

Ephesians 5:3–5,

WHBC, 5.14.23, AM

Background to passage: Paul's quick turnaround from his encouraging word to imitate God and walk in love like Christ is to move back to teaching from the negative (by that I mean that he is instructing them what not to do rather than what to do). Important theological distinction/application: Christianity is not a faith that requires a certain standard of behavior or good works to earn salvation. It's salvation by grace alone through faith alone.

Ephesians 5:3–5 ESV

³ But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. ⁴ Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. ⁵ For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Opening illustration: Sitting on the back porch on Tues and Erika in jest uttered one of the most revered and classic mom phrases of all time, “if you can’t say something nice...”

Main thought: On this Mother's Day, we will look at a beautiful, and probably most significant, character trait and behavior mom's (past, present, and future) share with God himself: Grace

1) A Moral Life (v. 3-5)

Ephesians 5:3–5 ESV

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1) A Moral Life (v. 3-5)

Explanation: Morality is a good thing. God is pleased when his children live lives of great moral standards. It is a testimony to the world. Paul begins a longer list that includes

theological instruction with several subjects of behavior for believers. These are some “thou shalt nots.” He covers:

- sexual sin (porneia) - covers all sorts of immorality
- impurity - related to the former, but includes connotation of filth, uncleanness, nasty
- covetousness - excessive desire of acquiring more and more wealth, greed, consuming ambition, linked to idolatry in v. 5
- filthiness - obscenities, shameful, indecent behavior
- foolish talk - “words of morons,” to talk like a drunken man
- crude joking - vulgar or indecent speech

We will return on a different day to cover some of these sins, as Paul says two things: they are appropriate “fitting” and proper among the saints (holy ones). He also says that those who practice these things will never see heaven; that HUGE.

Proverbs 22:6 ESV

⁶ Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.

Proverbs 22:15 ESV

¹⁵ Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline drives it far from him.

Proverbs 29:15 ESV

¹⁵ The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.

Illustration: Don't go outside with wet hair or no coat, you'll catch a cold.

Don't swim for 15 min after you eat.

Were you raised in a barn?

Did you brush your teeth? Flush?

As long as you live under my roof,

Always wear clean underwear, you might get in an accident

Answer me when I ask you a question.

Are you going dressed like that?

Do you think I am your maid?

Do you think I am made of money?

When I was your age...

Don't make me come in there.

Don't sit too close to the TV, it will ruin your eyes.

I don't care who started it, I said stop.

I brought you into this world...

If everyone was jumping off a cliff, would you?

I will give you something to cry about.

I've had it up to here with you.

No one ever said, life isn't fair.

It's all fun and games until someone gets hurt.

Can't find it, where did you have it last? If you would put things where they belonged you wouldn't have this problem.

Don't you embarrass me.

Last but certainly not least, "Because I said so."

Application: It is a mother's responsibility to help you understand and know moral truth...and manners...and respect...and responsibility...and hygiene...and stewardship...and gratefulness...and resourcefulness...etc. Children, listen to your mothers. It will be helpful for you. Your life will be much easier. It's God's command for you. Mom's, keep at it. You have an incredibly high calling and God will enable you to do it. **When you just can't take it anymore, go get some aspirin/Tylenol, read the instructions, pay special attention to the line that says, "keep away from children."** Mom's do remember that there are no guarantees in parenting, you can raise them "right," and they may still live lives of immorality.

But I want to move toward the more important common trait between God and mothers.

2) A Graced Life (v. 3)

Ephesians 5:3 ESV

³ But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.

2) A Graced Life (v. 3)

Explanation: I want to focus on the last phrase, last word of this verse - saints. Paul tells them not to do these things because they are not fitting for saints. The word saint means “holy ones.” So why does Paul feel like he needs to tell people not to do if they are holy? How could he call people holy whom he is having to call out? Caveat: when he says that those who do these things will ultimately be in hell, he is not talking about the strugglers, the fighters, but about those that make peace with their sin and willfully and willingly pursue, yet still name the name of Christ.

He calls them saints because their status before God is not determined by their works or good deeds or morality. Their status before God as a Christian is determined by the grace that God exhibited toward them.

Ephesians 1:5–7 ESV

⁵ he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ *to the praise of his glorious grace*, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, *according to the riches of his grace*,

Romans 9:10–12 ESV

¹⁰ And not only so, but also when Rebekah had conceived children by one man, our forefather Isaac, ¹¹ though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad—in order that God’s purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of him who calls—¹² she was told, “The older will serve the younger.”

Titus 3:5 ESV

⁵ he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

Romans 3:20 ESV

²⁰ For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

Romans 4:5 ESV

⁵ And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness,

Ephesians 2:8-9 ESV

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

2 Timothy 1:9 ESV

⁹ who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began,

Illustration:

Application: Here's where I want to draw the connection - grace. I'll stop short of saying "all," but I think it's fair to say with few exceptions, a mother's love, is unconditional. A baby doesn't have to earn his/her mother's love. A mischievous child may hear some of the above sayings above, but love is there. A rebellious Even when there is estrangement and emotional distance and hurt and pain, a mother's love and grace to overlook what some other can't is there.

God can overlook the heinous rebellion of our sin because it was punished on the cross. And by grace through faith he applies the righteousness earned by Christ to our account. Mothers can overlook the most grievous offenses because God made them at way. How many times have mothers being hanging on for years, decades for God to work in the lives of their children? How many mothers have been sinned against, but choose to embrace forgiveness and forgive offense.

Closing illustration: coal miner's mother: "Mama loved you. Mama prayed for you. You never believed. Mama will never see you again."

The key to salvation is not works and goodness, but grace through faith. Those of you here that are hoping that you've done more good than bad in your life, thinking God will let you in, you will be disappointed, and eternally punished. The only way you are accepted by God is through his grace. The reason that your mother is always in your corner is because she loves you regardless of what you do. She may bear much suffering on your behalf like Christ did, but she will still accept you as her son or daughter based on grace.