

Ephesians 5:7-10 Are you a People Pleaser or a God Pleaser?

There is always a warning in scripture when Paul tells us what God wants us to do. It is almost always followed by a warning to avoid the things that we used to do. He does the same there here.

1. **Don't be partakers with those who do evil** – vs. 7 The word partaker means to have a part of or share with; to participate – that is the actively engage in an act or behavior. It also means to have part of the quality or character of something. Now it is the last part of the definition that really scares me when it comes to God telling us not to do something. He is really telling us to pay attention to and be aware of the danger of allowing anything that will cause us to have the character of anyone other than Jesus. It is a warning that we all too often ignore because we say, “Oh, it is just a little problem, or that is just who they are”.
2. **You know better** – vs. 8a Paul knew that these Christians used to be real heathens. And so does God. He knows what you were like before and knows how easy it is to slip back into that life style. These warnings are not to make our life miserable but successful. And we had better pay attention to all of them. Just like a parent knows how easy it is for a child to forget the trouble with bad behavior. We are just like that when we sin. We are too quick to forget the pain, the consequences of our disobedience. I know that sometimes I forget things that really trip me up. These Christians were no different. They were going back to the same lifestyle they just came from. Imagine yourself the way you were a few years ago. Are you better now than you were then? Have you grown in your relationship with God? Is your quiet time better or worse? Are your friends helping you in your walk with God? Are your intimate relationships remaining pure? Are you obeying God on an daily basis? You need to ask yourself these questions every day.
3. **As a believer you are light.** – vs. 8b What a contrast. Dark and light. Paul knew that it was the most vivid illustration he could give. Your former life was dark; your new Christian life is light. Just as God said “you are the light of the world”, we need to understand that as light we have a responsibility to light up our darkened world. But how can you do that if you are living in darkness? We are light because of who we have in us. We read that we have the Lord in us. The Holy Spirit is our strength and our ability to be light to our world. We already know that the Holy Spirit is our only hope of being what we need to be to obey God's will in our lives.

4. **Please God as a child pleases his parents** – vs. 8c - 10 A child wants to please their parents. It is just natural that children try to imitate and do the mom or dad do. As parents we often say “when you do that it pleases me”, or “I like when you behave like that”. These things make a child respond with more good behavior. The same is true in our spiritual life. The more we please God with our actions and behavior, the more He pours His spirit into us. The more He can trust us with things, money, relationships, and yes, hardships. Paul brings out a great point in verse 10, we need to “LEARN” to please the Lord. It does not come naturally. We do not always see the value and benefit of pleasing God, but the consequences and the discipline we experience are there to help us know and understand how and why to please God. The difficulty we have as believers is that we tend to please those who are around us at the time. We want the approval of our peers and our friends and our co-workers. We also try real to impress them with our abilities and that leads to real trouble. What we forget is that God is with us ALL the time. So often we get so focused on our immediate situation that we fail to factor in God is with us. One of God’s names is Emmanuel, which means God is With US! You cannot ask for more or a better guarantee than that. He is with us 100% of the time and will never leave us. However, it comes with a responsibility form us; we must never leave Him. We must never move away from Him. We must never let anything get in between God and us. If we do, He is still there, but He will let us have our own way until we “come to our senses”. The most dangerous place for a child to be is when they run away from their parents in a crowded store or fair. The very same is true with a Christian. We are most vulnerable when we move away from God. He will let us move, but it will also be painful and could cost you more than you want to pay. There is a great old song that goes like this; Sin will take you further than you’ll ever want to go, Sin will take you deeper than you’ll ever want to know. Sin will keep you longer than you’ll ever want to stay, Sin will cost you more than you’ll ever want to pay.

What is keeping you from being that light that God wants you to be? Is it your attitude?

5. Is it your super intellectualism and your thirst for knowledge without wisdom and understanding? Is it you desire to be “Somebody” with “Something” to “Some people” who really don’t care who or what you are? Why not right now settle this whole thing with God? Let Him be the one you please. Let Him be the only reason you live. Let Him be the light that shines through you. It can happen for you. God promises it. Right now.