

Ephesians 5:1-21aⁱ

Intro: Great to be back together after our time with Jeff last week. I have prayed for your homework to give you an opportunity to study Ephesians 5 a bit and allow the Lord to shed light on the spirit-filled life. We have studied the positional truth in the first 3+ chapters of Ephesians to begin to know who we are in Christ. Chapter 4 started a transition into temporal truth which is how we can live the life that is pleasing and obedient to God. If we don't know who we are, we don't have a standard or way to measure how we are living our lives.

This week, I want to present a bit of help in how to study a passage like this and give you a bit of a look at some ways you can get more out of your time reading the word of God. Then I want to hear from you about what the Lord has shown you about this passage when you did your homework. ☺

I) Study Tips

- A) Read the passage in several translations and several times to get a sense of what it plainly says
 - 1) You can read in several different Bibles or
 - 2) Use Bible Software like the free eSword that I taught about in the past
 - 3) Use online Bibles like the <http://www.biblegateway.com> where you can read in many different translations and languages too.
- B) I like to print them out and lay them side by side to compare them physically (MS Word, Apple Pages, Google Docs or Open Office all work well at producing 2 column pages which are usually enough)
 - 1) This allows me to mark things that catch my attention
 - 2) I can see areas where they agree (although perhaps using different words) and where they do not agree
 - (a) Where they are similar, it gives me a bit more of an idea of the basic meaning of the verse
 - (b) Where they disagree or leave something out, it makes me want to look deeper and see what caused the difference of opinion.
 - (c) By doing this, most of the time, I get a much richer feel for what the original text is actually saying.
- C) After I have done this process, then I may begin to look for background information, cultural norms, commentaries and historical ways the church has understood the verses.
 - 1) Here is where you can look deeper into the way the original audience would understand the message.
 - 2) It takes a bit of practice to begin to put yourself in the place of an original believer hearing Paul's letter being written to your personal church. Must have been a thrill to hear him name people that you knew, eh?
 - 3) Looking at maps and understanding the political and ethnographic situation also is helpful to learning.
- D) Note how the different translations may have broken the sections up to get an insight into the text
 - 1) Often the breaks can show the bias or doctrinal preference of the editors
 - 2) But it can also show how different people can read the same passage and see a totally different aspect of the meaning. To me, this shows why we need one another to see the fullness of our God.

II) Basic Layout from NKJV

- A) Eph 5:1-7 Walk in Love
- B) Eph 5:8-14 Walk in Light
- C) Eph 5:15-21 Walk in Wisdom

III) Basic Layout in NASB

- A) Eph 5:1-17 In Relation to Evil
- B) Eph 5:18-21 In Relation to the Holy Spirit
- C) Eph 5:21-6:4 In Relation to Home Life

IV) Your Turn... What Has God Shown You as you Read this Passage?

ⁱ Adapted from unpublished class notes and Yandian, Bob. Ephesians-The Maturing of the Saints. Harrison House: Tulsa. 1985.