

Walk In Love
Ephesians 4:25-5:2
Pastor John Miller

Back up quite a bit to Ephesians 4:1, and I want you to look at it with me. Paul says, “I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you,” beg you, “that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.” In this section of Ephesians, to just remind you, we’re in what’s called the worthy walk. In the beginning of the book, Ephesians 1-3, we had the wealth of the believer, now we have the walk of the believer, and we’ll end in Ephesians 6 with the warfare of the believer.

The new life we have received as Christians should be seen in a new lifestyle. When you were born again, God gave you new life. You were regenerated by the Holy Spirit, you have a new nature, and that new nature should produce a new lifestyle. Paul is delineating how the new believer should live. In verses 22-24, Paul used the analogy or the imagery of putting off the old soiled garments of the past life, putting on the new garments of the grace clothes, and living in the work of the Holy Spirit and the fullness of that new nature that Christ has given you.

When you are born again you have the new nature, but now we are to yield to the Spirit—let the new nature come out as we walk in the Lord. He’s telling us to put these things off and on, even though positionally it happened the moment we were saved in Christ. Practically, we need to implement it by surrendering and obeying God’s Word. Verses 22-24 actually leads up to the “therefore” in verse 25 that Paul is talking about putting off and putting on. Paul phases from lofty theological talk in the first three chapters on the two natures to the nitty-gritty Christian behavior of walking in love.

Paul is going to give us five commands of how we are to walk. We’re going to see that we are to tell the truth, control our anger, we’re not to steal but to work with our hands that we may give to others, we’re going to see that we don’t use our mouth for evil but for good, and fifthly, we’re not to be unkind or bitter but “...tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”

Before we unpack verse 25 to Ephesians 5:2, I want to point out three very important features of what all these five commands have in common. First of all, they all concern our relationships. Our Christian life is not to be lived in a vacuum. There are no lone-ranger Christians. You need to live your life in the nitty-gritty of family, of church, of work, and of neighbors. Christianity isn’t intended to be lived in isolation, it’s to be lived with one another. You’re going to see that famous phrase in this section of “one another”—“And be ye kind to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,” so the idea of walking in love is that we walk in love toward one another.

The second thing about these five sins we are to avoid and virtues we are to take on is that each example has a negative prohibition and is balanced by a corresponding positive command. We are not to lie, but the positive is we are to speak the truth. We’re not to steal,

but the positive is we're to work with our hands that we may give to those that are in need. There's the positive along with the negative.

Thirdly, in each of these cases, a theological reason for the command is either given or implied in the Bible. Belief and behavior always go together. There's either an Old Testament reference or theological implication, and I'll unpack that for you as we go. Get ready. Buckle your seatbelts. We have a lot of verses to cover. I'll try not to tarry on any one of them, but there's five of them.

First, Paul says not to tell lies but rather the truth—don't be untruthful but rather truthful. That's in verse 25. He says, "Wherefore," which I pointed out goes back to Ephesians 4:20-24, where we're to take off or put off like a piece of soiled garments, "putting away," that's the idea, once and for all taking off, "lying," or untruthfulness, "speak every man truth with his neighbour," again, we're to live together with one another, "for we are members one of another." He says, "Don't tell lies, don't be untruthful, but you should be truthful with your neighbor," and he gives us the reason, "...for we are members one of another." The NIV renders verse 25, "Therefore each of you must put off falsehood," so it's not just lying with your speech, it's all falsehood with your life. It has a broader application than just what we say in the way of lying. It's interesting that this is a direct correlation to the Ten Commandments, commandment nine, in Exodus 20:16, "Thou shalt not bear false witness," thou shalt not lie would be a modern translation.

What is lying? I read that a Sunday school teacher asked her class of fifth graders, "What is a lie?" A young boy said, "A lie is an abomination to the Lord and a very present help in time of trouble." I think the guy got his verses kind of mixed up a little bit, right? I don't think that's what the Scriptures have in mind. A lie is a statement that is contrary to fact spoken with the intent to deceive. If you were unaware that what you said was not true, then you haven't really lied; but if you knowingly, intentionally, purposely make a statement to try to distort facts or to deceive someone, then you have spoken a lie.

Today we have all kinds of euphemisms for lying. We call it "shading the truth," or "exaggeration," or maybe we use the term "fib," and you've all heard the term "white lies," right? I don't know where that ever came from. "Well, it's just a little white lie, it's not going to hurt anybody." We kind of try to shade the truth and don't really want to be honest. One thing that is so important for us...and by the way, he's writing to believers in Ephesus that were Gentiles who came out of a very pagan culture and didn't really have this as a moral standard, but God gives us that in His Word, "thou shalt not lie," so we need to be "truthing it."

Earlier, in the book of Ephesians, he actually said, "...speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things." The idea is that we're "truthing it" in every aspect of our lives. There should be no dishonesty or falsehood in our speech or in our actions. We need to be careful that we do not lie. Christians are not to lie. Remember in Acts 5 when Ananias and Sapphira made as though, hypocritically feigned as though, they were giving all the proceeds from their property that they sold to God, and the Lord struck them dead in the church service? Can you imagine being in a church where God would strike you dead if you lied during the service?

You're singing, Take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold, BOOM! you're dead. We'd have to put a mortician on the staff at the church. They were dragging people out of the middle of the service. The Scripture says, "No man dared join themselves to the believers." "I'm not going to join that church, they're dying over there." Evidently, God took hypocrisy and duplicity and deceitfulness very, very seriously. He struck Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, dead. Remember, Satan is a liar, and he's called "the father of lies." That term "father of lies" carries the idea of the source of lying. He generates lies. When we lie, we're playing into Satan's camp.

Notice in verse 25, "...speak every man truth with his neighbour." He gives us the negative, "Do not lie," don't practice falsehood; and if you're living in lying or you're lying to cover yourself, then you need to repent and get right with God. The Bible says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Paul gives us the positive in verse 25, "...speak every man truth with his neighbour." It's drawn from Zechariah 8:16, so our relationships are built on truth and trust. All human relationships must be built on truth and trust.

I'm going to kind of spill the beans a little bit right here, but when we go through this tonight, especially at the end of this section, it has amazing application, though that's not the primary interpretation, for the marriage relationship. You cannot have a marriage relationship built on dishonesty, built on lies. I always tell couples when I'm doing premarital counseling, "Never violate your spouse's trust. Always be honest. Once you violate that trust, it's very, very difficult, sometimes even impossible, to ever fully regain it." A lot of what we cover tonight, if you're married, has great application; but it also applies in every relationship that we have, humanly speaking.

Now, note the reason not only that the other person is your neighbor, but we are to love, the Bible says, in the church, the body of Christ, it says in verse 25, "...for we are members one of another." This is in the context of the body of Christ, and "we are members one of another." When your body lies to other parts of your body, you're in big trouble. When your brain starts to lie to parts of your body—believe me, I know from experience—you're in trouble. Your body must all work together in unity, so we cannot lie one to another. We're brothers and sisters. We're part of the family of God, so we shouldn't put on a pretense or be deceitful or dishonest with one another. Remember in Ephesians 4:1-16, Paul emphasized that we're to walk in unity using our gifts in love to build up the body of Christ. Fellowship is built on trust and is built on truth, so falsehood undermines while truth strengthens. It's so important.

Secondly, notice the second command in verses 26-27, don't lose your temper, but make sure your anger is righteous or as we have in verse 26, "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 Neither give place to the devil." This "Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath," is actually a quote from Psalm 4:4. If you've never discovered that in the Old Testament book of Psalms, he's actually quoting from those verses. What does he mean in verse 26, "Be ye angry," that could freak some people out to read that in the Bible, "He's actually telling us to be angry." I believe what he's telling us is that anger...by

the way, anger is neutral, it can be good anger or bad anger. It depends upon whether it's a righteous anger (Bible students call it a righteous indignation when we hate the things God hates) or whether it's a bad anger that's out of control when you "lose your temper." Temper's a good thing, but when you lose it, it's a bad thing.

These are good verses for flying on airplanes, right now. You see all the crazy air flight rage going on, it's insane! "Be ye angry, and sin not." When he enjoins us to be angry, I believe he's saying, "Have a righteous indignation." It means that we hate the things God hates. All through the Old Testament, God hated sin and we see the judgment of God on sin. We're to hate the things that God hates with a righteous hatred.

You know that Jesus displayed anger in the gospels. When He went into the temple and saw the religious leaders with their money-changing tables, selling their doves and sacrifices for exorbitant amounts, it says He made a whip, turned over their tables, and with the whip drove them out of the temple. I don't think He did that with great politeness or courtesy, "Sorry, to be a bummer here," but (explosive noise!) throws over their tables. He makes a whip and drives them out because He was angry with a righteous indignation at the things that make God angry. I think the problem in the church today is too many Christians aren't righteously angry. They're not angry at sin and what it does to people and how it dishonors and defames God. We need to think about how dishonoring sin is to God and damaging it is to people. Jesus displayed this kind of righteous indignation.

What's an unrighteous anger? It's self-centered, self-focused, because of our pride and because of what we want didn't happen so we get angry for selfish, sinful reasons. I think of Moses, who got angry and took the rod a second time in the wilderness and struck the rock. The water came forth, but God said, "Moses, you blew it. I wasn't angry. You made it as though I was angry. You didn't sanctify Me in the eyes of the people, therefore, you're not going to go into the Promised Land." God takes it very seriously. We need to be very careful. That's why the Scripture says, "Be ye angry, and sin not," don't let it lead you to sin. Make sure it doesn't cross that line from a righteous indignation to an unrighteous indignation.

Verse 26, "...let not the sun go down upon your wrath." What does that mean? It means don't allow unrighteous anger to boil over to seethe in your heart. Don't continue to harbor that anger and bitterness in your heart because it's dangerous. Verse 27, you are giving the devil a foothold, "Neither give place to the devil." What happens when we allow the sun to go down upon our wrath and hang onto it day after day after day? It turns to malice, and then we find that we have given place to the devil. That concept means you've allowed Satan to get a foothold in your heart and in your life. Again, this is why, this is why, this is why—listen up ye married people tonight; listen up ye non-married people tonight. It doesn't matter if you're married or not, don't allow unforgiveness and bitterness...the section closes tonight with, "And be ye kind...tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." There's the theological implication—Christ died sacrificially on the cross for you to be forgiven—and who are you not to turn around and forgive those who have sinned against you.

You may be here tonight and there's somebody you won't forgive, somebody you have malice toward, maybe bitterness or unforgiveness, and you have anger toward them. You have allowed Satan to get a foothold in your life. I don't believe that as a Christian you can be demon possessed, but you can certainly be oppressed and become influenced by the flesh and the devil, and it's a very dangerous thing. In Matthew 19, when they asked Jesus, "Is it okay to get a divorce for any and every reason?" Jesus said, "What did Moses say?" They quoted the law of Moses and said, "But what do You say?" Jesus said, "Because of the hardness of your hearts, God allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not God's purpose or designed intention." Notice it's the hardness of your heart. If you have two Christians in the marriage relationship, and one of them hardens their heart or both harden their hearts, it can be very dangerous because then Satan gets a foothold in that marriage relationship and it's a very, very dangerous direction to go. Don't lose your temper, but rather make sure your anger is righteous because you don't want to give place to the devil or give the devil a foothold in your relationships.

Thirdly, notice, if you're taking notes, that we're not to steal, "...but rather let him labour, working with his hands...to give to him that needeth." Again, a single verse, verse 28, "Let him that stole," or him that was stealing before his conversion, maybe some Christians were still involved in stealing, carrying over their old life into their new life in Christ, "...steal no more," so if you were a thief before you got saved, you're not to be a thief now that you have been saved. This is a verse we need today in our world. "...but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that," here's the reason, "he may have to give to him that needeth." He turns it around. Don't be stealing for yourself, but rather be working hard with your hands. Here we have the sanctity of hard work, and the motive of hard work is so that we can give to others, not just so we can buy for ourselves what we want but to work hard so that we can be a blessing and generous to give to others. The King James Bible has, "Let him...steal no more." The NIV translates that, "Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer." There were many slaves who became Christians at this time, and they actually learned to steal from their master to get what they thought was just, but they're not to steal any longer.

This is taken, again, from the Ten Commandments. It's the eighth commandment, Exodus 20:15, "Thou shalt not steal." Is it wrong to steal? Yes, it's wrong to steal, "Thou shalt not steal." It's eighth of the Ten Commandments, but it has a wider application than stealing other people's money or possessions. It can involve tax evasion, working and not getting paid, or getting paid and not working. That's stealing from your employer. It can involve unpaid debts that you haven't paid or made right, or maybe unfair wages—someone works and they're not being paid properly. It has a broader application.

Notice verse 28, we're to work with our hands. We go from lying lips to speaking the truth, from stealing hands to hard-working hands that we may give to others. Jesus transforms liars into truth tellers and thieves into benefactors—they're able to be generous and give to others. What does the Bible say? "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Again, if we were to have a testimony service and able to go into detail about our past lives, many of us would be ashamed of the

things we've done; but thank God such were some of you, but God has delivered us by giving us a brand new nature.

In verse 28, "...that he may have to give to him that needeth." What a blessed motivation that is for working hard—husbands providing for his family, for his children—being a blessing to give to others.

I want you to note the fourth thing in verses 29-30, don't use your mouth for evil, but rather use for good. This is Christianity 101. This is rubber meets the road. Paul goes from theology to practical Christian living—how we are to "walk worthy" of our vocation. He says, "Let no corrupt communication," that's your speech here, "proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying," so don't speak corrupt words, but speak good words which rather than tearing down, edify or build up, "that it may minister grace unto the hearers," and notice what words that are foul, corrupt speech do, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." I think it's interesting that verse 30 is placed in this area of our speech. It could be placed under any one of these sins that is to be abandoned. It could be placed under lying or anger or stealing. All of that grieves the Holy Spirit, but the Spirit of God is that which speaks—He inspired Scripture, and He speaks to us through God's Word—and He is grieved by unholy or corrupt speech.

If there is anything that should mark a true child of God, it's that his words should be gracious and edifying. There is absolutely no place for a Christian to have vulgarity or foul language coming forth from their lives. It's not okay. It's something that you should be concerned about if it's happening in your life because if it's in the well, it will come up in the bucket. If God has forgiven you and given you the Holy Spirit, then it should affect the way that you speak. Speech is a wonderful gift of God. It's one of the human capacities which reflect our likeness to God.

I know that people think porpoises speak, and I know they think their dog talks to them, but animals don't have the gift of speech. They do communicate, but they don't have words or speak like human beings. Jesus became the logos, the living Word; and God speaks through what He's spoken, His written Word. It distinguishes us from the Animal Kingdom. Someone said, "Cows moo, dogs bark, lions roar, birds sing or tweet, but only humans speak." We need to make sure that our speech is honoring to God, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD."

What does it mean, in verse 29, the King James Bible has "corrupt communication"? The word "corrupt" was used of a rotten tree that rotted and died or rotten fruit that had gone bad. It has the idea of dishonest, unkind, or vulgar speech. The NIV translates that, "unwholesome" speech. Any speech that is unkind, dishonest, or vulgar is to be done away with in the heart and life of a believer. "...but that which is good to the use of edifying," when our words come out of our mouths, they should be good words that are used to build up and edify. Again, put that in a marriage relationship—that in a marriage relationship good words that build up and strengthen that relationship and glorify God are so very important. You must ask, "What is helpful for building up others?" before you even speak.

Notice verse 30. This is one of my favorite verses in Ephesians. Paul says, “And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” There’s a bunch of important doctrine packed in verse 30, a couple points of which I want to point out. First, it indicates the Holy Spirit, and that’s the third Person of the Godhead who’s referred to here, is actually a personal individual of the Godhead—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We have three Persons, yet one God. I know we don’t understand the triune nature of God, it’s something that’s beyond us and it’s transcendent and God can’t be understood with the human brain apart from revelation, but the Bible reveals that there’s one God, one in essence, but three separate Persons—there’s God the Father, the Person of God the Son, and the Person of God the Holy Spirit. Just because He’s called the Spirit doesn’t mean He’s not a Person. This is one of the many references in the Bible to indicate what is called the personality of the Holy Spirit, that He’s subject to personal treatment, He can be grieved. That word “grieved” in verse 30 means He’s subject to personal pain.

Have you ever had somebody say something that hurts you personally? It grieves you, it pains you? That’s a characteristic of personality. The Holy Spirit can be grieved. He can be lied to. He can be blasphemed. He can be resisted. He is the third Person of the Godhead. He’s not a force, He’s not an “it”; He’s a personal being. He’s the third Person of the Godhead. Don’t grieve Him.

“...whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” This is what we found in Ephesians 1:13, that we “...were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,” when we believed. Every Christian, the moment they are born again, is not only regenerated (that’s what it means to be born again, given new life), and indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but, thirdly, they are sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption. He doesn’t just come to live inside of you, He gives you new life, He indwells you—your body becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit—and then He seals you. This verse is special because unlike Ephesians 1:13, it tells us how long we’re sealed for, “...unto the day of redemption.” Don’t miss that statement.

To be sealed indicates two clear things. First, it indicates ownership, it’s God’s stamp of approval that you are His, and it speaks of security. You’re sealed. When you send a letter that is sealed, it’s secure. No one can break the seal. When you are born again and given the Holy Spirit and He seals you, how long will that seal last? It will last, verse 30, until the day of redemption. What does that mean? It means until you get to Heaven. To me, this is so simple, yet so many people stumble over this. This is actually saying that once you’ve been born again, are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and sealed...and by the way, every Christian is sealed. You don’t have to ask for the sealing. You don’t have to seek to be sealed. You don’t have to pray to be sealed. You’re automatically sealed and are secure until you get to Heaven. This is one of the indications or clear teaching in Scriptures that once you’ve been born again, you cannot be lost. No one can break that seal. Even in the ancient world when you sealed a letter and sent it, only two people could break the seal, the sender and the receiver of the letter. God, in our salvation, is both—He’s the sender and the receiver. When we get to Heaven, we will get there because we’ve been sealed and we’re secure by the work of the Holy Spirit. I love that statement, “...unto the day of redemption.”

You've heard me say many times that salvation has three tenses: past, present, and future. We've been justified, we're being sanctified, and one day we will be glorified. That's the same as "the day of," our "redemption." Redemption involves salvation, sanctification, and glorification. That's the finalizing of that work of God in saving us, so we're saved until the day of redemption.

Notice the message that Paul is trying to convey. He's not trying to teach doctrine on the Holy Spirit, he's trying to convey that your speech can grieve the Holy Spirit. No child of God should ever want to cause God pain. When you were younger and living at home (I don't know if you've ever experienced this), did you ever do something kind of naughty that caused your mom to cry or your parents to be disappointed, and it hurt you more than it hurt them because you know you disappointed your parents? That's the way it is with the child of God. I have a fear of God in that I don't want to do anything to cause Him pain or to hurt Him. If I used words that are dishonoring to God, I'll grieve the Holy Spirit, and I don't want to do that because I want to have a fear of the Lord. The whole context of this passage—lying, verse 25, anger, verse 26, stealing, verse 28, foul speech, verse 29—all these sins grieve the Holy Spirit. There's no indication in the Bible that you can grieve Him away, but you can certainly grieve or cause Him pain. What we want to do is the way we think, the way we speak, the way we act, we want to bring a smile to the face of God. We want to bring pleasure to God as we want to bring pleasure to our only other parents or parents that we love or people that we love in our lives, so Ephesians 5:18 says, "...be filled with the Spirit." Don't grieve the Spirit, but let the Spirit fill you.

The last and fifth thing that we're to do if we're to put on the things that become Christ, we are to not be bitter or unkind but to be kind, forgiving, and loving. What happens in verse 31 to Ephesians 5:2 is Paul doesn't give us one single sin to put away, he gives us kind of a catch-all of attitudes that need to be put away. Notice them, "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking," which is the translation of slander, "be put away from you," notice in verse 25, "Wherefore putting away lying," now all these are to be put away, taken off, laid aside. Verse 31, "...be put away from you, with all malice," and what do you need to do? Here's the positive, "And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another," there's that famous "one another," "even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."

Notice Ephesians 5:1-2, "Be ye therefore," here's the conclusion, "followers of God, as dear children; 2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." We'll probably go back over these when we return to Ephesians, which won't be until after Christmas, but it's marvelous the way Paul lays this all out. "Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking," it starts with bitterness toward other people, and you let the sun go down upon your wrath, then you start getting angry, that's wrath, and anger, and then clamour and evil speaking is the outward vocalizing or expressing your anger. There's a lot of angry people in this world today. All of that needs to be put away from you. Again, all of that grieves the Holy Spirit. One modern translation I read actually says to get rid of your bad temper. I like that. Don't lose your temper, and deal with malice, which is the desire to hurt someone.

Notice the positive, “And be ye kind.” Years ago I read Harry Allen Ironside’s commentary on this verse, and he said something I’ve never forgotten. He said, “If you’re not kind, you’re not spiritual.” You know, a lot of people think if you speak in tongues, you’re spiritual; if you have the gifts of the Spirit, you’re spiritual; if you shout, “Hallelujah!” in a church service, you’re spiritual; if you carry a real big Bible, you’re spiritual; if you pray real loud and real fervently, you’re spiritual; or if you know a lot of Bible verses, you’re spiritual. I love that he just said, “If you’re not kind, you’re not spiritual.” I looked up the word “kind” there. From its root word meaning, the etymology of the word has the idea of being helpful. It actually has the idea of helping people. It’s not just the emotion or a feeling, but it’s actually, “I just want to help you—I’ll open the door for you, I’ll help you carry your groceries. I just want to be kind.” A truly spiritual individual will be kind to others. They’ll be helpful to others, and they’ll be thoughtful of others. That’s a mark of true spirituality which does not grieve the Holy Spirit.

Rather than bitter resentment or wrath, which is furious outbursts of passion or anger or clamour or evil speaking or malice, “be ye kind one to another,” and then notice, “tenderhearted,” that phrase “tenderhearted” is tied in with the phrase compassion. We’re not only helpful or kind, but we’re compassionate toward others. Notice verse 32, “...forgiving one another,” again, this is in the context of the church, the body of Christ, the fellowship of believers, “And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,” kindness and tenderheartedness and forgiveness.

This is the classic passage that I think applies so wonderfully to the marriage relationship. What marriage could survive without being kind, tenderhearted, and forgiving one another? Notice the theological basis here, “...even as God,” we just had a reference to God the Holy Spirit, now we have a reference to God the Father, “for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.” Why has He forgiven you? Even as He has done it for Christ’s sake. Jesus died on the cross, there’s God the Son, that we might be forgiven. We come to the cross to be forgiven, we stay at the cross to be forgiving toward others. There’s no basis for us being unforgiving toward others who have sinned against us or wronged us. You say, “Well, what if they don’t want forgiveness?” You still don’t harbor bitterness, you still don’t harbor anger, you still don’t harbor malice. It grieves the Holy Spirit if you have malice toward them. You’re to be kind, tenderhearted, and forgive them. That’s important for you to know. This, again, is in the church relationship, but I wanted to point out, as I said, that we have a reference to God the Father, then we have a reference to God the Son, and then back in verse 30, we had a reference to God the Holy Spirit.

In closing, in Ephesians 5:1-2, Paul wraps it up by saying, “Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children,” so we are to imitate. The word “followers” means mimic or imitate God, “as dear children; 2 And,” to, “walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.” We are to be forgiving and sacrificially serving others, even as Christ gave Himself as the sacrifice for us.

This is the description of the Christian life: Lay aside lying, anger, stealing, corrupt speech, and bitterness. Instead of lying, be truthful; instead of anger, don’t sin; instead of stealing; work with

your hands to give to others; instead of corrupt speech, use edifying words that will build others up; instead of bitterness, anger, and clamour, let it be put away. Be kind, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, and he closes by saying mimic God—be like God, be impersonators of God. Why? Because we're children of God. Amen? We are children of God, and it's time for us to be living like children of God. Let's pray.