

**Sermon Notes of
Pastor Craig Kuhlman's Sermon on March 17, 2019:**

**"Transforming Life Lessons
for the Church Today from Ephesus:
Part 12 (Ephesians 5:5-21)
Living in the Light and Life of the Holy Spirit"**

[In today's sermon, Pastor Craig Kuhlman shows how we can be above fearful circumstances in our lives through a daily abiding relationship with the Father, Son and Spirit.]

Notes

Introduction:

- We're going to continue going through the book of Ephesians.
- Pastor Craig is just amazed at how inspiring Ephesians is this time, even though he has read it many times before.
- "Living in the Light and Life of the Holy Spirit" is the summary statement for these verses we're going to study today.

Recapping Transforming Life Lessons from last week (Ephesians 4:25-5:5):

1. Believers aren't to tell lies, but speak the truth (because we are members of one another).
 - The more we focus on the fact that we are here today as family, the better we will treat each other.
2. If believers are angry, it must be righteous anger.
 - Now in Exodus, when Moses came down from the mountain and saw that Israel was worshipping a false god, he became angry and broke the two commandment tablets.
 - Now God wasn't upset with Moses and didn't correct him for his obviously righteous anger, but rather made two more tablets with the 10 commandments written on them.
 - Jesus exhibited righteous anger when He drove out the money changers out of the Temple in Jerusalem.
 - So, today, if we are to be angry, it has to be righteous anger.
 - Being upset at anything that goes against God's way of life and His love for us fits into that category.
3. Make peace with anger before sunset, so the devil can't take advantage of us.
4. Believers aren't to steal, but work so we can share generously with those in need.

5. Believers aren't to speak in unwholesome ways, but use words to edify, giving grace.
6. Believers aren't to cause sorrow, pain, or distress to the Holy Spirit in these ways.
7. Believers are to put off all bitterness, unrighteous anger, slander, and malice, but be kind and forgiving as Jesus has forgiven us.
8. Believers are to imitate God by walking in love.
9. Believers aren't to reflect immorality, impurity, or greed.
10. Believers aren't to reflect filthy speech, but thanksgiving.
11. The not-yet-believing lifestyle has no place in God's kingdom.

Today's message:

- Once we've rejected legalism and have embraced God's grace, we need to live out a Godly lifestyle which is in contrast to a not-yet-believers life style.
- Pastor Craig's then gave his new rhyming phrase (his ditty) to help us put into our minds what today's text from Paul is telling us.
- He asked the entire congregation to say this together with him as one family.

*Walking in the Light
Reflects all that is Right
Including God's Delight;
When Walking in the Spirit
We lose the sense to Fear-it.*

- Pastor Craig asked the members to say, "What are some of the things in our lives that we fear?"
 - We fear that we might lose our jobs.
 - We fear financial issues.
 - We fear illness in our lives and the lives of our loved ones.
 - We also can fear that our car might break down on the freeway.
 - These are the external circumstances that we can fear on a daily basis.
 - Now many times, these fears are unfounded, but they are still there.
 - But, here's the amazing thing – when we walking in the Spirit and living in the Light, we face those circumstance that we are worried about or even going through with a Godly confidence.
 - Those fears now strike a different tone and have a different impact in our life.
 - So how do we walk in Spirit and live in the Light? – It's by spending time with God every day in prayer, study and meditation.
 - Pastor Craig then mentioned that it would good for all of us to pick up from our information table these two handouts, "A 52-Week Bible Reading Plan" and "A

Personal Prayer Guide” which will help us to participate in our daily relationship with God.

- By having a daily relationship with God, it will definitely change our reaction to the things we experience in our lives, even though God’s love for us will never change.
- God doesn’t take away our external circumstances, which we all face, but gives us His confidence to go through them.

Do not partner with those who speak deception (Verses 6-7):

Ephesians 5:6 (NASB), 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;

- “Sons of disobedience” simply means that they aren’t believers and don’t have a relationship with Jesus Christ and thus weren’t obeying what God said to obey.
- Paul was cautioning the believers at Ephesus that while they were to befriend and be a witness to those who don’t yet have a relationship with Jesus, they needed to be circumspect and not be drawn back into that non-believers lifestyle.

Ephesians 5:6 (Mirror), Avoid any association with those who employ hollow words to entice you; unbelief only produces a breed of people that distorts the pattern of their design as image bearers of God; this certainly does not please God.

- So, as a believer, we bear that image of the Father, Son and Spirit, which is our role as we interact with those who don’t have a relationship with God.

7) (Mirror) Do not allow their unbelief to include you in their company.

The Fruit of Light (Verses 8-14):

Ephesians 5:8 (NASB), for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light 9) (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), 10) trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

- Now, there is no magic to this. When we are in that daily abiding relationship with God, then the fruits of the Spirit are the natural result.

Ephesians 5:8 (Mirror), You were there once, trapped in the same darkness, but now you are light; your life confirms that light rules. 9) The spiritual harvest of light is evident in all that is excellent, innocent, and of impeccable integrity. 10) This gives certain evidence to the life of God’s delight.

- Pastor Craig asked the audience to imagine that he has an empty coke bottle in his hand and that he has just dropped a pen cap inside it.
- Now, how do you get this pen cap out of the bottle without touching the bottle?
- Answer from one of our members – “You pour water into it.”
- And when you do that, the pen cap pops right out.

- Now this is the analogy of what we do as believers when we are walking in the Spirit and living in the Light, which means when we are engaged in that abiding relationship and are being filled with the Spirit.
- By ourselves, we are not physically removing the pen cap – our sins or our deeds of darkness out of our lives, but rather we fill our body with the Spirit, who does it supernaturally.

Ephesians 5:11 (NASB), Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; 12) for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.

- So, Paul is telling us that living out this life of relationship, is delightful to God because His Light dispels the darkness in our lives.
- Remember on of pastor Craig’s earlier memory lines: “Deeds of darkness can be discouraging. Therefore our flourishing needs nourishing.”
- So, when we nourish our flourish in our relationship with God, these things work themselves out.
- We don’t have to worry about those discouraging issues in our life, but rather we just need to focus on the light and life of Jesus in us and continue walking in the Spirit.
- Now, there is NOT one verse Paul wrote that, “We are to retire in the Spirit.”
- No, Paul tells us to walk in the Spirit, to live in the Spirit.
- And it doesn’t matter what age we are or what job status we have, we are to continue to walk in the Spirit.
- In fact, God did some of His greatest things through people who turned 85.

Ephesians 5:11 (Mirror), Do not tolerate anything in your life that associates you with darkness; there is no profit in it for you. Let light dispel any residue of darkness in you. 12) By gossiping about shameful acts that people do in secret, you are giving those things undue mileage.

- Once again, it’s not that we have to work at eliminating darkness out of our lives, we just simple fill ourselves on a daily basis and the Spirit takes care of it.

Ephesians 5:13 (NASB), But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. 14) For this reason it says, “Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you.”

- Here’s the beautiful thing – we have been given the Light, so therefore we don’t have to worry, we don’t have to fret, we just simply focus on our transformed nature and live out of that transformation and in that relationship with God.
- We can do this because Jesus conquered darkness and He is that Light and Life who lives within us.
- And as that happens, we just naturally display Jesus to others in love and help members in our family when they are in need or hurting.

Ephesians 5:13 (Mirror), Darkness loses its grip upon that which light manifests. Light displaces darkness.

- So, the power here is not in darkness but in light. The power is in Jesus, who is the Light of the cosmos.
- Now out of our humanity we can still be drawn into the deeds of darkness, but Jesus took away all of the ill effects of darkness and at the end of the day, the ill effects are done away because of Jesus.
- We need to reflect the Light of Jesus.

14) This is the message of light; Christ awakens you from your intoxicated slumber and resurrects you out of the death trap of enslaved thought patterns.

The Nature of Wisdom (Verses 15-17):

- Wise people make the most of every opportunity (verse 16)
- They understand God's Will (verse 17)

Ephesians 5:15 (NASB), Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise,16) making the most of your time, because the days are evil. 17) So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Ephesians 5:15 (Mirror), Take accurate stock of your life; wise conduct defeats foolishness. 16) Wisdom converts time into opportunity and frees your day from slog. 17) Make his master plan your meditation.

- Now, it's been said that the church should be much like a hospital than a museum.
- If we want to extend the metaphor, the church should be more like an ER, an Emergency Room, helping us get back on our feet so we can serve others, than an intensive care unit or a hospice facility.
- It's our role to help anyone, in the church, who is hurting or in need and to lift that person back up, so they can continue to serve.
- The role of the church is to serve, to engage, to build up, to reach out, to worship and to witness to others as we are living in the Light of Jesus.

Filling of the Holy Spirit and its results (Verses 18-21):

- Now how many times has pastor Craig said, "It's all about spiritual disciplines"?
- And this is what Paul is telling us here showing what the results are when we are being filled with the Spirit.
 - Fellowship (verse 19a)
 - Worship (verse 19b)
 - Gratitude (verse 20)
 - Submission (verse 21)

Ephesians 5:18 (NASB), And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, 19) speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;

- When we come together in fellowship and engage in songs of worship, this is one of the ways we are reflecting the Light of Jesus and walking in the Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18 (Mirror), While wine offers no lasting escape from the evil of the day, spirit certainly does! Indulge in spirit intoxication! 19) Speak psalms to one another;

burst out in spontaneous celebration songs and spirit-inspired resonance. In your heart do not let music stop; continue to touch the Lord with whispers of worship. Ephesians 5:20 (NASB), always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; 21) and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

Ephesians 5:20 (Mirror), Because you are identified in the Name of Jesus Christ, you can afford to always overflow in gratitude of the Father, in spite of everything that happens to you. You are not under circumstances but above circumstances because you are in him!

- As pastor Craig's been telling us, God doesn't take away all the circumstances that happen to us.
- Because of our relationship with our heavenly God, we are not under our circumstances but above them as the Mirror Bible, so wonderfully shows us.
- So, the next time we start to fear about unemployment or about health issues, or about a loved one who is suffering, we need to remember that Paul is telling us that we can live above our circumstances because Christ has accomplished everything for us.
- Now this understanding should be a tremendous comfort!
- "We are not under circumstances but above circumstances because we are in him!"
- Our circumstances do not dictate who we are because we are in Him – in Jesus!
- Does this make sense? Of course it does.

21) Inspired by the selfless consideration you witnessed in Christ, show perfect courtesy to one another.

- In conclusion, let's say our rhyme together as a family:

*Walking in the Light
Reflects all that is Right
Including God's Delight;
When Walking in the Spirit
We lose the sense to Fear-it.*

- Amen!

Closing prayer