

## **Ephesians 5:1-9 (NIV)**

1 Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children 2 and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. 3 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. 4 Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. 5 For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. 7 Therefore do not be partners with them. 8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light 9 (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth)

"Sowing your wild oats", "Just letting your hair down", "Living a little"; these phrases are used to justify people's sinful behavior. It's as if we have this built in right to sin as much as we want in order to get it out of our system. It's like the person who lives like he has no regard for God for six days of the week and then comes to church on Sunday.

The Christian doesn't live like that. No, the Christian wants to imitate the standard that God has set up for him. Why? Because Christ has loved us first and he gave up his life as a sacrifice to God to pay for all of our sins. Christ loved us so that we might live a life of love. That life of love does not include flings of accepted sinfulness. Notice how clear Paul is on this subject. Not even a hint! People shouldn't suspect that anything of this nature is going on in the life of a Christian. No sexual immorality or any other kind of impurity. Consider what you read, watch, look at? Does this give even a hint of this? These are improper for God's holy people who know better.

Nor any obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking! What comes out of your mouth? Do you sit and laugh when someone else says such things? Do you give the hint that you too think and speak this way? Not even a hint! Why? Because those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God! Anyone who lives a life of immorality, impurity, and greed is an idolater and breaks the first commandment.

Let no one deceive you into thinking that such things are no big deal! This is serious! God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Like each of the lessons we've looked at already this week, Paul is warning us to have nothing to do with the Devil. We were once darkness. We were once condemned to eternal death. But Christ has changed that! Christ offers us free forgiveness for the times that we slip up and fall back into these things. But don't let them permeate your life. Don't let your repentance be a mere sham of empty words! Live as you truly are, as a child of the light! It will show in your fruit: goodness, righteousness, and truth. Dear Christian, heed the warning! Live as a child of the light!