

1) We are to be like God: We are to live as beloved children of God and give our lives as offerings and sacrifices to him, 5:1-2.

- We are to be imitators.
- New clothes: love as Christ loved us.
- Offerings and sacrifices.
- Sweet-smelling to God. Yes!

2) We need strong teaching that disallows any substitutes or distractions that would confuse our identity and our inheritance, 5:3-5.

- Paul shocks us as he moves from love to fornication.
- The old wardrobe is not fitting for the new life.
- No substitutes, no distractions, consistent inner witness: If God is our life, then God is our life, cf. 1 John 5:10-12.

3) We need strong teaching to reject deceptive and idolatrous influences, 5:6-7.

- The words matter. Do not be deceived by rationalizations of people who do not know the goodness and love of God.
- The wrath of God will come upon the disobedient.
- Reject their counsel.

## AN OUTLINE OF EPHESIANS 5:1-7 MESSAGE NOTES

### \*Two tracks to the good life ...

Adam and Eve were the first sheep off the path but certainly not the only ones.

- We're all like sheep who've wandered off and gotten lost. We've all done our own thing, gone our own way. And GOD has piled all our sins, everything we've done wrong, on him, on him (Isaiah 53:6 MSG).

#### In pursuing the goodness of God apart from God ...

They gave up life with God. In a very real sense the blessing of God was their undoing. From the grass under their feet to the trees overhead, works of beauty and functional excellence, God's goodness from the very beginning, plain old grass, plants and trees speaking volumes more than their simple nature suggests. Why? Because creation reflects the Creator, and in the Creator's world even something so common as grass speaks the message of eternity. In fact all creation reflects this powerful message: There is something more. God did this. God is there.

#### But the real something more is God ...

Not his gifts, not his blessings, not his provision and care. Maybe that is what I am trying to say in the book that there is something more and how to get there. God began with a desire to give us his best, the good stuff. That hasn't changed, thus the slippery slope and the inherent tension that every occupant who arrives on Planet Earth has to live with: Do we choose the blessings or the Blesser?

### Life on the \*creation track ...

Most of us taste the blessings of God every day ...

In the beauty of this Earth and in the daily provision of food, housing, entertainment, physical activity, friendships, jobs and family. In fact with many of us, even as Christians, the good stuff is so good, so satisfying, that we overlook God's best. And even though grass and plants and trees are great, they are merely part of God's provision, the part we can enjoy on Earth whether we know God or not.

#### I call this "life on the creation track" ...

And "life on the creation track" can be absolutely wonderful - the joy of being on the water in the summer, camping in the mountains, the newest album by your favorite group, the latest 3-D movie experience, sitting under the backyard trees drinking a glass of sun tea listening to the birds, watching the squirrels and the rabbits, enjoying a weekend fishing outing with the boys, smelling freshly cut grass, driving your convertible with the top down, family and friends, intimate moments with your spouse. The list of "things to enjoy" on the creation track is very, very long and God is responsible for it all.

It doesn't get any better than this, does it? Well, as a matter of fact, yes it does.

### Eternal life on the \*redemption track ...

Even the best case scenario ...

For life on the creation track ends in a fiery crash. The really good stuff comes on the "redemption track" which never ends.

#### But contrary to the creation track ...

Access to the redemption track excludes sinners. Due to the "little" problem that Adam and Eve introduced to the world in Eden (sin, depravity, death, rebellion, etc.) for a person to access the "redemption track," we now needed an ambassador, a go-between, someone who could bridge the gap and make a way for us to once again taste God's best, to not be afraid in his presence, to not face condemnation.

#### We needed ...

Someone who could lead us beyond our limitations and our pretense to capture and live God's original purpose. We needed a Savior, a Shepherd. So God sent himself in human form. You may have heard of him? His name is Jesus.

[\*Excerpts from Beyond Pretend: A Sheep's Guide to the Universe!  
By David Lee Scott.]