



This week at Magdalen Road Church we continued our Autumn series in Ephesians as we reached chapter 5. Paul is expanding upon v1-2 that talk of living a life of Love, like Jesus. I

**++Don't join in the idolatry of sex,
but rather love selflessly (v1-7)**

In these challenging initial verses Paul deals with the topic of sexual immorality. At the heart of the verses lies the contrast between living a selfless loving life, or else self-serving sex. We noted that the context of Ephesus with the Temple of Artemis would have meant various temple prostitutes – hence the culture the Christians were immersed in would have been similar to ours. Paul is very uncompromising – v3 he says there must not even be a hint of sexual immorality (by which he means sex used in a way that God did not intend) – either in what we do or what we say (v4). Ultimately he describes them as idolaters (v5) – they love and serve something else rather than God. We noted especially the role that pornography is playing in our society and the damage it is causing people.

**++Don't join in with the world's sin,
but rather expose it's emptiness (v8-16)**

Paul's focus then expands slightly, as he talks of how we are to engage in a dark world. The key word in v11 and v13 is expose and yet how are we to expose sin, when v12 says it's shameful even to mention it? The answer seems to be transformed lives that challenge people, causing them to be more open to the gospel. Paul urges us to live wisely and carefully in dark times (v15), making the most of opportunities. He also gives us homework as he calls us to consider what pleases the Lord (v10). How can we live as people of light who 'expose' in a world of darkness?

**++Don't be foolish about how you live,
but rather live the Spirit-filled life (v17-21)**

Paul claims in these final verses from this week to know what God's will is for our lives. It's be filled with or by His Spirit so that we might be transformed as to how we live. It's striking that in describing a Spirit-filled church (lead by the Spirit rather than by wine) his emphasis is then on 4 aspects of church life:

- 1... **speaking** to one another with psalms, hymns & songs from the Spirit.
- 2... **Sing[ing]** & mak[ing] music from your heart to the Lord,

- 3... always **giving thanks** to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 4... **Submit[ting]** to one another out of reverence for Christ.

As we consider Magdalen Road it's helpful to think our relative maturity or not in these things...

Here are just a few questions that might get things going, please feel very free to ignore / adapt for your group:

What do you remember from Ephesians so far? Any key verses?
What has been a challenge to you or an encouragement?
How do 1v10 and 3v10 build into the big storyline of the book?
Why is unity in church so vital?

V1-7

What alternatives does Paul set up in these verses?
Why is greed listed do you think?
Why do words matter?
What does idolatry have to do with it all?
Where's the temptation at MRC for there to be a hint?

Encourage an appropriate level of honesty – if there are folk who need to be 'brave' and find help, please encourage people to seek accountability or people to talk to.

V8-16

What does Paul mean by light and darkness?
How does 'exposing' happen?
What relevance does the 'wake up O Sleeper' quote have?
What does it mean to find out how to please the Lord?
What might this look like for each of us?

V17-21

What alternatives does Paul set up in these verses?
What 'fills' you?
What 4 things flow from being Spirit-Filled?
How do you think MRC does in these things?