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Walking in Love
5: 1-7

Walking in love DIG: Does walking in love define what it means to be an imitator of God? Explain. How do we become God's children? What are some ways a child imitates their parents? In 4:1, Paul urges us to model our lives in accordance with our high calling as God's grace. In 5:1, what is the model he holds up for us? How does love fulfill the Torah?

REFLECT: How might you lovingly excuse yourself from a gossipy conversation? How can partnerships (business, social, recreational) impact your spiritual life? What are some practical ways we can imitate God's love? What are the positive and/or negative motivations which prompt you to live a godly life? Who can you tell about Him this week?

In this passage, Sha'ul first presents the positive truths about true godly love,
and then the negative truths about Satan's counterfeit love and its consequences.

The plea (5:1-2a): Therefore . . . Paul begins **Ephesians 5** in the same way as he did the previous chapter – with the word **therefore**. This word refers back to the **forgiveness** believers have found **in Messiah (4:32)**. In **Ephesians**, the concept of **forgiveness** is connected to two vital biblical themes: **redemption** and **grace (1:7)**.[194] **. . . imitate God, as His dear children (5:1).** To know what **God** is like we must study **His Word**. Yet, the more we learn of **God's** character, the more we learn how far above us **He** is and how impossible it is to fulfill the command to **imitate Him** in ourselves, to be absolutely perfect, just as **He** is. That is why we need to be **empowered with the inner strength** of **His Spirit** so that we will **know the love of Messiah is beyond all comprehension (3:16 and 19a).** The only way we can **imitate God** is for **the Lord Yeshua Messiah** to live **His** perfect life through us. We are totally dependent on **His Spirit** to **imitate Him** (see the commentary on **Galatians, to see link click Bv – Walk by the Ruach, and Not the Desires of the Flesh**).



And walk in the way of love (5:2a). The **walk** of the believer is a key matter to **Paul**. **He** has introduced the fact that ours is a **worthy walk (4:1c)**, and **a walk** different from **the pagan Gentiles (4:17a). He** will also call for a walk in **the light** (see **Bq – Living in Light**), and a walk in wisdom **(5:15).** In this verse, **the apostle** pleads with believers to **walk** in such a way that daily life is characterized by **love**. Growing in **love** is a continual need for every believer, since love fulfills all of **God's Torah** (see the commentary on **Romans De – Respecting Civil Authority: Love fulfills the Torah**). As we grow in **love** we also see the need to be even more **loving**. And since biblically defined **love** is so contrary to the flesh, we are always in need of reminders and encouragement to **love.**[195]

The pattern (5:2b): A young child often learns to draw by tracing. The more carefully he traces, the truer the likeness of his copy is to the original. The pattern for believers to follow in **Yeshua Messiah Himself**. The difference between this tracing and that of a young child learning to draw is that we will never have a time when **Messiah** will cease to be our pattern. In other words, we will never be "on our own," sufficiently skilled in ourselves to live as **He** lived. In fact, we must allow **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh** to pattern us after **Messiah**.

Our ultimate goal for us is to **imitate Yeshua's love, just the way He loved us (5:2b).** Giving oneself to others is the epitome of agape **love**. Biblical **love** is not a pleasant emotion or good feeling about someone, but the giving of oneself for his or her welfare **(First John 3:16)**. Divine **love** is unconditional **love**, **love** that depends entirely on the one who **loves** and not on the merit, attractiveness, or response of the one **loved**. **Messiah** did not merely have a deep feeling or emotional concern for us. Nor did **He** sacrifice **Himself** for us because we were deserving. **While we were still sinners (Romans 5:8), He gave Himself for us** purely out of **His**

sovereign, gracious **love**, taking our **sin** upon **Himself** and paying its penalty on our behalf. **God's love**, and all **love** that is like **His**, **loves** for the sake of giving, not getting. With conditional **love**, if the conditions are not met there is no obligation to **love**. If we do not get, we do not give. Romantic, emotional "love" ebbs and flows. Therefore, to **love** as **God loves** is to **love** sacrificially, to **love** by the giving of ourselves and **He gave Himself**.

Messiah's giving of **Himself as an offering, as a slaughtered sacrifice** was **a pleasing fragrance** to **His** heavenly **Father.** The first five chapters of **Leviticus** describe five offerings commanded by **YHVH** to **the Israelites** (see the commentary on **Leviticus Ah – The Offerings from the People's Perspective**). **The burnt offering** (see **Leviticus Ai – The Burnt Offering: Accepted by God**) was fulfilled by **Messiah's** total devotion to **YHVH** in giving **His** very life to obey and please **His Father**; **the grain offering** (see **Leviticus Aj – The Grain Offerings: Dedicated to God**) was fulfilled by the sinlessness of **His** sacrifice; **the peace offering** (see **Leviticus Ak – The Peace Offerings: At Peace with God**) was fulfilled by **His** making **peace** between **God** and mankind. All of those offerings obviously spoke of what was pleasing to **ADONAI**. Each of those offerings provided **an aroma pleasing to the LORD. Philippians 4:18** explains that **the fragrant aroma** meant the sacrifice was **acceptable . . . well pleasing to God.**

But the other two offerings – **the purification offering** (see **Leviticus Al – The Purification Offering: Purified by the Blood**) and **the guilt offering** (see **Leviticus Am – The Guild Offering: Evidence of Repentance**) – were different because **they** were fulfilled by **Messiah's** bearing the **sin** of mankind. **They** depicted **the Father's** turning **His** back on **the Son**, when **He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf (Second Corinthians 5:21)**, at which time **Yeshua** cried out from the cross: **My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me (Matthew 27:46)?** While **Messiah** was the **sin**-bearer, **Ha'Shem** could not look upon **Him** or rejoice in **Him** or be pleased with **Him**. But when **the Father** raised **Messiah** from the dead, the sacrifice that caused **Him** to become **sin** became the sacrifice that conquered **sin**. The **sin** that put **Him** to death was itself put to death, and that great act of **love** was to **ADONAI** as **a fragrant aroma**. And today that **fragrant aroma** spreads its **fragrance** to everyone on earth who will place themselves under the grace of that sacrifice, and it will spread its **fragrance** throughout heaven for all eternity. In all aspects, our lives should please **God** (see the commentary on **Second Corinthians At – A Sweet-Smelling Aroma**).[196]

The perversion (5:3-4): Whatever **ADONAI** establishes, the Adversary will

counterfeit. Where **God** establishes true **love**, Satan produces counterfeit "love." This counterfeit "love" characterizes Satan's children, those who are of the world, just as true **love** characterizes **God's** children, those who are citizens of heaven. **Among you there should not even be mentioned sexual immorality** (Greek: *porneia*, and *refers to all sexual sin*)**, or any kind of impurity** (Greek: *akatharsia*, and *refers to anything that is unclean*)**, or greed,** which by its very nature is contrary to true **love (5:3).** What was acceptable in the pagan Roman Empire had, and has, no place in the life of a believer. Therefore, **Paul** reminded the **Ephesians** that **these are utterly inappropriate for God's holy people.**

Also out of place are obscenity and stupid talk or coarse language; instead, you should be giving thanks (5:4). Our words are a reflection of the thoughts of our heart. Vulgar words and **coarse language** do not reflect the light of **YHVH**. As Messianic Jews and Gentiles, the Ephesians were called to use edifying speech and to give thanks. It is important to note that all the forbidden actions are verbs that are present tense, indicating an ongoing and habitual lifestyle, not merely a slip of the tongue once in a while. Such people use **stupid talk and coarse language** all the time, unlike the followers of **Yeshua** who at least battles to stay on the narrow path of righteousness. **Sha'ul** reminded **his** disciples elsewhere that many of **them** came out of such lifestyles, being transformed by the power of **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh (First Corinthians 6:9-11)**.[197]

The punishment (5:5-7): It is clear that **the Rabbi** was restating a **truth** that **he** had taught **the Ephesians** many times while **he** lived among **them**. **For he** said: **Of this you can be sure.** There should have been no doubt or confusion in their minds about what he was about to say, because it was nothing new. **Ha'Shem** does not tolerate sin, and perverted "love" leads to punishment. **Every sexually immoral, impure or greedy person – that is, every idol-worshiper – has no share in the Kingdom of the Messiah and of God (5:5).** This is a sobering statement that needs serious reflection. The Torah and the whole Bible not only have an impact on this life, but in the world to come. While Judaism has placed great value on the concept of *Tikkun Olam* (Repairing the World), neglecting the world to come can have catastrophic consequences. It is such an integral part of our relationship with **YHVH** that **the apostle** warns us not to **let anyone deceive** us by telling us that sin is tolerable and that **God** will not exclude unrepentant sinners from **His** Kingdom. **Because of these things,** that is the sins listed here and the lies of **empty words that God's judgment is coming on those who disobey Him.** In a final warning, **Paul** says: **Therefore, don't become partners with**

them (5:6-7)! He says, “Don’t join **the world** in its evil; don’t be partners with **it** in wickedness. Instead, be partners with **Messiah** and **His righteousness**. Don’t **imitate the world (First John 2:15-17)**, but rather be **imitators of God, as His dear children” (5:1).**[198]

*Dear Heavenly **Father**, Praise **You** that **Your** great **love** is wrapped in total wisdom, including even knowing the future (**Dani’el 2,7, Revelation 19)** and the thoughts and intents **(Hebrews 4:12, Matthew 9:4)** of the hearts of everyone **(First Samuel 16:7, Luke 16:15, Acts 15:8).** How wonderful that **Your love** and wisdom work together to always desire what is best for me. **For ADONAI Elohim is a sun and a shield. ADONAI gives grace and glory. No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly (Psalms 84:11). Your love** is guided by **Your** all-knowing omniscience, so when you give me wisdom, it brings me eternal joy to follow **Your** leading.*

*I **love You** and long to live to please **You** while I am still on earth. It cost **You** so very much to buy my redemption **(Hebrews 12:2).** I want to thank **You** by listening to **Your Ruach Ha’Kodesh** so that I will not fall into any sin, and can conquer any temptations (**First Corinthians 10:11, John 14:23).** I set my joy on living for **You**. As I praise **You**, I am encouraged to remember how short life on earth is and how long eternity will be with **You**. I remember **Your steadfast love** for me. **Because Your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise You (Psalms 63:3).** It is a delight in loving **You**, even in hard times. **For I consider the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the coming glory to be revealed to us (Romans 8:18).** May my life reflect **Your** holy goodness. In **Messiah Yeshua’s** holy **Name** and power of **His** resurrection. Amen*