

“Living In The Light Sexually”

Ephesians 5:1-14

Sermon Series: The Walk

Introduction: Genuine biblical Christianity always has been and always will be counter-cultural. This was true in 1st century Ephesus and is true in 21st century America. The issue of sex is one of the issues where this is most clearly demonstrated.

Clinton Arnold writes of the Roman Empire in the 1st century, “Illicit sexual activity was an enormous problem for new Gentile Christians to overcome in the early church. Adulterous relationships, men sleeping with their slave girls, incest, prostitution, ‘sacred’ sexual encounters in the local temples, and homosexuality were all part of everyday life. There was not an accepted social standard with regard to sexual relations, although some Stoics (esp. Epictetus and Musonius Rufus) spoke against the prevailing practices in Roman society because they represented a lack of control over the passions. Rampant sexual immorality in Graeco-Roman society was why the Jews had long been appalled at the behavior of the Gentiles in this regard and considered them ‘impure.’ The Mishnah even prohibits a Jewish woman from ever being left alone with a Gentile because he cannot be trusted sexually.”

C.S. Lewis wrote, “Chastity is the most unpopular of the Christian virtues. There is no getting away from it: the old Christian rule is, ‘Either marriage, with complete faithfulness to your partner, or else total abstinence.’ Now this is so difficult and so contrary to our instincts, that obviously either Christianity is wrong or our sexual instinct, as it now is, has gone wrong. One or the other. Of course, being a Christian, I think it is the instinct which has gone wrong.”

How do we live in the light sexually?

I. We do this by walking in love (v. 2, see also Romans 13:8-10). Love is expressed by action. We love people by treating them in the right way and not harming them. We spiritually harm people through sin so it cannot be a loving action (no matter what the feelings are) to sin sexually.

II. We do this by walking in the light (v. 3-14).

1. We walk in the light by understanding and living out of our new identity (v. 8). Knowing who we are in Christ is foundational to overcoming, recovering from, and avoiding sexual sin.

2. We walk in the light by repenting of our old sinful ways (v. 7).

A. Repent of sinful actions (v. 3).

B. Repent of sinful desires (v. 3).

C. Repent of sinful words (v. 4).

D. Repent of sinful beliefs (v. 5-6, see also Isaiah 5:20-21).

3. We walk in the light by seeking to determine and do the will of the Lord in my particular situation (v. 11).

-The will of the Lord in regard to sex is 1 Thessalonians 4:3, which says, “For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality.” Romans 13:14 provides practical guidance when it says, “But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.” Craig Groeschel: Why resist a temptation tomorrow that you can eliminate today?

4. We walk in the light by exposing sin instead of participating in sin (v. 11-13). We take the log out of our eyes and then help our brothers and sisters take the splinter out of theirs.

Conclusion: Wake up and walk in the light!