jesus' hand to love us…

Part of imitating God is that you willingly choose to love people… *Okay, I guess you can come into my small group… I guess you can sit beside me… I guess I'll serve... I guess I'll give…*

Sacrifice – means to put others above yourself… for instance, with your friends, do you talk more about yourself… or do you listen? Do you celebrate others' success?

You know that phrase, *I did this out of love*… can I just say, sometimes we don't always do it out of love…

I know it's a different time, but parents, some of you used to get the belt out and go, *I do this in love,* and honestly, I think you enjoyed it a little too much…

Or there are times I have said, and you probably have as well, *I'm telling you this in love,* but the truth is… you're offended, or someone wronged you, so you say things under the guise of love to get even or get revenge… sometimes love speaks up, but you know what else? Sometimes love shuts up…

Then Paul seems to be going off on a tangent because he says…

But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.
Ephesians 5:3-4 (ESV)

So, he first talked about positive ways to walk in love.
Now he's given some negatives… this is about taking…

See, Ephesus was perverting the idea of love… it was a culture that would take…

For instance, one of the 7 Wonders of the World was the Temple of Artemis [show picture], and what you would do is pay money to get a blessing for yourself or a curse for your enemy… even religion there was all about you…

And it was a very sexually perverse culture… in fact, Ephesus was a big port city, so you had tons of visitors, and as soon as they got off ships, there were advertisements for brothels [show picture] … marble floors with markings that pointed the way to brothels… Ephesus was like Sin City… in fact, years ago they found this… *What happens in Ephesus* [show picture]

But in this culture, sex was all about taking… a man would have a wife for the household, a mistress for intimacy, and then he would have sex with slaves for fun…

The word for sexual immorality is the word *porneia*, which is where we get the word porn. But it's an umbrella term for all sexual acts outside of marriage. That means porn. I'm not familiar with bases anymore… but it's 1st base, 2nd base, 3rd base… any base outside of kissing… it's cohabitating; it's homosexuality…

But then he also says *covetousness*… why say that? Because both take away from others… because love is sacrificial, but sexual immorality, greed, and covetousness take from others… greed literally means more… more power, more stuff, more money… more. It's about taking…

Both greed and sexual immorality take from others…

But above, Paul says *love should willingly sacrifice*… that means when two people love each other, they will say… sometimes the person will go, *I want to have sex… I want to show you my love…* and then you can say, *You can show your love to me by taking a cold shower…*

Some people see this and go, *Oh my goodness… Christians are just so prude… I'm more sexually liberated, and you're just old school…*

Now, I need to be clear… listen, this is not an anti-sex talk or an anti-sex church… man, I'm all for sex in marriage… if you're married, the Bible, in 1 Corinthians 7:5, is clear.

Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.
1 Corinthians 7:5 (NIV)

You shouldn't withhold sex from each other except perhaps for a season of prayer… so some of you guys are going, *That's my new life verse…*

And some of you go*, Why would you say that?* Because God loves sex… He loves it…

Go read Song of Solomon… it talks about how the breasts of your wife satisfy you… this isn't about procreation… God loves sex, I love sex, this church loves sex… Christians love sex… I want to be very clear… God isn't against sex…

But God hates the misuse of it… He hates how it gets distorted and twisted… and He said sex is between a man and a woman in the confines of a committed marriage… anything else isn't love.

And can I just say to those who are dating and engaged… what's the big deal? Why can't we just have sex? Because restraining yourself now demonstrates to your future spouse that you will have the self-control to honor your vows even after you get married… and I know it's hard… but it's worth fighting for…

But how do you deal with these issues…

2. **Walk in the <u>LIGHT</u>.**
   (Ephesians 5:8-14. C/R: Luke 11:34)

For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.
Ephesians 5:8-10 (ESV)

Notice it says, *Walk as children of light*… we are now called to holiness…

Ephesus had a theater. [Show picture]. 25,000 seats… the strategy was to change how people viewed something: they would introduce it in the theater, in an entertainment space… in a public theater.

We live in a culture that has redefined marriage, gender, and family… redefined social norms… and changed language… and how did this happen?

We saw it first on our TV… and we were shocked… then less shocked… and after a while, it becomes normal.

But also, you are called into light, called to love, called to live under the direction of the Bible. And part of this is when you make a mistake…

You don't have to hide… God knows everything, and the Bible says, *While we were still sinners, Christ died for us…*

Camp high? It wasn't a camp high… they broke away from the world…

Most don't have a lust problem or a greed problem; you have a looking problem…

"Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eyes are healthy, your whole body also is full of light. But when they are unhealthy, your body also is full of darkness."
Luke 11:34 (NIV)

Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light.
Ephesians 5:11-14a (ESV)

You also need others…

Let me ask you this: Is God physical light or moral light? He's both, right? The Bible says that He is a light unto our feet… but also, think about this: Moses' face shines when he encounters God… also, we are told there are no lights in heaven.

But then let me ask you the other question: Is Satan physical darkness or moral darkness? He's both… the Bible says sin and Satan darken our hearts and minds… but also, think about this: disease grows in physical darkness… kids aren't afraid of the light; they are afraid of darkness…

So, here's my point… when you keep things hidden and in the dark… you are literally pulling hell up into your life… fear, shame, regret, hiding…

But when you confess and give it to God, you are pulling heaven down…