

## THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

### EPHESIANS 5:7-14, *WALKING IN LIGHT*

- A. Paul exhorted Christians not to act like unbelievers because Christians have the light of Christ (7-8a)
1. Don't behave like unbelievers (7), ***Therefore do not become partners with them;***
    - a. *Therefore*
      - 1) Paul uses this conjunction to start each new section. Note Ephesians 4:1, 17; 5:1, 7, 15.
      - 2) He is not introducing a conclusion but reasons why Christians should walk in the light.
      - 3) He is contrasting the objects of God's love (verse 2) to the objects of God's wrath (verse 6).
    - b. Christians are not to imitate the deeds of unbelievers.
      - 1) *partners*
        - a) It means *to cast one's lot with someone.*
        - b) Literally, it means *to participate in the same activities.*
      - 2) *Them* looks to verse 6 which identifies *them* as *sons of disobedience*, or unbelievers.
  2. The reason is because you are believers (8a), ***for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.***
    - a. *for*
      - 1) Paul gives an additional reason for not getting involved in the evil conduct of immoral people.
      - 2) John Stott, *He bases it not now on the future (the coming judgment of God) but on the past and the present (the difference between what his readers once were and now are).*
    - a. Paul reminded the Ephesian Christians of their former state before conversion.
      - 1) Ephesians 2:1-2, *And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience-*
      - 2) John 3:19-20, *And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.*
    - b. Also, Paul reminded them of who they are in Christ.
      - 1) 1 Thessalonians 5:4-5, *But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief. For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness.*
      - 2) John 8:12, *Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*
    - c. What does it mean to be light?
      - 1) It is living a life that doesn't hide anything, Hebrews 4:13, *And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.*
      - 2) It is revealing God's light in our daily lives, Matthew 5:14-16, *You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*
      - 3) It is exposing the darkness, Ephesians 5:13, *But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible,*
      - 4) Light is the Christian's new nature, John Stott, *Their lives and not just their environment' had been changed from darkness to light. And this radical transformation had taken place in the Lord, by virtue of their union with him who claimed to be the light of the world.*
- B. Christians are to walk as children of light characterized by righteous deeds that please God (8b-10)
1. They are commanded to live like saved people (8b), ***Walk as children of light***
    - a. Paul's command implies that a Christian might choose not to walk as a child of light.
      - 1) Romans 13:12, *The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light.*
      - 2) A choice to walk in darkness goes against the believer's new nature. Paul was commanding them to live in the way that conformed to their new identity.
    - b. Paul was very clear in what it meant to not walk as children of light, Romans 13:13, *Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy.*

- c. Warren Wiersbe, *That Easter morning, when Christ arose from the dead, was the dawning of a new day for the world. Christians are not sleeping in sin and death. We have been raised from the dead through faith in Him. The darkness of the graveyard is past, and we are now walking in the light of salvation. Salvation is the beginning of a new day, and we ought to live as those who belong to the light, not to the darkness.*
2. Saved people will exhibit the fruit of being light which is righteous behavior (9), ***(for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true)***,
- a. The *fruit of light* characterizes the nature of God in which believers now walk, Galatians 5:22, *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*
- b. Three such qualities are mentioned by Paul that exhibit light.
- 1) *good*
    - a) It is tied to positive moral qualities.
    - b) It means *uprightness of heart and life.*
  - 2) *right*
    - a) It is the act of doing what God requires.
    - b) Matthew 5:10, *Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
  - 3) *true*
    - a) It means *uprightness in thought and deed.*
    - b) It is facts that respond to the reality that God is true.
    - c) Philippians 4:8, *Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.*
- c. John Stott, *The light metaphor speaks vividly of Christian openness and transparency, of living joyfully in the presence of Christ, with nothing to hide or fear.*
3. Christians are to seek God's will in order to do it and thereby please Him (10), ***and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.***
- a. *try to discern*
- 1) It means *to examine, put to the test.*
  - 2) It is to approve as genuine.
  - 3) 1 Thessalonians 5:21, *but test everything; hold fast what is good.*
- b. *pleasing to the Lord*
- 1) It means *what is acceptable to God.*
  - 2) Romans 12:2, *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.*
- c. The reason to discern what pleases God is so we will do it.
- 1) James 1:22, *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*
  - 2) John 13:17, *If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.*
- C. Christians are not to participate in the evil deeds of unbelievers (11-14)
1. They are not to do what is improper but expose what is improper by proper behavior (11), ***Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.***
- a. Christians are not to be participate with unbelievers in their evil deeds.
- 1) Revelation 18:4, *Then I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you take part in her sins, lest you share in her plagues;*
  - 2) The works of darkness are unfruitful because they do not bear righteousness.
    - a) John 3:19, *And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil.*
    - b) H. D. M. Spence, *The works of darkness are unfruitful: they produce no goodness, give rise to no satisfaction, to no moral results that are "a joy for ever;" or, if fruit they have, it is shame, remorse, despair.*

- b. Christians are to expose improper behavior by doing what is right.
  - 1) Thomas Constable, *It is the deeds that Christians must shun, not the people who do them. We reprove these deeds as we bring the light next to them. This exposes them for what they are.*
  - 2) Also, Paul may be referring to exposing sins of church members since the church is responsible to hold members responsible for their behavior.
    - a) 1 Corinthians 5:12-13, *For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you."*
    - b) Galatians 6:1, *Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.*
  
- 2. Such improper behavior is too shameful to talk about (12), ***For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.***
  - a. Thomas Constable, *Believers should not even discuss the secret dark deeds of unbelievers in normal conversation. Discussing these things will just draw attention to them and may make them attractive to the carnal minded.*
  - b. Don't participate in other's dark deeds by replaying them with others.
    - 1) Romans 16:19, *For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil.*
    - 2) Warren Wiersbe, *It is not necessary for the believer to perform an autopsy on a rotting corpse to expose its rottenness.*
  
- 3. Proper behavior is like light that exposes darkness (13-14a), ***But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light.***
  - a. Light exposes darkness.
    - 1) John 3:20, *For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed.*
    - 2) John Stott, *Darkness hides the ugly realities of evil; the light makes them visible. Then evil is seen for what it is without any possibility of concealment or subterfuge.*
  - b. That which becomes visible is light.
    - 1) Light not only condemns but convicts which can bring change.
    - 2) Max Anders, *Light turns darkness into light. This is the church's mission. Whether the people in darkness are church members or society members, the goal is to transform them completely from darkness to light.*
    - 3) William Barclay, *In our own time, we know that many diseases have been conquered simply by letting the sunlight in. The light of Christ is like that. We must never think of the light of Christ as only condemnatory; it is a healing thing too.*
  
- 4. Those who live in darkness should awake to the light of Christ (14b), ***Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."***
  - a. The source of Paul's quote was probably from an early Christian poem or hymn.
    - 1) Isaiah 60:1, *Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.*
    - 2) William Barclay, *...when we read these lines, we are reading a fragment of one of the first hymns the Christian Church ever sang.*
  - b. It is a call to live who we are in Christ.
    - 1) Thomas Constable, *...it is important that believers wake up and rise from the deadness of their former unsaved lifestyles. If they do, Christ will shine on them in blessing as the sun warms what its rays touch.*
    - 2) John Stott, *Here our former condition in Adam is graphically described in terms of sleep, death and darkness, from all of which Christ rescues us. Conversion is nothing less than awaking out of sleep, rising from death and being brought out of darkness into the light of Christ.*
    - 3) Warren Wiersbe, *We have been raised from the dead through faith in Him. The darkness of the graveyard is past, and we are now walking in the light of salvation. Salvation is the beginning of a new day, and we ought to live as those who belong to the light, not to the darkness.*

<b>CONCLUSION</b>
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- A. Walk in the light of Christ.
- B. Do not stumble in the darkness of the world.
- C. Live to the glory of God.