

**RENOVATE:  
REFLECTING GOD**

Ephesians 4:32 – 5:14

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**MESSAGE NOTES**

*Our job is to make the invisible God visible — to mirror and mimic what He is like to the world. We can glorify God by doing our work in such a way that we make the invisible God visible by what we do and how we do it. — John Mark Comer, Garden City: Work, Rest, and the Art of Being Human*

- **Live** a life worthy of the calling you have received. — Ephesians 4:1
- No longer **live** as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. — Ephesians 4:17
- **Live** as children of light. — Ephesians 5:8
- Be very careful, then, how you **live**. — Ephesians 5:15

*So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God ... — Ephesians 4:17 – 18*

- Be made new in the attitude of your **minds**. — Ephesians 4:23
- The **mind** governed by the Spirit is life and peace. — Romans 8:6
- Be transformed by the renewing of your **mind**. — Romans 12:2
- We have the **mind** of Christ. — 1 Corinthians 2:16
- We take captive every **thought** to make it obedient to Christ. — 2 Corinthians 10:5

*God desires to transform our souls. This transformation occurs as we recognize that God created us to live in an interactive relationship with the Trinity. Our task is not to transform ourselves, but to stay connected with God in as much of life as possible. As we pay attention to the nudges of the Holy Spirit, we become disciples of Christ. Our task is to do the connecting, while God does the perfecting." — Jan Johnson, Spiritual Disciplines Companion*

*Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. — Ephesians 4:32*

*Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. — Ephesians 5:1 – 2*

We reflect the character of God by:

1. Loving others sacrificially.(4:32 – 5:2)

*Though natural likings should normally be encouraged, it would be quite wrong to think that the way to become charitable is to sit trying to manufacture affectionate feelings. ... The rule for all of us is perfectly simple. Do not waste time bothering whether you "love" your neighbor; act as if you did. As soon as we do this we find one of the great secrets. When you are behaving as if you loved someone, you will presently come to love him. — C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity*

*God uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of Him everywhere. For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ. — 2 Corinthians 2:14 – 15*

*For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. — Ephesians 5:8 – 10*

2. Learning to honor Christ in every kind of situation. (5:8 – 10)

*Being godly does require discipline, but that discipline should never be construed as a rigorous technique. Following Christ requires effort, but it is the effort to stay close to Him and listen to His voice. Serious effort is needed if we are to focus on Him and become sensitive to His desires. As we draw close to Him — walking with Him, talking to Him, listening to His words, relying on Him, asking for His help — His character begins to rub off on us. Quietly and unobtrusively His influence softens our wills, making us thirsty for righteousness, inclining us to do His pleasure, restraining our passions, keeping us from evil, making us ashamed of evil, giving us the courage to choose what is good. In His quiet love He takes all that’s unworthy in us and gradually turns it into something worthwhile for Him. Change is not passive; we must hate evil and love righteousness. To love righteousness is to will it to grow. It’s a matter of inclination and desire. It’s not what we are, but what we want to be that matters.* — David Roper, *Every Day Is a New Shade of Blue*

*But everything exposed by the light becomes visible — and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. This is why it is said: “Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”* — Ephesians 5:13 – 14

3. Staying attentive to what’s actually going on in our lives. (5:13 – 14)

*... The hour has already come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.*

— Romans 13:11 – 12

*It’s the easiest thing in the world to make Christianity just one more identity waving at us for attention as we float along.*

— Alan Noble

*You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.* — Matthew 5:14 – 16

What’s your hill? (Where has God given you a chance to shine?)

What sort of beliefs, values, character, and commitments is your life reflecting?

What kind of “wake up call” is the Spirit impressing on you right now?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- We’ve been looking at this section of Scripture from a few different angles. Take a few minutes to read over the section again, Ephesians 4:32 – 5:14.
- Clearly, Paul is discussing our lifestyle as followers of Jesus. Why is it essential to keep seeking to live out the character of Jesus, not just believe the right things about Jesus?
- Who are we acting like when we seek to love everyone (5:1 – 2)?
- How is forgiveness so central to loving as Jesus loves?
- What are a few very practical steps you could take in your relationships right now to love the way God loves us?
- Why are the metaphors of “light” and “dark” so appropriate in defining our lifestyles?
- What are the characteristics of each as noted in verses 8 – 14?
- Why does Paul reference this saying about “waking up?” In what ways is living in the light of Christ an invitation to become spiritually awake?
- How can we position ourselves to see Christ’s character become ours?
- What is one specific way you’d like to apply what we’ve discussed in your life this week?