



SEQUIM COMMUNITY CHURCH

EPHESIANS

SESSION 9B: THE IMITATION OF GOD

Ephesians 5:1-21

“Exploring the new standards and new relationships God intends for us”

By Rev. Rick Dietzman, Minister of Adult Discipleship

“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. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: ‘Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.’”

- Ephesians 5:8-14

1. Paul contrasts light and darkness to say more about holy living. What does it mean to live as children of light? _____

“Be very careful, then, how you live-- not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.”

Ephesians 5:15-21

2. What characterizes wise people in this passage? _____

3. What are four attributes of being filled with the Spirit?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

- In which of these areas do you most need the Spirit's filling right now? _____
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4. How does worship play a part in making you feel closer to God? _____

Digging Deeper

For those who want to do more personal reflection on this topic.

Taking an Honest Look at Temptation.

By Dr. Scott E. Koenigsaecker

It was Oscar Wilde who said, "I can resist anything except temptation". Resisting temptation is no longer in vogue. Yet, dealing honestly with our temptation is a key to living as Jesus wants us to live... "*not as gentiles...but as we have been taught... according to the trust of Christ*". If we truly want to "*put off the old and put on the new*" then we are going to have to stare down the temptations in our life.

There are four basic responses to temptation.

1. We can **GIVE IN...** because if it feels good we should do it.
2. We can **WISH IT AWAY...** of course, it never does go away.
3. We can **UNDERESTIMATE ITS EXISTENCE OR INFLUENCE IN OUR LIFE...** which makes us much like a frog in the kettle - before we know it we're cooked!
4. We can **RESIST IT...** fighting it with every fiber of our being.

What is your method of dealing with your temptations?

To fight temptation we need to understand temptation. An apt illustration is fishing. Like food to a hungry fish, temptation is a powerful force in our life yet, subtle in its approach. There are four steps of temptation.

- First, the bait is dropped into the water... our temptation makes itself evident to us.
- Second, we are attracted to the bait... our sinful desires rear their ugly heads.
- Third, we eat the bait (or swim away)... we yield to our sin or turn away from our sin.
- Fourth, if we don't swim away, we are hooked by the fisherman - soon to die and be eaten up... our sin leads us to the negative results of our actions (OR we are free to swim and enjoy life)!

As we deal openly with our temptation we need to remember several important principles in handling our temptations. We must realize that temptations are a part of the human condition. Even Jesus was tempted (*Hebrews 4:14-16*).

We will never be tempted beyond our limits. With God's help we will be able to handle our temptations (*I Corinthians 10:13*). We also have the assurance that God will provide us a great escape. Often we are overcome by our temptations because we really are not looking for a way out!

Like Joseph with Potiphar's wife we need to learn to "FLEE" our temptations (*Genesis 39:6-12*). AVOIDANCE is also important. Being in the wrong place or being with the wrong people can lead us into temptation, not point the way out. And, because some temptations cannot be avoided we need to RESIST those daily enticements where we live, work and play.

Remember, Christ is on our side and He will help us transform our temptations into victories!