

## **THEREFORE DO NOT**

(Eph. 5:1-7)

### **Introduction:**

1. Our Lord took the ancient admonition of “do not do unto others what you find hateful” and turned it on its head (turning the world upside down in the process) when He asserted that His people were to do unto others what they would have done to/for them. This principle helps us to understand what so many in the world misunderstand about Christianity.
2. Christianity is not a negative faith. It is a positive one. Just as a person cannot run while they sit, neither can a person do good while doing evil. When the Bible commands us to refrain from certain actions/attitudes it is so that we can embrace more beneficial actions/attitudes.
3. Let us see this truth in Paul’s letter to the church in Ephesus. We will notice it is the heart of his letter; which begins with a reminder of all that God has done for us in Christ and ends with admonitions unto godly behavior and security.

### **Discussion:**

#### **I. That which came before.**

- A. All that God has done for us “in Christ” (chs. 1-3).
- B. The unity and new life we enjoy “in Christ” (ch. 4).

#### **II. The “do not” statements and the “whys”.**

- A. Do not engage in sin (5:1-5).
- B. Do not be deceived (5:6-10).
- C. Do not have fellowship with darkness (5:11-14).
- D. Do not be foolish (5:15-17).
- E. Do not be filled with wine = dissipation (5:18-21).

#### **III. That which followed.**

- A. Our new relationships “in Christ” (5:22-6:9).
- B. The provision God has made for us “in Christ” (6:10-24).

### **Conclusion:**

1. Let us take to heart the message of Paul’s letter to the Ephesians. Let us remember and always be mindful of all the things that God has done for us in Christ. Let us stand united and glorify Him with our redeemed and sanctified lives. Let us pursue the things unto godliness and shun the things that distract/inhibit our pursuit (1 Tim. 4:6, 7).
2. Remember, God has created us in Christ for good works according to His purposes (Eph. 2:10). The “Therefore do not” passages are not meant to punish or grieve us, but rather to liberate us to pursue His will and our good.
3. Invitation.

## **MORE ON “THEREFORE DO NOT”**

1. Illustration of following directions in order to get somewhere. The negative directions (ex. don’t turn left at Main Street) are only meant to save us trouble in arriving at where we desire to go (cp. Ezek. 18:30-32).
2. The Sermon on the mount boils down to detailed directions to heaven (overview, details, warnings, encouragement unto the destination).

3. Consider Cain and Abel in this light (Gen. 4; and car crash of 6:1-4ff).
4. Consider our study of Revelation in this light.
  - Keep going the way the Lord instructed.
  - But we are facing extreme opposition traveling this way, is there another way we could go?
  - No, keep following the directions remembering that all will be well as long as you keep following.
5. Consider Rom. 12 in this light.
6. We arrive at the inescapable conclusion that our faith is a positive faith that demands that we leave behind the dregs of sin in order to pursue the goal of Christ-likeness (deeds-deeds-deeds) unto everlasting life.

## **PRAYER LIST FOR WEEK STARTING JAN. 14TH**

### ***Those with long term issues***

Louise Williams, Cliff and Rachel Greenawalt and their family, Ruth Vaughn as she lives with diabetes and MS, and Harrison Waldron.

### ***Those with short term issues***

- ▶ Darrell McKee and Jeff Hofgren as they continue to recovery from cancer treatments.
- ▶ Frances Davis as she struggles with some health issues.
- ▶ John Pellin as he recovers from cracked ribs.
- ▶ Kyle Lingenfelter as he seeks to find the cause and a treatment for his right wrist/hand.
- ▶ Owen Hastings as he recovers from breaking his foot.
- ▶ Our members who are traveling.
- ▶ Our college students who are away from us in body, but not in spirit.
- ▶ Our leadership in the church; that they might be faithful, strong, and bold.
- ▶ Our community; that they may seek the Lord and we might be able to guide them into the truth.