

Connection to Session 10

We are to imitate God. He is love; we are to walk in love. He is light; we are to walk in the light. We are not trying to earn new life; that's a gift. We are simply trying to learn what is and isn't pleasing to the One who gave us this new life.

Introduction/Opening

When I was a young boy I was an avid fan of baseball, football, and basketball. I knew all the players and all the ways they played the game that made them unique. In football I knew how the different running backs ran; some plowed straight ahead, some used finesse, and some would dance around behind the line waiting to find a hole. In basketball I knew how many times a player always bounced the ball before he shot a free throw and what his trademark shot was. In baseball I knew how the different batters got ready for a pitch. One player would swing the bat forward-backward, forward-backward, around, around, around before every pitch. Another one twitched his elbow really hard while he was waiting on the pitch. I wanted to be a good athlete, so I observed and imitated good athletes. This is true in other disciplines as well.

Whether it is relating to people, or fixing cars, or cooking a meal, or dressing with style, or caring for the needy, if we want to do something well we imitate a person who has learned to do it well. But who should we imitate when it comes to life itself? How about the One who created life? How about the One who was the perfect example of love and of being light in the midst of darkness?

Outline

1. Walk in Love (Eph. 5:1-5)
 - a) With imitation – “be imitators of God” (v. 1a)
 - b) With identity – “as dearly loved children” (v. 1b)
 - c) With inspiration – “as Christ also loved us” (v. 2)
 - d) With integrity – “as is proper for saints” (vv. 3-5)

2. Walk in the Light (Eph. 5:6-14)
 - a) The Foes of Light (vv. 6-8)
 - i. Deception
 - ii. Disobedience
 - iii. Darkness (2 Cor. 6:14c; Rom. 13:12)
 - b) The Fruit of Light (vv. 9-10)
 - i. Goodness, righteousness, truth
 - ii. Pleasing to the Lord

- c) The Function of Light (vv. 11-14a)
 - i. Light makes everything visible.
 - ii. Light exposes the fruitlessness and shamefulness of the deeds of darkness.
- d) The Faithfulness of the Light (v. 14b)
 - i. A standing promise: if you respond to the call to get up and to accept new life, Christ will shine on you (2 Cor. 4:6; John 8:12; 1 John 1:7).

Conclusion

What kind of person do you want to be? Who is it that you are learning life from? You may say, “I’m not imitating anybody. I want to be one of a kind. I want to play by my own rules.” Our Creator is all about uniqueness and diversity; just look around. But some things are fundamental. Whether it is sports, or business, or carpentry, or cooking, you succeed not by making up your own rules, but by learning from the best about how it is meant to be done, and then applying those insights in unique ways.

When it comes to life itself, the best one to learn from is the One who created life, and then took on flesh to show us how it’s done. We need to love the way Jesus loved. We need to walk in the light the way Jesus walked in the light. That love is so bold and that light is so bright that every aspect of our lives will be affected. There is no better way to live, and there’s no better time than now to start.

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