

Metro Calvary Women's Bible Study
Ephesians 5:8-21

Lesson 12

You were once darkness... (Ephesians 5:18). Notice this does not say we "once walked **in**" darkness (which is true). It says that we **were** darkness. What an awesome reminder of our old man/condition! The verse concludes: *now you are light in the Lord*. The verses that follow reveal how *light* behaves. May we behave more and more like the *light* God has created us to be.

DAY ONE: Read Ephesians 5:8-21

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet and another Bible translation or paraphrase.
2. Ephesians 5:8-21 has been divided into two sections. List below the subject(s) covered in each section.

Verses 8-14

Verses 15-21

OPTIONAL: From the list below record any new key words and their symbols on your chart.

New to this lesson: *darkness, light, walk, and unwise*

Term of conclusion: *therefore*

Contrast: *but*

OPTIONAL: Now, using the symbols you have chosen, mark each of the key words every time they are used in Ephesians 5:8-21. Remember, as you mark the words *God* and *Jesus*, to mark any personal pronouns that refer to Them. You do not need to mark every word that refers Them – only those that you feel are significant.

3. In Ephesians 5:8-21, Paul contrasts the works of *darkness* and the works of *light*. The contrasting term *but* is used six times in this section to reveal the contrasts. Scan the verses containing this key word and fill in the blanks below to reveal the contrasts. **Verse 8**, *For you were once _____, but _____ you are _____ in the _____.* **11** *Have no _____ with the _____ works of _____, but rather _____ them.* **12 & 13** *For it is _____ even to _____ of those things which are _____ by them in _____.* **But** *all things that are _____ are made _____ by the _____...* **15** *See then that you _____, not as _____ but as wise,* **17** *Therefore do not be _____, but _____ what the _____ of the _____ is.* **18** *And do not be _____ with _____ ...; but be _____ with the _____,*

- a. Which contrasts interests you the most? Why?

DAYS TWO & THREE: Read Ephesians 5:8-14

1. In Ephesians 5:8a, Paul uses two words to describe our lives before Christ and after we became believers. What are they?

Always stop and ask, "What is the **for** there for? Paul does not want them to dwell on their past, but he does want them to remember what the darkness was like and how great their deliverance has been from darkness to His marvelous light.

2. Look at the passages below and underline what you learn about darkness & light.

John 3:19-21 ¹⁹And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

John 8:12 ¹²Then Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "I am the light of the world. He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

Acts 26:16 ¹⁸to open their eyes, *in order* to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in Me.'

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 ³But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, ⁴whose 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."

1 John 1:7 ⁷But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

1 John 2:9-11 "He who says he is in the light, and hates his brother, is in darkness until now. He who loves his brother abides in the light, and there is no cause for stumbling in him. But he who hates his brother is in darkness and walks in darkness, and does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded his eyes."

Darkness describes the character of the life of the unsaved as; **void of truth and virtue in intellectual and moral matters**. It's all the things Paul has already described about the Gentiles in their unconverted state, and all the things he has described which characterized the **old man**. All of those past behaviors were the only life they knew.

3. *Children of the light* can sound New Age, or if you were a teenager in the 70's, it can sound like a Hippie slogan. Paul qualifies it here so no one is confused about this statement. What does Paul add in Ephesians 5:8b?

Being *children of light in the Lord* implies that this change comes from **God's power** in the new birth. Just as He created light out of the darkness, so now He has changed us from being **darkness** itself into being **light in the Lord**.

4. In 1 John 1:6-8 John says, “**If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.** ⁷But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” To understand this passage, we must see that John is writing against the false claims of the false teachers. Their first claim was, “**We have fellowship with God**” (1Jn 1:6), but John says that their lives did not back up their claim. They walked in darkness, they lied, and they did not practice the truth. In Ephesians 5:8b, Paul gives us a simple yet direct exhortation if we claim to be *children of the light in the Lord*. What is the exhortation?

a. In what ways was your life *dark* before knowing Jesus?

b. In contrast to the above question, what ways are you walking as a *child of the light in the Lord*?

5. In contrast to those who walk in spiritual darkness, Paul uses the **present imperative to command** believers to continually walk in the light, into which they now have been transferred. Paul gives us a great reason why Christians should not walk in the darkness from 2 Corinthians 6:14. What does this passage reveal?

2 Corinthians 6:14 “¹⁴Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness?”

6. Read Ephesians 5:9 and write it out using a different translation.

Fruit (2590)(**karpos**) is used in its literal sense to refer to fruit, produce or offspring, which describes that which is produced by the inherent energy of a living organism. **Karpos** refers to that which originates or comes from something producing an effect or result (benefit, advantage, profit, utility).

7. What do the following passages reveal about *fruit*?

Matthew 3:8 “⁸Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance.”

Matthew 7:15-21 “¹⁵“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor *can* a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰Therefore by their fruits you will know them.”

Galatians 5:22-23 “²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control.”

a. These attributes are not a *fruit* of effort and hard work but are the natural by product of our lives lived in the Spirit. How have you personally discovered this truth?

b. How does John 15:4-5 add to this thought?

8. In the context of what we have been studying in Ephesians; **goodness, righteousness, and truth**, stand in stark contrast to the life of the unbeliever Paul mentions in Ephesians 4:22 & 5:6 about those who are deceived. Someone said that **goodness, righteousness and truth** are categories into which you put everything that you **do, say or think**. Using your dictionary or your Concordance, write out the definitions of the words that describe the *fruits of the spirit*.

Goodness-

The word **agathosune** describes that which is always spiritually edifying and beneficial to everybody you come in contact with. How do you know that someone has the garment of light on? Just get around him, and you will find out. You will walk away either convicted or uplifted because everything he does is spiritually beneficial to anyone who comes in contact with him.

Do you want to raise your family in a manner pleasing to the Lord? Put on sisters that garment of goodness. It will reach out and touch your children, husband, friends, & neighbors like you wouldn't believe. It will send a message.

Righteousness-

The **righteousness of God** is all that God is, all that He commands, all that He demands, all that He approves and all that He provides (through the gospel of Jesus Christ, the perfectly Righteous One.) Sisters, are you living under the rights of God over you? Are you submitted to His demands, to what He approves?

Truth-

Truth means all honesty, reliability and integrity. There is something about being around someone who has the garment of truth on. You can trust them. They are reliable. They are honest. They are filled with integrity. There is an incredible mark you make on the world when you live a life that bears the **fruit of the light**.

9. Those that walk in the light produce the type of fruit listed in verse 9. What does Paul add in verse 10?

a. Look up the words listed below in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

Finding out (Proving)-

Dokimazo was used in classic Greek to describe the examining of precious metals (especially gold or silver coins), usually by fire, to prove the whether they were authentic and whether they measured up to the stated worth. That which endures the test was called **dokimos** and that which fails is called **adokimos**.

Acceptable-

10. Paul is instructing the Gentile saints to put every thought, word, and action to the test. As Christians we need to do the same that we might know if it is acceptable or pleasing to the Lord. "What does the Lord think about this?" "How does it appear in His presence?" **Every area of our life comes under the searchlight**—our conversation, standard of living, clothes, books, business, pleasures, entertainments, furniture, friendships, vacations, cars, and sports, etc. What do you learn from the below passages that speak about *pleasing to the Lord*.

Romans 12:1-2 ¹“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is your reasonable service.* ²And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

2 Corinthians 5:9-10 ⁹“Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. ¹⁰For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things *done* in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

1 Thessalonians 5:21 ²¹“Test all things; hold fast what is good.”

1 Corinthians 3:12-15 ¹²Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, ¹³each one’s work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one’s work, of what sort it is. ¹⁴If anyone’s work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵If anyone’s work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.”

Hebrews 13:20 ²⁰Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, ²¹make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.”

a. Which of these had the most impact upon your heart? Explain.

PERSONAL: Use the questions below to see whether something is pleasing to the Lord. Start making your list & line it up next to these questions:

(1). Will it make others stumble? (2) Will I be ashamed if Jesus should return? (3) Is it a fruitful use of my time or resources? (4) Is it bringing God glory or is it casting attention onto me?

PERSONAL: Are there things you have to rethink or remove from your life? Don’t ignore the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

Psalm 95:7-8 “Today, if you will hear His voice: “Do not harden your hearts.”

11. As children of the light pleasing the Lord, we should be walking in the fruit of the Spirit. Ephesians 5:11 reminds us that darkness produces fruit of its own. How is this fruit described from this passage?

a. In verse 11 we see Paul giving a firm command to the believers to *have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness.* *Having no fellowship with* implies a separation. What do the following passages reveal to us separating ourselves from evil?

Psalm 1:1-2 ¹“Blessed is the man Who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, Nor

stands in the path of sinners, Nor sits in the seat of the scornful. "But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night."

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 ¹⁴"Do not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. For what fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? And what communion has light with darkness? ¹⁵And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? ¹⁶And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: "I will dwell in them And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be My people." ¹⁷Therefore "Come out from among them *And be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, And I will receive you.*" ¹⁸ "I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty."

b. List some synonyms for the word *unfruitful*.

12. We are not only to *have no fellowship* with these *unfruitful works*, what are we to do?

13. The word *expose* might also be translated as *reprove* or *rebuke* or even *tell a fault*. Why do you think Paul is instructing us to expose these dark works? See Galatians 5:7-9.

Galatians 5:7-9

14. Ephesians 5:12 says, ¹²"For it is shameful (*disgraceful*) even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret." To *speak of* these works of darkness without *exposing* them for what they are or *reproving* them, would be wrong. Read verse 13. What does the *light* do?

a. What do the following verses teach us about exposing and reprovng darkness?

John 3:20-21 ²⁰For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

John 12:35-36 ³⁵Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. ³⁶While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them."

1 Corinthians 4:5 ⁵Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.

b. How does *light* affect *darkness*?

15. Ephesians 5:13 simply means that when Christians exercise their ministry as light, others are brought to the light. Unbelievers are transformed into children of light through the reprovng ministry of light. Of course it is not a rule without exceptions. Not everyone who is exposed to the light

becomes a Christian. How do we see this principle that light has a way of reproducing itself from 1 Peter 3:1?

16. Ephesians 5:14 begins with the term of conclusion *therefore*. Because Paul has established the importance of *light*, what does he tell us to do?

17. **Awake** (1453)(**egeiro**) means to waken, rouse from sleep, from sitting or lying, from disease, from death; from inactivity. Sleep here is used figuratively to refer to those who are spiritually asleep, feeling secure and unconcerned in sin, indolent and careless in the performance of duty. The **aurist imperative** is a command calling for them to do this **now**. Verse 14 is a text taken from the Old Testament, but Paul is applying it to the believers. How are you called to be watchful from the following passage?

1 Thessalonians 5:4-7 ⁴But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. ⁵You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness. ⁶Therefore let us not sleep, as others *do*, but let us watch and be sober. ⁷For those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who get drunk are drunk at night.

a. Although all believers are *children of the light*, we have our responsibility to walk in the *light* God has provided. Why don't some Christians walk in the *light*?

DAY FOUR: Read Ephesians 5:15-18

1. Read Ephesians 5:15. This verse encourages us to walk *as wise*. Why?

a. From verse 15, Paul exhorts us to walk *circumspectly*. Look up the word *circumspectly* in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

Circumspectly-

b. How do you see the importance of walking wisely and circumspectly from the Parable of the 10 Virgins in Matthew 25:2-8?

Matthew 25:2-8 ²Now five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish. ³Those who *were* foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, ⁴but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. ⁵But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. ⁶And at midnight a cry was *heard*: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' ⁷Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. ⁸And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us *some* of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' ⁹But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' ¹⁰And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut."

2. Sisters, we are exhorted to walk accurately & diligently. What does verse 16 tell us to do?

a. Why should we redeem the time?

b. What does the word *redeem* mean? Look it up in your Concordance or a dictionary.

Redeem-

3. How does a believer **walk circumspectly** and not walk **foolishly**? Paul says one way is by **making the most of your time**. In other words the first sign that a person is **wise** is that he is sensitive to how he uses his time; he makes a disciplined use of it. We all understand that time is valuable; even the lost world says "time is money." We all have the same amount of time, but in this context Paul is not speaking so much of time in general but of the opportunities that are placed before us. Redeeming the time calls us to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's sense of urgency! How foolish to stumble through life and never seek to know the will of the Lord! Instead of walking "circumspectly", they miss the mark, miss the road, and end up suffering from some detour. God wants us to be wise and understand His will for our lives. As we obey His will, we "buy up the opportunities" (redeem the time, v.16) and do not waste time, energy, money, or talent in that which is not His will. Lost opportunities may never be regained; they are gone forever. Sisters, how will you respond to this exhortation? What changes do you need to make? Be Specific.

4. What does the following verse reveal about *redeeming the time*?

Romans 13:11-14 ¹¹And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation *is* nearer than when we *first* believed. ¹²The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. ¹³Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. ¹⁴But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts.

a. There are many ways to *redeem the time*. Those who *redeem the time* make the most of the time and opportunities given to them. What are some examples of *redeeming the time*?

b. Few would disagree with Ephesians 5:16. Yet, many fail to obey it. What are some reasons for this failure in the lives of many believers?

5. Ephesians 5:17 concludes that one way to *redeem the time* is to *understand what the will of the Lord is*. This verse parallels verse 10. What is the instruction of verse 10?

a. Too often we fret because we don't know God's will in a specific situation. Yet, much of God's *will* can be known. Look up the following verses and record what they reveal about this subject:

Matthew 5:33

Proverbs 2:5-6

Romans 12:2

James 1:5

b. Which of these verses encouraged you the most and why?

6. Ephesians 5:18 commands us, *And do not be drunk with wine*. What reason follows this command?

Challenge: Define *dissipation* as it is used in this verse by using a dictionary or your Concordance.
Dissipation

a. Rather than *be drunk with wine*, what are we to do according to verse 18?

7. In what ways is *being filled with the Spirit* more *filling* and *fulfilling* than being *drunk with wine*?

a. Look up the word filled in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

Filled-

Pleroo here in Ephesians 5:18 does not mean to get more of the Spirit since the Spirit indwells us completely when we are born spiritually. The more meaning of **filled** in the NT is to be controlled by that which "fills" one's heart and mind.

8. Drunken and Spirit-filled people have one thing in common -- they are both controlled people. Their lives and their behavior are radically changed by that which fills them. Paul is saying stop living under the controlling influence of alcohol but instead be **continually** living under the controlling influence of the Holy Spirit. How important it is for us to "drink" deeply of Him yielding to Him, and letting Him give direction to our lives. **Ray Stedman** calls being **filled with the Spirit** the great secret of real Christianity. Are you aware of your need to be continually living under the control of the Holy Spirit? What does this look like in your life?

Sisters, I don't know about you, but I need to pray for the Lord to help me be more aware of the Holy Spirit in my life. And then I need to pray that He might control my mind, my attitudes, & my actions. When I was a very young Christian I started praying that I would learn to know the voice of God, and then to be quick to obey. The quickest way to grieve the Holy Spirit is to not respond to Him. I pray daily that I might have an awareness of the Holy Spirit, and that I might not grieve Him by my lack of response towards Him. I pray that for you too!

DAY FIVE: Read Ephesians 5:19-21

1. Ephesians 5:19 gives us the result of being filled with the Spirit. What does it exhort us to do?

a. What is your favorite: psalm hymn spiritual song (for the purpose of this lesson – contemporary Christian songs)

2. What have you found to be the **fruit** of *singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord*?

“Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in His wonderful face. And the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of His glory and grace!” This is one of my favorite songs because it is a great reminder for me to look to Jesus no matter what is going on in my life.

3. Paul continues his exhortations in verse 20. Using this verse, answer the following questions:

- a. What are we to do?
- b. How often are we to give thanks?
- c. What are we to give thanks for?
- d. What does question c mean exactly?

1Thessalonians 5:18 has the same exhortation of *giving thanks* as Ephesians 5:20. *In everything give thanks (present imperative = make this your habitual practice); for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

How is it possible to obey this command? When you are controlled by the Holy Spirit and understand the truth that nothing happens in your life that is not filtered through the hands of your Loving Father, Who is El Elyon, the Most High God; then you can withstand whatever He allows into your life. It will not be wasted. He is sovereign and therefore He is in control and He has a purpose.

4. According to Ephesians 5:20, who are we to *give thanks* to?

a. In Whose *name* are we to *give thanks*?

5. What have you found to be the fruit of *giving thanks*?

If we allow the Spirit to continually control us, we will discover that His constant filling is an excellent antidote against an attitude of **always** murmuring about **all** things! The grumbling spirit is not compatible with the Holy Spirit. Grumbling was one of the besetting sins of the people of Israel; they were always 'murmuring' against the Lord and against Moses. But the Spirit-filled believer is full not of complaining, but of thanksgiving.

6. Why do you think the believer must be reminded to obey the commands of Ephesians 5:20?

7. Ephesians 5:21 introduces the concept of *submission*; which we will study in depth in our next lesson. According to this verse, who are we to *submit* to?

a. We have been taught that *submission* involves obeying authority. Since verse 21 tells us to *submit to one another*, how do we do that according to this verse?

b. What does it mean *in the fear of God*?

c. What kinds of behaviors are opposite of *submission*?

DAY SIX: Review Ephesians 5:8-21

1. Describe a believer who *walks in the light*?

2. What should be the believer's response to the *works of darkness*?

3. Ephesians 5:14 commands us to, *Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead*. What practical suggestions would you give to a *sleeping* believer who needs to *arise from the dead*?

4. Why is a *Spirit-filled* life the antidote to *excessive wine*?

5. Record on your Worksheets “**Truths about God, Truths about Jesus, Truths about the Holy Spirit, Truths about the Believer, and Instructions.**”

But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. - 1 John 1:7