

Misplaced Love

Ephesians 5:1-7 (NKJV)

1 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma. 3 But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints; 4 neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. 5 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them.

In the first two verses that we covered last week Paul gives us a lesson on real love.

This week he gives us a lesson on misplaced love.

The world talks a lot about love. But most of it is misplaced love.

Misplaced love is when love is given to someone or something that is improper and sinful in the plan of God.

John said love not the world, neither the things that are in the world.

But love has become the license for all things immoral.

A middle aged school teacher takes off with a 15 year old student and all I hear is that the 15 year old doesn't have the capacity to give consent.

But if it was two 15 year old students the same newscaster would tell us how it was OK because they are in love.

Love is the catch word today for all types of illicit relationships. Anything goes as long as love is the basis of it.

Whatever God establishes, Satan will counterfeit. Where God establishes true love, Satan produces counterfeit love. Counterfeit love characterizes Satan's children, those who are of the world, just as true love characterizes God's children, those who are citizens of heaven. *The - MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Ephesians.*

But God has a different standard and He expects His dear children to live according to that standard. As a matter of fact, today living by that standard is a sign of salvation and to live contrary to that standard is a sign that the person has never known Jesus Christ as Savior.

I. What is not even be named among us as is fitting for saints

A. Fornication

1. *Porneia* (immorality) refers to all sexual sin, and all sexual sin is against God and against godly love. It is the antonym of *enkrateia*, which refers to self-control, especially in the area of sex. *The - MacArthur New Testament*

Commentary – Ephesians.

2. Romans 1:24-32 (NKJV) 24 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, 25 who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen. 26 For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. 27 Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due. 28 And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, 30 backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, 31 undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; 32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.
3. The conduct of a Christian is controlled not by a heathen society, but by the Holy Spirit. *The John Phillips Commentary Series – Exploring Ephesians: An Expository Commentary.*

B. All uncleanness or covetousness

1. *Akatharsia* (impurity) is a more general term than *porneia*, referring to anything that is unclean and filthy. Jesus used the word to describe the rottenness of decaying bodies in a tomb (Matt. 23:27). The other ten times the word is used in the New Testament it is associated with sexual sin. It refers to immoral thoughts, passions, ideas, fantasies, and every other form of sexual corruption. *The - MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Ephesians.*
2. The influence of the lustful world has been so pervasive and the church so weak and undiscerning that many Christians have become convinced that all sorts of sexual excesses and impurities are covered by grace or can be rendered morally safe if engaged in with the right attitude—especially if some Scripture verse can be twisted to give seeming support. *MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Ephesians.*
3. Immorality and impurity are but forms of greed in the realm of sexual sin. They are manifestations of sexual covetousness and express counterfeit love (which is really hate, since love seeks the purity of others and is

unselfish), masquerading as something beautiful, good, and rewarding. Because those sins seem so attractive and promising, spouses are forsaken, children are neglected, homes are destroyed, friends are disregarded, as no effort is spared to fulfill the desire to have the one who is lusted after—all of that in the name of love. *MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Ephesians*.

4. **Covetousness:** In Scripture sexual immorality (a very broad term applied to a variety of different sexual sins) and impurity are often linked with greed (v. 5). Indulgence in immoral activity has to do with self-gratification, usually without much thought for anyone else involved or without concern for the impact of such behaviour on other people. *Focus on the Bible Commentary – Ephesians: Encouragement and Joy in Christ*.

C. Neither filthiness

1. $\alpha\kappa\alpha\theta\alpha\rho\sigma\iota\alpha$ may refer to all abominable and unnatural lusts—sodomy, bestiality, etc., *Adam Clarke's Commentary*.
2. Filthiness has to do with general obscenity, any talk that is degrading and disgraceful. - *MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Ephesians*.
3. In our day, open talk about intimate matters is acceptable. Nothing is sacred. The language of the gutter is freely used in books and broadcasts. Vulgar talk that would have been considered pornography a generation ago is now hard to avoid. The tendency is for us Christians to lower our standards also. The world is always trying to pour us into its mold, but the Holy Spirit brings us back to the gold standard of Christlike behavior; He takes us away from the worthless paper currency of the world's immoral ways. *The John Phillips Commentary Series – Exploring Ephesians: An Expository Commentary*.

D. Nor foolish talking

1. It is stupid talk, talk only befitting someone who is intellectually deficient. It is sometimes referred to as low obscenity, foolish talk that comes from the drunk or the gutter mouth. - *MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Ephesians*.

E. Nor coarse jesting

1. It is the filthy talk of a person who uses every word and circumstance to display his immoral wit. It is the stock-in-trade of the clever talk-show host who is never at a loss for sexual innuendo. *MacArthur New Testament Commentary – Ephesians*.

2. Which are not fitting

F. But rather giving of thanks

II. The condemnation

A. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God

B. Let no one deceive you with empty words

1. A cheap form of Christianity is in circulation today. It is not really Christianity at all, just a popular counterfeit. People make professions of faith that entail no repentance, no genuine conversion, no regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and no dynamic new life in Christ. Such people can be deceived into thinking that they are Christians, but they see no need—and feel no impulse from an indwelling Holy Spirit—to give up sinful practices or resist them. *The John Phillips Commentary Series – Exploring Ephesians: An Expository Commentary.*

C. Because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience

III. Therefore do not be partakers with them.

A. The Church of Christ is too often rocked with repeated scandal. Why is this so? Part of the answer, I believe, is the "cookie jar syndrome." A little boy's mother had just baked a fresh batch of cookies and placed them in the cookie jar, giving instructions that no one touch them until after dinner. But it was not long until she heard the lid of the jar move, and she called out, "My son, what are you doing?" To which a meek voice called back, "My hand is in the cookie jar resisting temptation!" The fact is, no one can resist temptation with his or her hand in the cookie jar. *Preaching the Word – Ephesians: The Mystery of the Body of Christ.*