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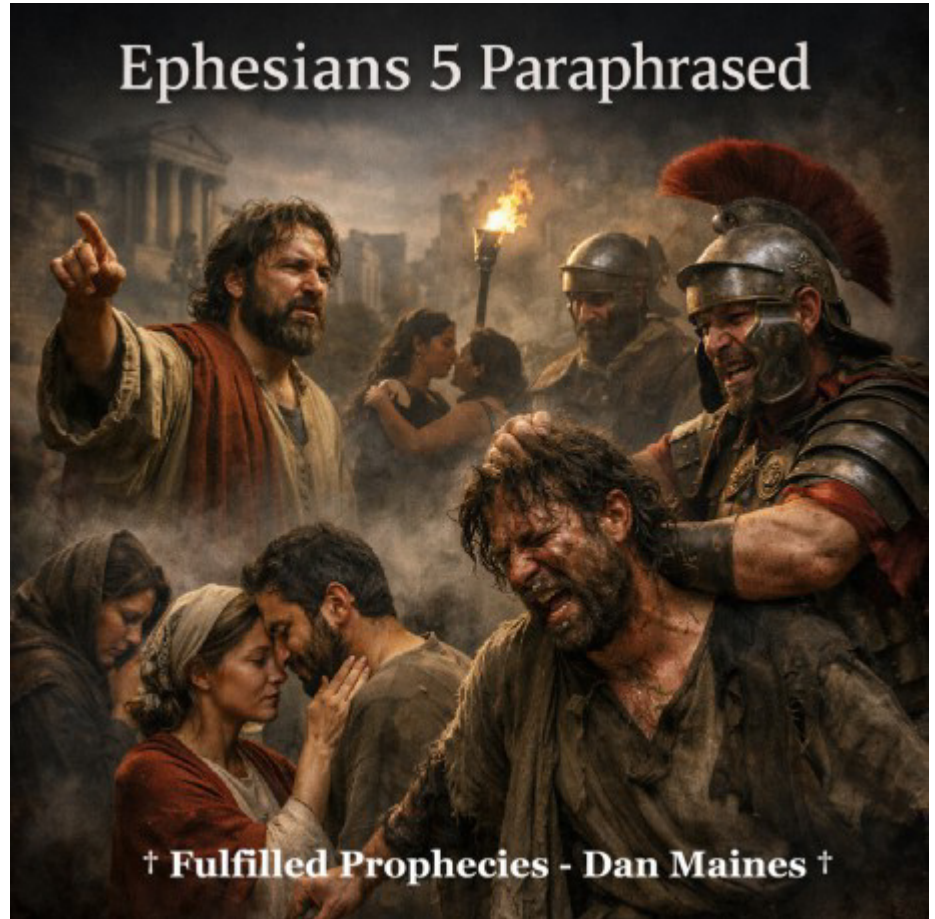
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## Ephesians 5 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

## **Ephesians 5 Paraphrased**

### **Introduction**

† Paul continues teaching believers how their new life in Christ should shape every part of their conduct.

† The chapter focuses on love, purity, wisdom, and the relationship between Christ and His people.

† These instructions guided believers living before the covenant transition that ended in AD 70.

### **Ephesians 5:1**

Live as people who imitate God, because you are His beloved

children.

† Paul calls believers to reflect God's character in daily life (Matthew 5:48).

† Being called children shows covenant identity and belonging through Christ (Romans 8:15).

† Clement of Alexandria wrote that believers show their faith by imitating God's goodness.

### **Ephesians 5:2**

Walk in love just as Christ loved us and gave Himself for us as an offering and sacrifice that pleased God.

† Christ's sacrifice becomes the pattern for how believers love others (John 15:13).

† Paul uses temple sacrifice language to show Christ fulfilled what the old sacrifices pointed to (Hebrews 10:10).

† Irenaeus taught that Christ's offering revealed the true meaning of sacrificial love.

### **Ephesians 5:3**

Sexual immorality, impurity, and greed should not even be mentioned among you, because these things don't belong among God's people.

† Christian conduct was meant to stand apart from the immoral practices common in Roman society.

† Greed is included because it reveals a heart devoted to possessions rather than God (Colossians 3:5).

† Early Christian writings like the Didache warned believers to avoid the corrupt practices of the surrounding culture.

### **Ephesians 5:4**

There should be no filthy speech, foolish talk, or crude joking among you, because those things are inappropriate, but instead give thanks.

† Words reveal the condition of the heart and must reflect a

transformed life (Matthew 12:34).

† Gratitude replaces corrupt speech because a thankful heart recognizes God's goodness.

† Clement of Alexandria taught that speech should reflect holiness and self control.

### **Ephesians 5:5**

Understand this clearly, no immoral or impure person, and no greedy person who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

† Greed is called idolatry because it places desire above devotion to God (Colossians 3:5).

† The inheritance refers to participation in the covenant blessings of Christ's kingdom.

† Irenaeus warned that those who persist in immoral living reject the life God offers.

### **Ephesians 5:6**

Don't let anyone deceive you with empty words, because God's judgment comes upon those who live in disobedience.

† False teachers in the first century often minimized sin or excused immoral behavior.

† Paul warns believers to reject teachings that contradict God's standards.

† Early Christian leaders frequently warned churches about deceptive teachers.

### **Ephesians 5:7**

So don't become partners with them.

† Believers were not to share in practices that dishonor God.

† This refers to rejecting sinful conduct, not withdrawing completely from society.

† Tertullian described Christians as people who refused to participate in immoral pagan festivals.

## **Ephesians 5:8**

You once lived in darkness, but now you live in the light because you belong to the Lord, so live like people of the light.

† Darkness and light describe life outside and inside God's truth (John 8:12).

† Conversion is described as moving from ignorance and sin into truth and righteousness.

† Early Christians often used light imagery to describe the new life revealed through Christ.

## **Ephesians 5:9**

The fruit produced by the light consists of goodness, righteousness, and truth.

† Genuine faith produces visible results in behavior.

† These qualities summarize the moral character believers should demonstrate.

† Clement of Alexandria described these virtues as evidence of a transformed life.

## **Ephesians 5:10**

Always learn what pleases the Lord.

† Believers were expected to test their actions and attitudes according to God's will.

† Discernment was essential in a world filled with competing beliefs and philosophies.

† Early Christian teaching emphasized examining life according to Christ's instruction.

## **Ephesians 5:11**

Don't participate in the useless works of darkness, but instead expose them.

† Exposure means bringing sin into the light where it can be recognized and rejected.

† Christian conduct itself exposed the corruption of the

surrounding culture.

† Early Christian writers frequently criticized the moral failures of pagan religion.

### **Ephesians 5:12**

The things people do in secret are shameful even to mention.

† Many immoral practices in the Roman world were hidden yet socially accepted.

† Paul reminds believers not to normalize those behaviors.

† Christian teaching emphasized moral purity in contrast with pagan society.

### **Ephesians 5:13**

Everything exposed by the light becomes visible.

† Truth reveals what darkness tries to hide.

† The gospel shines light on human behavior and calls people to repentance.

† Christian preaching openly challenged immoral practices throughout the Roman world.

### **Ephesians 5:14**

Everything that becomes visible is illuminated by the light. That is why it says wake up sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

† This line likely reflects an early Christian hymn used in teaching.

† The imagery describes spiritual awakening from ignorance and sin.

† Early Christian worship often used poetic expressions to encourage repentance and faith.

### **Ephesians 5:15**

Be careful how you live, not as unwise people but as wise.

† Biblical wisdom means living according to God's instruction.

† Believers needed discernment in a morally corrupt society.

† Early church leaders repeatedly urged believers to pursue wisdom.

### **Ephesians 5:16**

Make the most of your time because the days are evil.

† The phrase reflects the moral and political instability of the first century.

† Believers were urged to use their time for God's purposes.

† The early church lived with urgency as events moved toward covenant fulfillment.

### **Ephesians 5:17**

Don't live foolishly but understand what the Lord wants.

† God's will was revealed through the teaching of Christ and the apostles.

† Spiritual maturity requires thoughtful obedience.

† Early Christian instruction manuals emphasized learning and practicing the Lord's commands.

### **Ephesians 5:18**

Don't become drunk with wine which leads to reckless behavior, but be filled with the Spirit.

† Drunkenness was common in pagan festivals and social gatherings.

† Being filled with the Spirit describes a life guided by God's influence.

† Early Christian gatherings emphasized worship and discipline rather than indulgence.

### **Ephesians 5:19**

Encourage one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making music in your hearts to the Lord.

† Singing was central to early Christian worship gatherings.

† Psalms connected believers with Israel's heritage while new hymns honored Christ.

† Pliny the Younger recorded that Christians sang hymns to Christ as to a god.

### **Ephesians 5:20**

Always give thanks to God the Father for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

† Gratitude is a constant theme in Christian worship and prayer.

† Thanksgiving acknowledges God's authority over every part of life.

† Early church writings frequently encouraged believers to live with continual gratitude.

### **Ephesians 5:21**

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

† Christian relationships were marked by humility and mutual service.

† Submission here reflects cooperation and respect rather than domination.

† Early Christian communities valued unity and humility.

### **Ephesians 5:22**

Wives should respect their husbands as they respect the Lord.

† Paul applies the principle of order within the Christian household.

† Marriage relationships were given spiritual meaning within the covenant community.

† Early Christian teaching emphasized faithfulness and respect within marriage.

### **Ephesians 5:23**

The husband is the head of the wife just as Christ is the head of the church and He is the Savior of the body.

† Headship refers to responsibility and care rather than domination.

† Marriage reflects the relationship between Christ and His

people.

† Early Christian writers often described the church as the body under Christ's care.

### **Ephesians 5:24**

Just as the church is subject to Christ, wives should respect their husbands in everything.

† The relationship between Christ and the church provides the pattern for marriage.

† This emphasizes harmony and cooperation within the household.

† Early Christian communities encouraged order and faithfulness in family life.

### **Ephesians 5:25**

Husbands love your wives just as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her.

† Husbands are commanded to show sacrificial love.

† Christ's sacrifice becomes the model for how husbands should treat their wives.

† Early Christian teaching raised the standard of responsibility placed on husbands.

### **Ephesians 5:26**

He did this to make her holy, cleansing her through the washing of water with the word.

† The language reflects purification associated with baptism and the gospel message.

† Christ prepares His people for covenant union with Him.

† Early Christian writers connected this imagery with spiritual renewal.

### **Ephesians 5:27**

He did this so He might present the church to Himself in splendor without stain or wrinkle or any defect but holy and

blameless.

† The church is pictured as a bride prepared for marriage.

† This imagery anticipates the covenant union described later in Revelation.

† Early Christian teachers frequently described the church as Christ's bride.

### **Ephesians 5:28**

In the same way husbands should love their wives as they love their own bodies. Whoever loves his wife loves himself.

† Marriage is described as a unity where husband and wife share one life.

† Loving one's spouse reflects care for oneself.

† Early Christian teaching strongly encouraged faithful marriages.

### **Ephesians 5:29**

No one hates his own body but nourishes and cares for it just as Christ cares for the church.

† Christ's care for His people is compared to the natural care people show their own bodies.

† The image emphasizes protection and provision.

† Early Christian writers frequently described Christ as the protector of the church.

### **Ephesians 5:30**

We are members of His body.

† Believers share a united identity in Christ.

† The body imagery emphasizes unity among believers.

† Early Christian communities strongly valued unity in Christ.

### **Ephesians 5:31**

For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two will become one flesh.

† Paul quotes Genesis to show God's design for marriage from

the beginning.

† Marriage unity mirrors the covenant union between Christ and His people.

† Early Christian teaching upheld marriage as a sacred covenant.

### **Ephesians 5:32**

This mystery is great but I am speaking about Christ and the church.

† The hidden meaning of marriage is revealed through Christ's relationship with His people.

† The term mystery refers to truth that has now been revealed.

† Early Christian teachers often highlighted this symbolic meaning.

### **Ephesians 5:33**

Each husband must love his wife as he loves himself and the wife must respect her husband.

† Paul summarizes the responsibilities within marriage.

† Love and respect together create harmony within the household.

† Early Christian communities viewed strong marriages as evidence of transformed lives.

### **Historical References**

† Irenaeus explained that Christ's sacrificial love is the model believers must follow in life.

† Clement of Alexandria taught that Christian conduct should reflect purity gratitude and holiness.

† Tertullian described Christians as people who refused to participate in immoral pagan practices.

† Pliny the Younger recorded that Christians gathered early to sing hymns to Christ and live disciplined lives.

### **How It Applies To Us Today**

† Believers are still called to live in love purity wisdom and gratitude.

† Our conduct should show the character of Christ in everyday life.

† Christian marriages should reflect the sacrificial love between Christ and His people.

† Living in the light shows the transforming power of the gospel.

## **Q and A Appendix**

**Q:** Why does Paul emphasize imitation of God?

**A:** Because believers are called to reflect God's character in their conduct (Matthew 5:48).

**Q:** Why does Paul warn strongly against immoral living?

**A:** Because the covenant community was meant to live differently from the surrounding culture (1 Thessalonians 4:3).

**Q:** Why does Paul emphasize wise living?

**A:** Because believers needed discernment during morally difficult times (Colossians 4:5).

**Q:** Why is marriage connected with Christ and the church?

**A:** Because marriage illustrates the covenant relationship between Christ and His people (Revelation 19:7).

**Q:** What is the central message of this chapter?

**A:** Believers are called to live in love purity wisdom and unity as people who belong to Christ.

**† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †**

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## **Source Index**

† Ephesians 5

† Irenaeus, Against Heresies

† Clement of Alexandria, Stromata

† Tertullian, Apology

† Pliny the Younger, Letters 10.96

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