

## **Are You Contagious?**

Ephesians 5:1-2

**March 11, 2018**

### BIG IDEA

God has given all of us influence over other people whether we know it or not. This may be kids, family, friends, neighbors, co-workers, brothers and sisters in Christ, or anyone else that God has placed into our lives. We are contagious. The question is: are we contagious for Christ or are we contagious for culture?

### THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURE

#### **Main Scripture: Ephesians 5:1-2**

*Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. <sup>2</sup> And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*

#### **Additional Scripture: Ephesians 4:17-5:5**

*Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. <sup>18</sup> They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. <sup>19</sup> They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. <sup>20</sup> But that is not the way you learned Christ!— <sup>21</sup> assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, <sup>22</sup> to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, <sup>23</sup> and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, <sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.*

*<sup>25</sup> Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. <sup>26</sup> Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, <sup>27</sup> and give no opportunity to the devil. <sup>28</sup> Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. <sup>29</sup> Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.*

**5** Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. <sup>2</sup>And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

<sup>3</sup>But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. <sup>4</sup>Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. <sup>5</sup>For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

## DISCUSSION & APPLICATION

### **1. Paul established that there are signs or symptoms of the Old-Self and the New-Self (Ephesians 4:17-5:5).**

- a. What are a few words that categorize the Old-Self?
  
- b. What are a few words that categorize the New-Self?

### **2. When we experience symptoms, we know we are contagious.**

- a. What are some of the symptoms from a common cold that you typically have?
  
- b. How do you think people perceive those symptoms?

### **3. We are to imitate God as dearly loved children.** (Watch the “Follow” video on Right Now Media.)

*Ephesians 5:1 – Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.*

- a. What are some examples of when you have seen a child imitating something?



- b. How are we to know how to imitate God?
- c. Looking back at the words you used to categorize the Old-Self and the New-Self, which words better describe Jesus?
- d. On a scale of 1-10, how well are you doing at imitating Jesus?

#### **4. Jesus was contagious.**

- a. Why do you think people were willing to risk something to get to Jesus?
- b. Besides being God and the messiah (which are extremely important), what was different about Jesus than any other rabbi or religious teacher?
- c. How can we imitate those things that make Jesus different?

#### **5. Walk as Jesus walked with the Cross being the ultimate example of love.**

*Ephesians 5:2 – And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.*

- a. What are some different forms of the word “love?”
- b. Why do you think agape love (self-sacrificing, others-oriented) is the kind of love Paul used to describe how we are to imitate Jesus?
- c. What would be a good name and slogan for an “agape love fragrance?”



## **6. You are either contagious for Christ or you are contagious for culture.**

- a. Based on your symptoms, would you say you are contagious for Christ (New-Self) or for culture (Old-Self)?
- b. Who is being influenced by your contagiousness?
- c. What is something you can do to be more contagious for Christ?

## **7. What if Ridgewood Church was contagious for Christ?**

- a. What would it be like to come to a church that is contagious for Christ?
- b. How could a contagious for Christ church impact the community?
- c. What can you do to help make Ridgewood contagious for Christ?

### PRAY

Lord, help us to imitate you, not the culture. Help us as individuals and as a church to become contagious for Christ.

### NEXT WEEK'S BIG IDEA

God is always working and driving your story. He works everything together for good.

