

EPHESIANS - Ephesians 5:2

Message 79

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INTRO: We began in the previous message on Ephesians 5. We had a twofold command in verses 1-2. It is very difficult to see how verses 1-2 relate to the passage before it and the one after it. It is these kinds of decisions one needs to make in order to properly interpret a passage. I quoted from Lloyd Jones in the previous message. He said, "It would be interesting, from the mere standpoint of mechanics, to know whether this injunction belongs to the previous section or the Epistle or to the one that follows. Frankly, I cannot make up my mind, I really believe it belongs to both" (291).

I'm not sure that 'mere mechanics' is the right way of putting it but it is certainly interesting and in this case perplexing. It seems to me that it begins a new section by concluding the previous section with the first command, and beginning the new with the second command. If that is correct, the command, "To follow God as dear children" relates to the last words of the previous section. Verse 2 then begins the new.

Verse 2 then says:

2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

We are then still on the topic of agapee love. I am glad for it because it is a long time since I exercised my mind on this topic before I did the messages on grace, mercy, and love. And in these two verses, I had to do more study on this key topic.

2) Walk in Love

We come then to the second command. Ephesians 5:2 says:

2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

In verses 1-2 we have two commands, and both are positive. The first is to be followers of God as beloved

children, and the second is to walk in love. Now there is a question to be answered here. Is the command to walk in love connected to the command to be followers of God? That is, being followers of God is the reason for walking in love. Or is it a separate command.

With regard to the first command, to be followers of God, I see it as connected to what went on before. That is why it begins with the word "therefore." The second command, to walk in love, it seems to me begins another thought. The KJV gives these two commands together as one sentence. The NKJV makes a new sentence out of the second command. There is no conclusive evidence which way is correct. It is a decision the interpreter must make. I would not be dogmatic but I think the NKJV is correct in making a new sentence at the command to walk in love. So as I see it, the first command closes off the previous section, and the command to walk in love introduces what follows. So verse 2 says:

2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

We begin then with the content of the command. It is that the Christian is to walk in love. With today's view on God's love it is difficult, if not impossible, for us to not read that view into commands such as this one.

Today, our world is saturated with the teaching of unconditional love. In the end, this teaching leads to Rob Bell's view in his book, "Love Wins." And as I see it, both the unconditional part of that view and our understanding of what love is, are wrong. Let me read for you a rather extended section from some messages I did on this teaching of unconditional love. Here is what I said:

The first thing on order then, in considering this subject is defining our terms. What exactly is unconditional love? I would like to give you about 15 minutes to ponder and write down what you think it might mean but I cannot afford the time. There are many writers, song writers and New Age writers who speak of unconditional love. I typed 'unconditional love' into the internet browser and got almost 2 million hits. Do we have a big subject here or what. And you will say, "I didn't know so many Christians were onto this subject." I don't have time to check but I would be surprise if most of those who have written on unconditional love are non-Christians. This subject is a favorite of the world, the New Age, psychologists, Buddhists and more. If you don't believe that check out the internet or YouTube.

So let me give you a Wikipedia, definition of unconditional love: "**Unconditional love** is known as affection without any limitations. It can be also love without conditions. This term is sometimes associated with other terms such as true [altruism](#), complete love, or "mother's/father's love." Each area of expertise has a certain way of describing unconditional love, but most will agree that it is that type of love which has no bounds and is unchanging. It is a concept in ones mind comparable to true love, a term which is more frequently used to describe love between lovers. By contrast, unconditional love is frequently used to describe love between family members, comrades in arms and between others in highly committed relationships. An example of this is a parent's love for their child; no matter a test score, a life changing decision, an argument, or a strong belief, the amount of love that remains between this bond is seen as unchanging and

unconditional. In religion, unconditional love is thought to be part of [The Four Loves](#); affection, friendship, romance, and unconditional."

Let me give you another definition that kind of summarizes most of those I read in an article titled, "What unconditional love really is and how to give it". The writer says, "It is important to understand the definition of unconditional love to be able to give it, it is the kind of love that expects nothing back, places no limits, and does not set any ideals or conditions on what it should be. When you love in this way you do it without expectation of reciprocity and with no preconceived notions of how or if they will express love back to you. This is the kind of love you see exhibited by parents and children, brothers and sisters, true friends, and the best of romantic relationships."

Now that particular definition ran on and on with similar ideas. So let us consider unconditional love from that definition. Have you ever seen parents love their children like that? No expectations? Doesn't matter what the child does its all good? Have you ever seen brothers and sisters love like that?

How about in the best of romantic relationships. Does it work like that? Does man love unconditionally? Let's take a romantic relationship that has come to the wedding day. Everything went wonderfully well. The reception is over. And when a couple would normally leave for their honeymoon the new wife says, "That was a wonderful day honey. I did not realize it would be so tiring. Would you please take me back to my parents now? Tomorrow I will ask them if I can see you again." Now remember, unconditional love is the kind of love that expects nothing back. Oh no. So you get married but you expect

nothing back. Nothing. If it is unconditional it expects nothing back. It has no limits. So, because this wonderful husband expects nothing back, he will take her right back to her parents and come see her when she wants and take her back home when she wants.

And then one day she goes with him on the honeymoon, and they come back home. And, oh yes, by the way, now that she has finally moved in with her husband, she has now decided she does not want to do the cooking either, nor the wash. But that is OK. His love has no limits. It expects nothing, and since it has no limits, he is quite happy to live the rest of his life like this. This is the bliss of unconditional love.

But it was no problem for him to love her like that because there were no clothes to wash and there were no supplies to make meals with because he decided that if his wife loved him unconditionally she would not mind if he did not go to work, since he really disliked work. So he never went to work. And since she had no expectations, it was a wonderful married life they had. But it wasn't long, because their lives were both very short. No money, no food, just love. How do you like that? Here is an altruistic husband and wife. The husband loves the wife unconditionally. He expects nothing from her. The wife loves her husband, she expects no money; no groceries; and they live happily ever after.

Well, Warren Smith has opened our eyes to the vast subject of the NAM. He spoke a number of times of the book, "A Course In Miracles." This New Age book was written by Helen Shucman between 1965 and 72. It is as NA as anything you will ever get, and it is filled with the idea of unconditional love, though the phrase itself does not occur in it.

An article by Greg Mackie gives this title: "How would the Course define 'unconditional love?'" Then he gives a short answer, and here it is, "Unconditional love is the Love of God, the only real Love: a limitless, changeless Love that embraces everyone and does not have to be earned in any way. We are forever worthy of unconditional love, because God created us as beings who are both lovable and loving, and our true nature cannot be changed. We can restore our awareness of God's unconditional Love and of our own true, loving nature by meeting the conditions necessary for this restoration; in particular, by loving our brothers unconditionally through forgiveness." Now in all that remember that according to the NA teaching we are all God. That is the God he is speaking about.

When I was working my way through some of this, I noted that the word 'God' is written with a capital G. So I called Warren Smith to see what they mean in this quote by God and it being spelled with a capital G. So I told him I was doing some messages on the subject of unconditional love and I said, "Warren, I am doing some messages on unconditional love right now, and I need some information on a quote regarding the course in miracles." Well, I got nowhere. I couldn't write down what he all said. I said, "Woa, start all over again. Here's my question." And he took off again. But eventually I got what I wanted.

When I told him about my subject he said, "I got introduced to the subject of unconditional love through Gerald Jampolski, and that was his understanding of the teaching of 'The Course In Miracles.'" Warren Smith told me about Jerry Jampolski who was brushed on the head by an Indian guru with a peacock feather and it changed his life. You can go

on YouTube and check him out on unconditional love and unconditional forgiveness.

As I was talking with Warren he kept moving very fast and suddenly I said, "Woa. Don't say another thing, I'm going to lose it. Now repeat what you said so I can write it down." And this is what he said, "Unconditional love in its simplest form is the undoing of fear." Then he said, "That comes almost verbatim from the course in miracles! The title of these messages is, "The Subtle Undoing Of The Fear Of The Lord."

From "Unconditional Love": These loves; *erao*, *phileo*, and *stergo*, I believe, are all based at least to some extent on the emotions. As I see it, when we speak of love in English, or even in our German, we usually have in mind the loves spoken of as either *erao* or *phileo* in the Greek. But when the NT speaks of love in verses like John 3:16 and most others, it is *agappe* love. And *agappe* love is an entirely different kind of love.

In human relationships *agappee* love is the attraction or attachment of one person to another or others. But it is not based on emotions. It is grounded in a conviction or knowledge of truth which causes one to act on behalf of the welfare of another person. It does not have to do with feelings. So, *agappee* love can be commanded because it is based on truth or facts, not on ever changing emotions. This love is reasoned love. It will do right even when one doesn't feel like it. End quote.

Let me just say that such views are such a mixture of truth with error that it is very hard to discern the error. But if one holds to such a view of love, and one reads a passage like Ephesians 5:2 and it says, "walk in love," then one will come out with a wrong view of

what it means.

But we are most fortunate. Paul did not only tell us to walk in love, he gives us an illustration of what he meant by love. So our verse says:

2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

What we have in all the words after the word "as," is adverbial to the word *walk*. An adverb answers one of the following questions; how, where, when, why, and to what extent. Here, all of what follows the word 'as' tells us how to walk in love. This is indicated by the word 'as'. We are to walk in love as Christ has also loved us. We are to do this as Christ 'has loved' us, and 'given' Himself for us. God's love for man is all wrapped up in the Lord's one great act for man, and that is in dying for man.

Furthermore, no person ever experiences the love of God unless they repent of their sins and put their faith in Christ. Lost man exists entirely outside of the love of God. Though God loved man to such an extent that He sent His only Son to die for him, there is no relationship of love between the lost and God. Only when anyone repents of their sins and they put their trust in Jesus Christ, does one enter a relationship of love with God. It is only after one deals with sin and receives Jesus Christ that God and Jesus Christ enter this person to live there. It is to such blood bought and blood washed sinners that the instruction is given to walk in love.

So how then do we walk in love? Well, let me zero in on the particular area Paul has in mind here. When Paul says, "Walk in love," what he has in mind is love for people. So let me first explain what I think love for people means

and then describe what this love does. Agape love is a *mental attraction or attachment* to others based on the factual information one has which causes one to seek the legitimate welfare of that other person or persons which in turn brings about mutual fulfillment. It is based on facts, not feelings. Important to this definition is that love seeks the legitimate welfare of others.

Let me give you an example from the life of Christ. We go to Mark 10 and we begin in verse 17:

17 *Now as He was going out on the road, one came running, knelt before Him, and asked Him, "Good Teacher, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"*

What would we say to anyone who asked us that question? But look at how Jesus answered:

18 *So Jesus said to him, "Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.*

19 *"You know the commandments: 'Do not commit adultery,' 'Do not murder,' 'Do not steal,' 'Do not bear false witness,' 'Do not defraud,' 'Honor your father and your mother.'"*

20 *And he answered and said to Him, "Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth."*

The law had not been able to point out to this man that he was lost, but Jesus knew where he had failed. Notice now the next words:

21 *Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him,*

Jesus loved him. What does that mean? He knew this man's mind was blinded to the Gospel by the devil. He had a mental attachment to the things of this world and he sought his own welfare, not that of others. Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4:4 of such people:

4 *whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

To seek this man's welfare, Jesus would have to help him to see where he actually was. What Jesus would say would have to be based on facts, or truth. So verse 21 tells us how He loved him:

21 *Then Jesus, looking at him, loved him, and said to him, "One thing you lack: Go your way, sell whatever you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, take up the cross, and follow Me."*

What did love do? It told this man the truth! What was holding this man? His selfish attachment to his possessions. When Jesus loved him, He told him the truth. We go on:

22 *But he was sad at this word, and went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.*

23 *Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "How hard it is for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God!"*

24 *And the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, "Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to*

Agapee love acts on the basis of facts and truth, and seeks the welfare of others. Love is not that feeling we can hardly keep from associating with it. From the life of Christ we are shown what it means to walk in love.

Go to Luke 10 for another example:

25 *And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?"*

26 He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?"

27 So he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'"

28 And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live."

29 But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

All the law can be summed up in this one word, agapee love. The greatest commandment is to love God. The second is to love our fellow man. If we are to love our neighbor, this lawyer now wants to know how wide the range of people is that we are to love. So Jesus answers and we go on in verse 30:

30 Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.

31 "Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side.

32 "Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side.

33 "But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion.

34 "So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him.

35 *"On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.'*

36 *"So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?"*

37 *And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."*

Let me remind us once more that to love does not mean to like. You cannot like someone you have no relationship with, and you do not like someone you have a relationship with. No doubt all three of these men won't have had a relationship with this wounded man. Then note that the two religious men did not love this man. Did this wounded man have a legitimate need? Did they need any further facts than what they saw with their own eyes? They had all they needed to love this man with agapee love. This was their neighbor. They were in this man's presence.

The opportunity to express love comes at importune times. All I need do is look at myself. Love is basically unselfish, and our nature is basically selfish. So this love usually goes against our nature.

Love is probably better understood by what it does than what it means, and there we have an example of what it does. I ask, why did Jesus end up dying? Because He lived right. That is what love does. Go to Matthew 23. Jesus deals here with the scribes and Pharisees. We begin in verse 1:

1 *Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples,*

2 *saying: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat.*

3 *"Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe*

and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do.

4 *"For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.*

You see here that these scribes and Pharisees are very religious people. They have put years into their religiosity, but do they love? No! They tell people how to live, but they refuse to do it. That is a basic failure in love.

As we have said, man is basically selfish and love is unselfish. Selfishness seeks the welfare of self; love seeks the welfare of others. So we go on in verse 5:

5 *"But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments.*

6 *"They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues,*

7 *"greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.'*

8 *"But you, do not be called 'Rabbi'; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren.*

9 *"Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven.*

10 *"And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ.*

11 *"But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant.*

12 *"And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.*

You can read this whole chapter and see how selfish these scribes and Pharisees were. Seven times Jesus called them hypocrites. I ask you, is

that loving? Let me ask you: What was the legitimate need of these scribes and Pharisees? It was for them to recognize that they were lost in selfishness and hypocrisy. And what did Jesus do? Just what He did to the lawyer and the rich young ruler. He told them the truth about their condition so they might truly get right.

Now I ask you, why did Jesus die? Because He loved the world and sought its welfare, and He did it based on the facts. That is what caused His death. The world hates the truth (John 3:16-21). What caused man to kill Christ was hate for the truth; it was envy; it was doing what they did by lying and self-seeking. Jesus exposed all that, and therefore He died. So Scripture tells us that all who will live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. That is the response of the world to truth and righteousness.

But I want to give us yet one more biblical demonstration of how love acts. We go to 1 Corinthians 13, the love chapter of the Bible. Here we have 13 verses and nine times it speaks of our word, agapee. Verses 1-3 speak of love negatively. Verse 1:

1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.

2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.

3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

How could one bestow all one's goods to feed the poor, and give one's body to be burned, but not have love? Well, ask Ananias and Saphira.

Verses 4-7 now speak of love positively. Here we get a demonstration of love in action. Here is how one will act if he bases his actions on facts and acts on behalf of the welfare of others. Verse 4:

4 Love suffers long (if one's concern is for the welfare of another) and is kind; (if one is concerned for the welfare of the other) love does not envy; (if one's concern is for the welfare of the other) love does not parade itself, (if one's concern is for the welfare of another) is not puffed up; (if one's concern is for the other)

You see, if one's attachment to others seeks their welfare and it is grounded in truth, love will suffer long. It will be kind, because it is concerned for the other. It will not parade itself, because it does not have selfish ambitions in view. It will not be puffed up, or proud because it does not have self in mind.

Furthermore, verse 5, love:

5 *does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil;*

6 *does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth;*

If one has the welfare of others in view one could not rejoice in iniquity. And if one's love is grounded in truth, it will most certainly rejoice in truth. And last, verse 7, love:

7 *bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.*

Now verse 7 is more difficult, but it in no wise contradicts what preceded it and because it would take much time to explain this verse we'll move on.

So look now at our text. I'll read from verse 1:

1 Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.

I see that as pointing back to the previous words about forgiving the way God forgives. Then verse 2 I believe, points forward and it says:

2 And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

We have seen then that love seeks the welfare of others. It gives. It is unselfish. Now we note that when Christ loved us in that ultimate act, He gave Himself for us. There is an exchange. We deserved death and He took our place.

When our text now speaks of Christ giving Himself for us as an offering and a sacrifice, this takes us back to the OT. Turn to Genesis 4. Before Christ came and offered Himself in our place, God gave to mankind a picture of what He would yet do. In the Garden of Eden, after the first sin by man, death began. God made coats of skin for Adam and Eve. If they were to be brought back into a relationship with God, they would have to get rid of their own clothes that they had made, and put on the clothes God had made for them. This clothing cost shed blood. Some animal, a sheep no doubt, died to cover them. There is the first sacrifice.

And then in chapter 4:3-5 we read this:

3 And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD.

4 Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering,

5 *but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.*

Why did God not respect Cain's offering? It did not cost blood. The blood always looked forward to the death of Christ. And so throughout the OT until Christ died, sacrifices that cost blood were made, and in them we have the promise of a coming Messiah who would offer Himself for the sin of the world.

But He was not only an offering, He was a sacrifice. The OT word for a sacrifice is *zabah*. It comes from the word, *zabah*, meaning to kill. The sacrifice was an animal killed in the place of the sinner. Jesus Christ came to be killed in the place of the sinner.

Why did He do that? Because of His love. Man had a legitimate need. It was salvation from sin and the clutches of Satan and Christ paid the ultimate price for man's welfare.

Well, we have one more matter to consider in this verse. Jesus Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice to God, "for a sweet smelling aroma." Now what could that mean? Well, once more we must go to the OT to learn what this means. It is not possible to rightly understand the Lord Jesus Christ without some understanding of the OT.

Now our verse says Jesus offered Himself to God as a sacrifice as a sweet smelling aroma. If you would put in your Bible search program the phrase, 'sweet aroma' it would come up 41 times. And if you would study those, there are grain offerings, drink offerings and animal offerings that are a sweet smelling sacrifice to God. But I think what we have in view in our passage is the burnt offering.

Now what was outstanding about the burnt sacrifice is that in other animal sacrifices, the meat was kept

for the priests. But in this sacrifice the whole animal was sacrificed to God. And when Christ offered Himself up to God as a sacrifice, it was a complete sacrifice.

Let me read to you from the Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary when it speaks of the burnt sacrifice. It says:

"The distinguishing mark of this offering was that it was wholly consumed on the altar: while in other animal sacrifices only the fat portions were burned. The purpose of the offering was propitiation; but with this idea was united another, the entire consecration of the worshiper to Jehovah. Because of the regularity and frequency with which it was offered, it was called the 'continual' burnt offering (Exod. 29:42); and because no part was left for human consumption, it was also called the 'whole burnt offering' (Ps. 51:19). This was the normal sacrifice of the Israelite in proper covenant relationship with God, and was the only sacrifice regularly appointed for the sanctuary service. It was offered every day, in the morning and in the evening." end quote.

I want to point out in particular that it was sacrificed every day, morning and evening. Every day, twice a day, it spoke prophetically of the coming Messiah! And second, that it was for the purpose of propitiation.

Here is why that is important. We go to Romans 3. We begin in verse 21:

21 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;

23 *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*
24 *being justified freely by His grace through the redemption*
that is in Christ Jesus,
25 *whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through*
faith, to demonstrate His righteousness,
because in His forbearance God had passed
over the sins that were previously
committed,
26 *to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that*
He might be just and the justifier of the
one who has faith in Jesus.

God set Jesus forth as a propitiation. What is that? It is a satisfaction. Jesus satisfied God's wrath against the sinner. This wrath is only satisfied, or appeased, when a sinner repents before God and puts his or her faith in Christ.

We too can become a sweet aroma to God. We go to Philippians 4, verse 18. The Philippians had sent things Paul would need while he was in prison. It was missionary giving. And Paul says:

18 *Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received*
from Epaphroditus the things sent from you,
a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable
sacrifice, well pleasing to God.

The things the Philippians had given were an acceptable sacrifice to God. When we truly give of ourselves, as love does, it is well pleasing to God and therefore it is to God a sweet-smelling sacrifice.

There is another way in which we can become a sweet smelling aroma. We go to 2 Corinthians 2 and verse 16. Here Paul says:

14 *Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in*
Christ, and through us diffuses the

fragrance of His knowledge in every place.

The aroma of life is a sweet smell. And this sweet smell is the fragrance of the knowledge of Christ. Verse 15:

15 For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing.

The believer who lives and speaks out for Christ is the fragrance of Christ to the saved and to those who are perishing. It is a breath of life to the perishing who wish to be saved. Now note verse 16:

16 To the one we are the aroma of death leading to death, and to the other the aroma of life leading to life. And who is sufficient for these things?

When we walk in love, as we are commanded in our text, we become the fragrance of Christ. It is a sweet smell to those who have escaped out of the muck and mire of sin, and to those who desire to get out of it. But to those who wish to live in sin, it is a stench in their nostrils. They hate truth. They hate God's Word. They cannot stand this aroma because it condemns them in their sin.

CONCL: So we conclude. Our text has instructed us to walk in love as Christ loved us. Love, gives. It sacrifices. When Christ spoke to the lawyer, the rich young ruler and the scribes and Pharisees, He sacrificed of Himself. We want to be liked. When someone asks what they need to do to be saved, love points out sin and that it must be dealt with. That can do away with any liking. One might become the aroma of death right there.

But there are those who respond positively to truth, and they will get saved. To them the believer has become the aroma of life. Love gives. Love is sacrificial. Love seeks the welfare of others, whether by truth that hurts or truth that is received. Love does right. Love lives right. Love rejoices in the truth!

Love is the opposite of living in fornication and uncleanness and covetousness.

So, Paul instructs the believer to walk in love!