

**Eph 5:8–15 (ESV)** for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light <sup>(9)</sup> (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), <sup>(10)</sup> and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. <sup>(11)</sup> Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. <sup>(12)</sup> For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. <sup>(13)</sup> But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, <sup>(14)</sup> for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.” <sup>(15)</sup> Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise,

### 1. We continue our look at what the “Born again” life is meant to look like

- A. We see that those who have been saved are called to live lives that bring glory to God
  - 1). They are to live lives that reflect the reality of who they are in him
  - 2). That they do have a new nature – do have a new power – and new desires

### 2. Outline

- A. You were darkness but now you’re light
- B. Because your light walk in the light
- C. Walking in the light requires walking in wisdom

## I. YOU WERE DARKNESS BUT NOW YOUR LIGHT

**Eph 5:8–12 (ESV)** for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light <sup>(9)</sup> (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), <sup>(10)</sup> and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. <sup>(11)</sup> Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. <sup>(12)</sup> For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.

### “V. 8a for at one time you were darkness”

#### 1. This is our testimony isn’t it – we lived in the darkness

- A. We committed those sins that Paul has written about in Ephesians
  - 1). We were immoral, unclean and covetous therefore we were not on our way to heaven
- B. But God has done something hasn’t he – we’ve been rescued

**Col 1:13 (NIV)** For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves,

**Transition:** Therefore Paul writes in the last part of verse 8

### “V. 8b but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light”

#### 1. Notice not only are we in the light but we ARE light

- A. You once were in the darkness but now you ARE light – you’ve been changed radically

**Thought:** Do you see why somebody claiming to be saved without a change in lifestyle is impossible?

- A. The difference couldn’t be any greater – *you WERE darkness but now you ARE light*

**Transition:** Therefore Paul now says the evidence of light rather than darkness should characterize our life

### “V. 9 for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true”

#### 1. Fruit of light = light produces moral and ethical character

- A. The fruit that grows in light is goodness, righteousness, and truth
  - 1). This change in lifestyle becomes evidence we are now light
- B. **Goodness** = is love in action  
**Righteousness** = rightness of character before God and rightness of actions before men  
**Truth** = this is what goodness and righteousness is based on – the truth of God’s Word
- C. Jesus had this to say about walking in the light

**Mt 5:16 (NIV)** ... let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

- 1). We walk in the light so men can see the change and glorify our Father

**John Tillotson:** "This our Saviour requires of his disciples, that the virtue and holiness of their lives should be so visible and conspicuous, that all men may behold it, and give testimony to it, and glorify God on that account."

**Point:** When we walk as children of light - living before God not hiding anything – He has his way

A. There will be a good character and good works that the world notices – we are different

**Transition:** Now Paul tells us how we grow in the light – that light shiner brighter and brighter

## **“V. 10 and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord”**

### **1. Care about this – do the work to see what this life should look like**

A. First: Stay in the word because that is where we see what light looks like

- 1). We see what our responsibility as a believer is  
What we should be saying YES to and what we should be saying NO too

B. Second: Stay in the light by being honest before the Lord– ask the tough questions

“Is this thought, word and action pleasing to you?”

- 1). Allow him to search your life – to point out anything that needs to change

**Transition:** Now Paul brings up an interesting aspect of living as light

## **“V. 11-12 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. <sup>(12)</sup> For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret.”**

### **1. Not only do we not partake in works of darkness we expose them as sinful**

A. Let’s be careful here – we are not “Sin police” looking at everybody suspiciously

- 1). But there are times when we are meant to say something
  - a). Times when silence isn’t love – where it will be interpreted as approval

B. There will be times he will want you to take a stand for what is right

- 1). That takes being sensitive to the Spirit – when to be silent – when to stand
  - a). There are those who say something about everything but scripture says  
**1 Pe 4:8 (NIV)** Above all, love each other deeply, *because love covers over a multitude of sins.*

1a). There are many things we should let slide – or church would be miserable

b). But Paul says here – there will be times when we are to expose sin for what it is - stand

- 2). So cover sin with love AND expose sin because you love that person

a). Takes being sensitive to the Spirit to know what to do when

**Transition:** But how do we expose sin

### **2. We expose sin by shining the light into the darkness**

A. We do this through the Word – a church teaching the Word is doing this constantly

- 1). The people learning the word are being trained as to what sin is
  - a). Sin in being exposed in their life – they confess – repent  
The light shines brighter from them (Next point)

B. We also do that with our life – You ARE light – as you live for the Lord that light shines

- 1). I made a joke here about our basketball outreach even though it is only me playing  
But there is truth to that – when a believer enters the darkness the light shines
  - a). Almighty God dwells within us – controlling all things  
We carry the message that can change a person’s eternity in an instance
  - b). Add everything up and everywhere we go is an outreach – our life is an outreach

- 1a). We are light bearers entrusted with a life-changing message
- 2). Isn't this the church's mission – why we're here – to shine the light in the darkness
  - a). To reflect Christ to such an extent it changes the environment around us

**Luke 11:33 (NLT)** "No one lights a lamp and then hides it or puts it under a basket. Instead, it is put on a lampstand to give light to all who enter the room."

### 3. There is a warning here – do you see it?

**Eph 5:11 (ESV)** Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness...

**Eph 5:11 (NKJV)** And *have no fellowship* with the unfruitful works of darkness

- A. There is a danger as we expose some sins
  - 1). I feel the warfare as we learn more and more about the dark side of trafficking  
It takes me into places I never thought I'd go – never really wanted to go
- B. Our flesh can be drawn with a carnal interest into these things
  - 1). There is a real necessity to stay prayed up because our flesh is attracted to the toxicity

**Charles Hodge:** "To have fellowship with the works of darkness... is to delight in them and to participate in them. All such association is forbidden as inconsistent with the character of the children of light."

- A. We stop that by staying in close fellowship with our Lord and his Word
  - 1). Consistently pouring in the Word of God – that cleanses our mind from the darkness  
**Ro 12:2 (NIV)** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.
- B. Keeping a short account on sin – asking him to constantly be checking our heart  
To see those sins – those desires – those works of the flesh before they take root  
**Why this is important: Ps 139:23–24 (NIV)** Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. <sup>(24)</sup> See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.
  - 1). I think David after his fall with Bathsheba had a healthy distrust of self
    - a). Lord I know what my heart can be like – I know what I can do – what I'm attracted too  
Will you keep a watch on me – will you find those sins before they grip me
    - b). Those sins that are still easy to take care of at their starting point

**Transition:** Verses 8-12 you are light now so stay out of the darkness

- A. In verse 13-14 Paul strengthens his case to walk in the light – this is a bit difficult

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## II. BECAUSE YOUR LIGHT WALK IN THE LIGHT

**Eph 5:13–14 (ESV)** But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, <sup>(14)</sup> for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says, "Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

**"But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible"**

**Eph 5:13 (NLT)** But when the light shines on them, it becomes clear how evil these things are.

### 1. Even those things done in "secret" v. 12 can be exposed v. 13

- A. They will be made manifest by the light of God's searching judgment
  - 1). What a reason for avoiding the unfruitful works of darkness  
Those are works that are destined for exposure when God judges the world
    - a). The unbeliever is going to stand before him and the books will be opened  
Not one sin will be missing – every sin will add to the judgment

### 2. Yeah – I'm not worried about that day of judgment – I'm a believer

- A. Listen – when a believer refuses to repent – there is no guarantee God won't expose their sin  
**God said this to his children: Nu 32:23 (NIV)** ...and you may be sure that your sin will find you out.

- 1). He loves you enough to do whatever is necessary to wake you up and turn you
  - B. A few years back we saw this play out in network news
    - 1). A hacker released the confidential data from AshleyMadison.com – remember that?
      - a). This was a website designed for married people to meet and have affairs
      - b). Millions of married men’s names and credit card info was put up on a list
      - c). Many of those men were Christians – Pastors, elders, worship leaders, congregants
        - 1a). One estimate was **400 church leaders** were exposed – plus many other congregants
        - 2a). Church leaders were forced to step down all over America
    - 2). They thought they could keep their sin out of the view of the public – hide it
      - a). But a sovereign God in mercy said “The jig is up” – You won’t stop – I will stop you!”
    - 3). From an article I read about the AshleyMadison reveal
 

“The aftermath of the world’s biggest adultery scandal is rich with lessons we should take to heart, chiefly a reminder that secret sins you think are safe are never truly safe or secret.”

      - a). I believe that was mercy – God forcing them to get help – get spiritually healthy again
        - 1a). Eph 5:5 says no sexually immoral person will enter his kingdom  
Therefore he **MUST** do whatever he must do to turn you
- Transition:** So the warning is that the darkness will be exposed by the light – don’t mess with it
- A. Then for those who are still playing around the edges – Paul exhorts them

*“Therefore it says, “Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”*

### **1. Therefore – because this is a possibility – awake! Rise from spiritual slumber!**

- A. We get this same exhortation from Jesus in Revelation
 

**Rev 3:1-2 (NIV)** "To the angel of the church in Sardis write: These are the words of him who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars. I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. (2) ***Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God.***

    - 1). There is a little life – there is something that remains – the fire is barely simmering
      - a). Jesus says this is so urgent – that flame is about to go out  
Do whatever is necessary to keep that from happening
        - 1a). All those spiritual disciplines that keep you healthy – be intentional
  - B. Carri and I were talking about this Friday night – Eternal security and the necessity of abiding
    - 1). I believe I will be with the Lord – He will keep me – I will persevere  
I also believe that I must take persevering and abiding seriously  
**Mt 24:13 (NIV)** but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved.
      - a). My theology of security doesn’t erase all the warnings – the exhortations
        - 1a). I’ll persevere because God will keep me – YES  
But how he works that out is by causing you to persevere – you take this seriously
      - b). If I’m falling asleep spiritually ***I must wake up!*** I must take this seriously
- Transition:** In verse 12 he spoke of discerning what is the will of the Lord
- A. Now he builds on that thought in v. 15-17
    - 1). Having emphasized the contrast between light and darkness  
He now turns to the contrast between wisdom and foolishness – another warning

## **III. WALKING IN THE LIGHT REQUIRES WALKING IN WISDOM**

**Eph 5:15–17 (ESV)** Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, <sup>(16)</sup> making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. <sup>(17)</sup> Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

**“V. 15 Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise”**

**1. Take the warning to wake up in v. 14 seriously**

- A. In light of that it would be foolish to keep living in a spiritually apathetic state  
It would be wise to do whatever you need to do to come alive again

**2. Wisdom = the art of living**

- A. It is seeing what God says and applying it to your life – it is obedience  
1). To walk in his ways is wise – to walk in the light is wise  
2). To walk in darkness and sin is foolish – and extremely dangerous

**Transition:** Now Paul points out what wisdom looks like

**“making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.”**

**1. The wise person understands the value of time**

- A. They don't just float through life – they have a goal and they press towards it  
1). What is our goal? It is to be like Christ! To walk like Christ is to walk in the light  
2). The believer does what is necessary to reach that – to progress towards it  
B. Paul gives us some wise advice when it comes to this – using his own life as an example

**Turn: 1 Co 9:24–27 (ESV)** Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. <sup>(25)</sup> Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. <sup>(26)</sup> So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. <sup>(27)</sup> But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.

- 1). Paul says run the race with excellence – don't run half-heartedly – lolly-gagging  
a). That would be to run like a fool  
2). Paul says be like the athlete who exercises self-control in all things  
a). They use their time in a disciplined way – they don't just waste it  
1a). They do what they must do to be better – stronger – faster  
When they feel like it and when they don't  
2a). They don't do what will weaken them – no matter how much they want too  
3). Paul says have a plan – Paul didn't leave how he would reach his goal to whatever he felt like  
**1 Co 9:26 (ESV)** So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air.  
a). I don't run aimlessly – just motion with no direction  
I don't box as one beating the air – flailing – but never hitting anything  
b). He knew what his goal was and he planned on how to get there  
1a). Effective Christianity takes thinking – sorry - planning  
2a). I am going to use my time in this way or that – to reach the goal  
3a). I know where I want to be in 6 months and I have a plan on how to get there  
4). He says if he didn't discipline his body he would be disqualified  
a). Not lose his salvation – but forfeit his effectiveness – benched!  
b). All the joy of being used by God – the joy of intimacy – the abundant life – GONE!

**Point:** The wise person is one who uses their time for their advantage – the fool does not

- A. This doesn't mean you're reading your Bible – 15 hours a day – “My devotions was Isaiah today”  
1). It doesn't mean you can't go to the movies – have fun – take your wife out on a date  
B. It does mean we plan – we are disciplined – we have priorities – getting what must be done done

## 2. Why this is so important

**Eph 5:16 (ESV)** making the best use of the time, *because the days are evil.*

A. I think of Ephesians 6 and the armor of God

**Eph 6:10–13 (ESV)** Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. <sup>(11)</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. <sup>(12)</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. <sup>(13)</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, *that you may be able to withstand (or stand) in the evil day*, and having done all, to stand firm.

1). There are those “evil days” coming

a). This is that day when the trial is so great – the temptation so strong  
That your faith is going to be rocked – shaken – even drug away

2). The wise prepare for that day – redeeming the time to put the whole armor of God on

a). The armor that is listed in v. 14-18 – those are all Biblical doctrines – read the Word

3). Notice the call – no half-heartedness here

a). Because your fight is not with man – but with the powers of darkness – forces of evil  
Do all that you need to do to stand firm – when you have *done everything to stand*

1a). The wise person will heed that scriptural exhortation – the fool won’t

b). There were people in church a year ago – now back in the world – given over to sin

B. Jesus speaks of the days we are going to be facing in the end times

**Mat 24:9-13 (NIV)** "Then you will be handed over to be persecuted and put to death, and you will be hated by all nations because of me. (10) At that time many will turn away from the faith and will betray and hate each other, (11) and many false prophets will appear and deceive many people. (12) *Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold, (13) but he who stands firm to the end will be saved.*

1). We are entering those times – false teachers, prophets – false signs, wonders are rampant

a). Many are being drawn into these false movements masking as Christianity

**Transition:** So be wise – how? Paul tells us.

## 3. Understand what the will of the Lord is

**Eph 5:17 (ESV)** Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

A. The wise person will do what is necessary to understand what the will of the Lord is

1). They will search the Scriptures to see God’s will – they will be in church to hear his Word  
They will fellowship with other believers to remain strong

**Heb 10:24–25 (NIV)** And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>(25)</sup> not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

a). The church is meant to encourage one another on towards love and good works

b). Jesus said the love of many will grow cold – it is heated up as we meet together

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## CONCLUSION

### 1. The believer is now light – Paul says live like it

A. He also warns us that living like darkness has some very serious implications

1). Even for the believer

