



MESSAGE

STUDY GUIDE

GROUP MATERIAL

SONGS

## Community Group Material:

*Bible Reading: Ephesians 5:1-7*

Ask one person to pray at the beginning of your meeting.

### Check-in

Check in with each other about how everyone is doing.

**Bible Reading:** Ephesians 5:1-7

### Sermon Summary:

I don't think any sane person would ever say that a parent of a small child was cruel and unloving because they put protective covers over electrical outlets, and safety gates to keep the child from falling down the stairs. In fact, those measures are sourced in their deep love for their child. Preventing hurt or damage is foremost in their minds. And let's be honest about the few parameters that parents install, they don't hinder the child's freedom to roam in all other areas of the house. How is it that when we are given certain parameters we cry "unfair," or, "I should be able to do whatever I want." Isn't that true freedom? But is it?

In Ephesians 5:1-7, lays out two incredible facts: 1) we are God's beloved children, and 2) God has set up a few parameters to keep us from damaging others and ourselves. As the God who knows all

because he deeply understands how all things work well, why would we think we know better than him? We do this quite often don't we. May we see that our relationship with God is sourced in a deep, deep love, and therefore he will let us know what will benefit us and what will not. Don't merely focus on a few parameters and feel God is a killjoy. Focus on the freedom in every other area of life and explore it.

**Discussion:**

1. How deeply does God love us all? Which verses tell us of this love?
2. Is it too much for God to ask us to imitate him? If not, how is it possible?
3. How would you define a walk in love? What did it look like for Christ? What might it look like for you this week?
4. Harold Hoehner says, "*...we as believers should walk in sacrificial love so that we may be a pleasing aroma not only to God but also to fellow believers.*" How have you experienced this from other believers?
5. As you look at the short list of parameters God set up for your safety and flourishing, why is that you find yourself bristling at them? If you have accepted God's way of salvation, why do you want to put limits on his work of salvation for your whole being?

**End with Prayer.**

- Pray for your walk in sacrificial love.
- Pray for any needs of people in your group.