Ephesians Lesson 5
Chapter Five: Being Bold for Christ

Background for Shepherds: Chapter 5 continues Paul’s discussion of what the Christian life should look like. The focus of this chapter will tackle some significant aspects of a teen’s life. We will discuss peer relationships and family dynamics. The nature of this lesson should really make the teen think. It may even touch on some sensitive issues. The application of this chapter is to encourage the teen to take a bold stand for Christ that promotes godliness both among their friends and in their home.

Ice Breaker/Opener:
Do you consider yourself to be a bold person? Boldness is a character trait we would all like to have. Boldness shows strength, confidence, and a willingness to make right choices under any circumstance. Can you think of anyone you know who is bold? Boldness doesn’t just happen automatically. It is a choice someone has to make one day at a time. But the neat thing about boldness is that anyone can be bold! As we live our lives for Christ, there will be countless times we will need to be bold (showing strength and confidence in our faith, making choices that honor Him). This is what separates those who are serious about their walk with God from those who are just average Christians. Let’s see how this chapter shows us how we can be bold about our faith.

Work Up: 15 minutes

1. Read Ephesians 5:1-2
   What two things are we told to do in these verses? We are told to be imitators of God and to live a life of love (as Christ gave us the example).
   We are told to imitate God! WOW! He is the Almighty God of the Heavens and Earth, The Creator of the Universe, the One who is called “Holy, Holy, Holy” and we are told to follow His example! This chapter explains several ways we can accomplish this.

2. Read 5:3-7
   Looking at these verses, what things are we told do not imitate God? Sexual immorality, greed, obscenity, foolish talk, improper jokes, etc.
   What does verse 7 say about the relationship we should have with people who do such things? Don’t be partners with them. In other words, when you see someone doing something wrong, don’t join them in doing what they are doing!
   Are you beginning to see the boldness that God desires from us? He tells us that in order to imitate Him, we need to be willing to take a stand when people around us are doing things that do not please the Lord. That is not easy, especially when we may call those people “friends.”
3. **5:8-14.**

We see in these verses three specific reasons why being bold for Christ can be a challenge:

- **Read verses 8-9:** We are to be “children of light” as we live in a world full of spiritual darkness. Boldness requires being different! It is usually easier to “fit into” a crowd, as opposed to taking a stand for something. Why do you think that is? It’s always easiest to go with the crowd and do what everyone else is doing. Taking a stand isn’t always popular. Though it may not always be easy to take a stand for what is right, God calls us to do it regardless of the results! That is what makes us different! And you may be surprised at how many people look up to you for it!

- **Read verse 10:** Our goal should be to do “what pleases the Lord”, not what pleases the people around us. It is easy to do what pleases our friends, but first and foremost we must please the Lord with what we do. Even if what we are doing isn’t popular or easy, our goal must be to please the Lord! Why should pleasing the Lord be more important to us than pleasing people? He is the One who brought us into existence. He even sent His Son to die for us. We should be concerned with what He thinks of our actions far more than what anyone else thinks.

- **Read verses 11-14:** Living for God at times may require us to expose sin our friend’s lives. We don’t like to tell our friends what they are doing is wrong, but at times, if we truly care about them, we will (for their benefit!). Can you think of any reasons why pointing out sin in a friend’s life can be a good thing? It can prevent them from doing something harmful. It shows you care about them and want what’s best for them. (Check out James 5:20 – when done with care and compassion, helping a friend in sin can save them from a lot of heartache and trouble).

Each of these actions takes boldness! Being willing to live a life than is different from the world, living to please God (not people), and being willing to encourage our friends toward godliness. This is what living like Christ is all about! This is what it means to imitate God!

4. **Verses 5:15-21** tell us that taking opportunities to be bold for Christ is very wise. These verses also give us encouragement by telling us how God helps us to be bold. **Verse 18 (read)** says that God has given us the Holy Spirit to assist us in living for Him (Rom. 5:5; Gal. 5:16). When we decide to do what God asks of us, the Holy Spirit gives us strength to see it through!

5. **5:22-33 (read 5:22-23, 25, 31-33 for the highlights)** OPTIONAL. MAY OMIT FOR TIME.

These verses focus on the relationship of a husband and wife. Marriage may not be something you think about right now (though some of you may daydream about being married on day 😉). But these verses show us that a husband and wife have specific roles and important responsibilities given by God. The husband is to love his wife as he leads his family and the wife is to submit to and encourages her husband. When this is done, it leads to the great unity and harmony God intends each couple to enjoy, and it displays the same love Christ has for the church.

Here is a thought as we wrap up our lesson for the day. Have you ever considered the fact that you can help your parents in their responsibilities? The attitude and actions you display at home can go a long way in encouraging your parents to be the people God calls them to be. Life as a teenager can be stressful, but if you take your frustrations out on your parents by being
disrespectful and disobedient, you are failing to show your parents the honor God calls you to show them. We can be bold for Christ in front of our friends and classmates, but if we fail to be Christ-like in our homes, then we are failing to imitate God as He desires. Can you think of some ways you can be a support and encouragement to your parents? Show them respect, help out around the house with a good attitude, quit fighting with your brothers/sisters, etc.

Additional talking points if time permits:
- What additional responsibilities do your parents face each day?
- What responsibilities do you have each day?
- How can you having a bad attitude affect your parents?
- How can you having a good attitude encourage your parents?

Summary: No matter if you are hanging out with friends or hanging out with family, God calls you to be bold by living a Christ-like life and encouraging other to do the same.

Challenge: If you want to bold for Christ, it will require an intentional effort on your part. Start each day determined to live for Christ and look for opportunities to do so. Think of something you can do today to show people you are serious about your faith!

Prayer Time: Ask for prayer requests. Close in prayer asking God to give your students the desire to live boldly for Christ around their peer and at home.

LOCKER CARD: Ephesians 5:1a “Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us.”