



Eph 5:3–5:5

Read, the passage below...

Ask the Lord to open your eyes, that you may behold wonderful things from His Word (Ps 119:18), and that you would receive His Word with humility—putting it into practice in your daily life (Jas 1:21–22).

Passage:

- 3 But ^aimmorality ¹or any impurity or greed must not even be **named** among you, as is proper among ²saints;
 4 and *there must be no* ^afilthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which ^bare not **fitting**, but rather ^cgiving of thanks.
 5 For this **you know with certainty**, that ^ano ¹immoral or impure person or covetous man, who **is an idolater**, **has** an inheritance in the kingdom ^bof Christ and God.¹

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5:3 immorality ... greed. In absolute contrast to God's holiness and love, such sins as these exist (also in v. 5), by which Satan seeks to destroy God's divine work in His children and turn them as far away as possible from His image and will. As do many other Scriptures, this verse shows the close connection between sexual sin and other forms of impurity and greed. An immoral person is inevitably greedy. Such sins are so godless that the world should never have reason even to suspect their presence in Christians.

5:4 not fitting. These 3 inappropriate sins of the tongue include any speech that is obscene and degrading or foolish and dirty, as well as suggestive and immoral. All such are destructive of holy living and godly testimony and should be confessed, forsaken, and replaced by open expressions of thankfulness to God (cf. Col 3:8).

5:5 For this you know. Paul had taught this truth many times when he pastored the church at Ephesus and it should have been clear in their minds. God never tolerates sin, which has no place at all in His kingdom, nor will any person whose life pattern is one of habitual immorality, impurity, and greed (see v. 3) be in His kingdom, because no such person is saved (see notes on 1Co 6:9, 10; Gal 5:17–21; 1Jn 3:9, 10). **the kingdom of Christ and God.** A reference to the sphere of salvation where Christ rules the redeemed. See note on Ac 1:3.²

Context:

In Eph 4:1 Paul transitions to the second major section of his letter... *"Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called..."*

The "calling with which we have been called," refers to the Gospel message to which all Christians have responded.

Ephesians 4–6 lays out the practical implications, of the Gospel truths that we find in Ephesians 1–3.

Eph 4:2–3 gives a summary explanation of the practical manifestations that Paul expects to see, following his mandate that we walk worthy of our Gospel calling. The "preservation of unity" is central to a *"walk [that is] worthy of the calling with which we have been called."*

Paul's repeated point in Ephesians 4 is that our relationship with *Christ* will inevitably impact our relationship with one another (4:2–3, 11–16, 25–29). Unity with Christ (2:5–6) inevitably leads to unity with one another (2:14–19).

Even Paul's general exhortations to sanctification in this letter are invariably drawn into the overarching theme of unity.

¹ Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible® (NASB), Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.

² MacArthur, John F., Jr. The MacArthur Study Bible: New American Standard Bible. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2006.



1. In 4:17 Paul exhort believers to, “walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk.” In 5:3 Paul picks up that same framework after a short digression in 4:22–5:2. Briefly summarise the heart of Paul’s teaching in 4:22–5:2. (Use his three–step process to frame your answer).

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Exploring the Text:

As you answer the following questions, please take the time to read all the *cross references* at the end of the questions. These are provided to enrich your study experience.

2. Why do you think Paul starts with the sin of “immorality” in v3? How does this sin relate to the immediately preceding context?

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3. What does Jesus have to say about “immorality” and “greed?” What does it say about us when we practice these sins? (cf. Matt 15:16–20; Mk 7:18–23)

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4. It is not hard to see the connection between “sexual immorality” and “impurity,” but how does “sexual immorality” relate to the sin of “greed?”

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5. What is the difference (particularly in terms of its effect) between the sin of speech in 4:29 and 5:4?

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6. Why are the sins of speech in v4 "not fitting?" (cf. Pr 6:12, 8:13, 10:32; Matt 5:48; Rom 1:28–32; 1Jn 1:5–6)

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7. Practically, why/how would the "giving of thanks" serve to eradicate the sins of morality, listed in v3?

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8. Practically, why/how would the "giving of thanks" serve to eradicate the sins of speech, listed in v4?

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9. Why does Paul say, in v5, that immorality and impurity and greed are essentially idolatry? (cf. Col 3:5; 1Cor 6:15–20)

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10. According to the ending of v5, what does it mean if your life is characterised by the sins of vv3–4?

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For Further Reflection:

11. "Filthiness" in v4, refers to obscene or shameful talk...

"Silly talk" is literally "moronic words..." It refers to meaningless, unfruitful, waste-of-time kind of conversations...

"Course jesting" refers to clever, but crude kind of jokes (typically innuendo or double entendre)...

Ask yourself if there are particular situations or groups of people in your life where this kind of speech is common. Do you watch any television programs, or read any magazines/books where this kind of speech regularly takes place? What practical steps can you take to avoid participating, or even just being exposed to such idolatrous conversations?

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12. Spend some time evaluating your speech using the acronym "T.H.I.N.K."

Before you say anything, ask yourself:

T — Is it **T**True?

H — Is it **H**Helpful?

I — Is it **I**nformative?

N — Is it **N**ecessary?

K — Is it **K**ind?

If you can't answer "yes" to each of these questions, then maybe it is better not to say anything....

Notes:

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